Journal of Language Teaching and Research

ISSN 1798-4769

Volume 13, Number 5, September 2022

Contents

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 897-907, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.01

Attention to Diversity in a Spanish CLIL Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions

Grace H. McClintic
University of Jaén, Jaén, Spain

***Abstract*—Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is taking on bilingual education in the 21st century. In this particular context, Spain, this approach has firmly taken hold. Due to mainstreaming, or the move to entirely bilingual schools, diversity has been put at the forefront of research. Charged with bolstering language learning competences in Spain, a country with notoriously poor foreign language competence and an unbalanced tradition with bilingual education, CLIL has now risen to meet the challenge to cater to the wide spectrum of students and foment access to high quality, functional language education. Thus, analyzing the perceptions of those implementing these classes, the teachers, is critical to gauge how the CLIL methodology is working with all types of students. Through the use of *ADiBE* protocol and instruments, this study explores six teachers' perceptions at the secondary education level in Andalusia through the use of questionnaires, one-on-one interviews, and classroom observations. The results show how diversity is being attended to by teachers in this particular context, while simultaneously casting light on the obstacles and limitations that are still in need of addressing.**

***Index Terms*—diversity, inclusion, CLIL, differentiation, teacher training**

I. Introduction

Diversity in itself is a complicated term and notion. In a basic sense, diversity is an inherent quality that all humans possess, argue Madrid and Pérez Cañado (2018), who indicate that diversity and inclusion are not meant to singularly denote special needs, but rather, they are terms that delineate the wide variety of factors that contribute to the discrepancy found in students of a same age who behave, perform and succeed in distinct ways, according, but not limited, to: *prior ideas, experiences, knowledge, attitudes, learning styles, intelligence styles, learning methods, achievement levels, learning paces, intellectual capacity, diverging interests, motivations, expectations, SES, and cultural backgrounds*.

For its part, in Spain, CLIL (known in Spanish as *AICLE*: *Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenidos y Lengua Extranjera*) has been functioning here for over two decades, however, this country has been plagued with low foreign language (FL) competence results and routinely falls short on many European comparatives when it comes to FL objectives for students. The importance of languages, and English, in the world today cannot be overlooked, and knowing this, there is no question as to why CLIL has dug deep into Spanish decrees and orders, infiltrating schools and centers across the nation. Albeit this pedagogy has been, as recently labelled by Pérez-Cañado (2021a), *controversial*, due to its streaming procedures and selection of students in the past, for which it gained notoriety for its exclusive, segregating or even elitist (Bruton, 2011) nature, it has come a long way, and is entrusted today with having the power to give all students in this country equitable access to quality language education.

In the past, CLIL in Spain featured mostly voluntary programs, exclusively offered to the more *gifted* students, and streaming did occur. Coupled with its rocky beginnings, misinformation and the spreading of certain examples of malpractices have led to the questioning of this pedagogy, which persists to this day, even leading to downright opposition. Given this, research initiatives have been created, such as the one to which this study is tied, *ADiBE (Attention to Diversity in Bilingual Education) – CLIL for All* (Pérez-Cañado et al., 2019), to ensure that a balanced scrutiny of this methodology is undertaken with a view to continue and improve its use in, not only Spanish, but European classrooms, by painting a realistic picture of CLIL via perceptions of the stakeholders, with an aim to seek out best teacher practices as well as to highlight the areas where improvement must be made.

II. Background

A. CLIL in Spain

(a). Education

Spain, as a country, is quite unique both in its history with bilingual education (BE) and the very makeup of the country. It features seventeen distinct communities, plus two autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Regarding language learning (LL), this country has been implementing CLIL as a way to counter its consistently low ranking on the Eurobarometer (Lancaster, 2016). The decentralized nature of the government is what makes CLIL implementation within the country so heterogeneous, thus, analyzing this country pedagogically poses to be a feat (INEE, 2016).

Educationally, the territories are managed nationally in line with the *Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport* as well as regionally: the autonomous communities have their own governments and Education Authorities, which are responsible for the management of education in each particular community. For their part, Lasagabaster and Ruiz (2010) highlight that differences in CLIL programs in the bilingual and monolingual regions outnumber the similarities, varying according to several factors, including: the number of hours taught in the FL, amount of content taught, language level requirements for teachers and/or students, and overall experience with BE.

Highlighting one community in particular, the location of this study, Andalusia, there is one defining characteristic which makes it unique in terms of BE: the complete lack of opportunities for students to come into contact with the FL outside of the classroom, which is, in the vast majority of cases, English (Madrid & Hughes, 2011; Lancaster, 2016). Andalusia, says Lancaster (2016), is known for its lack of tradition in FLT, given the fact that almost all communication and contact outside of school is in Spanish; yet, despite this "unfavorable situation", this particular community has decidedly used CLIL to its advantage, by turning "an ambitious language policy into reality", making waves through the traditionally monolingual society (p. 149).

Madrid and Pérez-Cañado (2018) highlight another major step that Spain and Andalusia, are taking to foment CLIL implementation on a nation-wide scale: the reduction of optional CLIL sections and subsequent increase in CLIL-wide bilingual centers. As a result, the number of students present in CLIL classrooms in this country is augmenting drastically each year, with more students than ever receiving content through a FL. However, with this move comes uncertainty, given that CLIL classrooms are increasingly heterogeneous in their student makeup. It is understandable, thus, why it is imperative to research whether CLIL lessons are able to functionally teach language and content to the diverse learner population.

(b). Catering to Diversity: Prior Studies

The previously mentioned uniqueness and juxtaposition between regions in this country has fomented an exploitation in this peculiar LL environment when it comes to research, explaining how and why it has become one of the primary frontrunners in CLIL investigation (Coyle, 2010). Several authors (e.g.: Coyle, 2010; Ruiz & Lasagabaster, 2010; Cinganotto, 2016) have pointed out the fact that other countries look to Spain as a model for BE due to its diverse settings. Government-funded research in the country is also prevalent, as demonstrated by two research projects funded by both the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competiveness (FFI2012-32221) and the Andalusian Government (P12-HUM-2348). As noted by Lasagabaster and Ruiz (2010) and Nikula et al. (2013), Spain has spent a particularly great deal of time and money on CLIL research and development within the European context.

For their part, Fernández-Sanjurjo et al. (2017) note how Spanish schools have flourished with the incorporation of CLIL schemes, crediting this to the large amount of research that has been undertaken (e.g.: Halbach, 2008; Casal & Moore, 2009; Lasagabaster & Ruiz, 2010; Madrid & Hughes, 2011; Cenoz, 2015). The same authors (2017) suggest that, at present, there stands a "social need" to better FLL in Spain, after consistently being branded as one of Spain's major flaws when it comes to the education of its citizens (p. 2, referencing Eurydice, 2012).

As CLIL has grown in popularity, research has bourgeoned steadily; unfortunately, much of the studies conducted before 2015, give or take a few years, was not done in sound conditions, leading Coyle (2007b) to warn that "quality might be overtaken by quantity" when it comes to CLIL research (p. 53). Albeit abundant, much of the literature is concentrated on language and content outcomes and very few studies have delved profoundly into the theme of diversity. Mainly, the research on this topic has been three-fold: first, there have been theoretical accounts (Scanlan, 2011; Grieve & Haining, 2011; Cioè-Pena, 2017; Madrid & Pérez-Cañado, 2018); secondly, there have been reviews of existing research (Somers, 2017; Martin-Pastor & Duran-Martinez, 2019); and finally, several qualitative studies have been carried out (Mehisto & Asser, 2007; Pena-Diaz & Porto-Requejo, 2008; Fernández & Halbach, 2011; Roiha, 2014; Pérez-Cañado, 2016). However, as of late, research and initiatives have been blossoming on this topic, including the previously mentioned Erasmus+ *ADiBE* project (Pérez-Cañado et al., 2019), created to focus specifically on differentiation methodologies and inclusive practices at a grassroots level, with an aim to shed light on how diversity is being catered to around Europe. These studies, relay Pérez-Cañado (2021b), are of the utmost importance for the future of CLIL due to the fact there is "extremely meager – verging on non-existent – amount of research" on this topic (p. 6). Thus, at the moment, there is insufficient concrete *evidence* that the measures put forth by CLIL guidelines are actually taking place in classrooms on the continent, justifying the use of *ADiBE* protocol to ascertain how diversity is being dealt with by probing those directly involved in the CLIL schemes.

This study is, thus, highly relevant, owing to the paucity of research on this topic: all previous conclusions relating to diversity have been theoretical or have come as after-thoughts (Pérez-Cañado, 2021a). Likewise, there have been no international comparative studies done, to date, on catering to diversity in CLIL (idem, 2021a).

Very recently, several studies have dealt with the appraisal of CLIL at a grassroots level, per the *ADiBE* protocol, assessing catering to diversity as perceived by stakeholders, e.g.: Bauer-Marschallinger et al. (2021), Casas-Pedrosa and Rascón-Moreno (2021), Pérez-Cañado (2021b), and Siepmann et al. (2021), all involving studies at a European level, seeking to validate how this approach is catering to diverse students' needs and what differentiation tactics are being used.

III. RESEARCH STUDY

The fundamental force propelling this study is inclusive education, and the deniable need for research into diversity tactics due to the mainstreaming of CLIL in the Spanish context, which affects millions of students. The central objective of the study is based on stakeholders' perceptions with a view to better understand the workings of CLIL at a grassroots level as a way to identify best teacher practices as well as isolate the main obstacles this approach is facing through the use of questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. This article will delineate the findings specifically concerning the perceptions from one of the stakeholders: the teachers, focusing on the curricular and organizational aspects being deployed in order to cater to diversity within one particular school in Andalusia. The study looks to answer how teachers perceive the current measures being taken as a way to cater to the diverse student population.

This article will delineate three of the five main areas of interest: linguistic aspects, methodologies, and teacher training and collaboration.

IV. Method

A. Research Design

The study at hand offers a mixed research design and is quantitative and qualitative in nature and uses primary (Nunan, 1991) and survey research (Brown, 2001). The research design, protocol, and instruments belong to the *ADiBE Project* (Pérez-Cañado et al., 2019), and the study uses a multi-perspective and triangulated approach. The study, in its entirety, focuses on stakeholders' perceptions to determine how three different types of achievers (under-, normal- and over-) are being catered to, per subsequent academic results and satisfaction ratings in a CLIL programme in fourth of compulsory secondary education (CSE) in Andalusia. It intends to provide empirically-sound data with an aim to help evaluate any changes or improvements that must be undertaken in these schemes in order to continue to move an inclusive CLIL docket forward, by critically analyzing grassroots practices to ensure a methodologically-sound CLIL implementation is taking place, suitable and functional for a diverse range of students.

A mixed-methods approach was used and included a range of data-gathering procedures: questionnaires, interviews and classroom observation of two sample CLIL lessons. The aim was to allow teachers to report their perceived notions of diversity in their classrooms and practices via self-reported questionnaires and one-on-one interviews and further supplement this data and perceptions with grassroots practices as observed in the CLIL lessons. The data was amassed from one, private secondary school in Andalusia, in an urban context featuring students with relatively high-SES.

For their part, the questionnaires that had previously been designed, created and validated (c.f. Pérez-Cañado et al., 2021) were given to the teachers in Spanish. They feature background and demographic questions followed by opinion statements blocked into five sections which sought to gauge respondents' opinions on CLIL workings related to diversity. The instrument features mainly closed-answered responses based on a six-point Likert scale (one indicating a strong sense of disagreement and six indicating a strong sense of agreement).

Accompanying the aforementioned instruments are semi-structured interviews, another qualitative tool which were carried out face-to-face on an individual basis, following the administration of the questionnaires. The questions used followed the same format and order as the thematic blocks featured in the questionnaires with an aim to gain more, specific details pertaining to the organizational aspects of this particular CLIL program.

Finally, two classroom observations were completed in the CLIL subjects of biology and business, taught by two of the teachers present in the study. The qualitative data was analyzed following thematic analysis principles (Braun & Clarke, 2006) per other *ADiBE* sub-projects such as this one and research conclusions were drawn with all the data amassed from the instruments, interviews and classroom observations so as to assess the overall situation of CLIL and attention to diversity in the bilingual programs in Andalusia. Due to data protection and privacy regulations, the teacher interviews were recorded but the classroom observations were not.

B. Sample

The sample included a total of seventy-seven participants, of which six were teachers. The teachers were a mix of Spanish nationals and native-English speakers (50% each, respectively). As for target language competence level, one Spanish national reported a C1 level of English, another B2, and the rest, a C2 proficiency level (the native-English speaking teachers and one Spanish national). There was an equal mix of male and female teachers and regarding age, the majority of the teachers (66%) were between 31 to 40 years old, whilst an equal percentage were between the ages of 41 to 50 or 51 to 60 years old (17%, respectively). The teachers taught a variety of CLIL subjects: history, art, music, computer science, business and biology. The subjects were taught across a range of grades in secondary (CSE), including grades first and second (history, art, music); third (art, biology); and fourth (history, computer science, business). Concerning the teaching' experience, equal numbers of teachers had from one to five years of teaching experience or five to ten years teaching experience, all of which were in a bilingual school. Regarding education, none of the teachers held university degrees in English, rather they were all content specialists.

TABLE 1
TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS

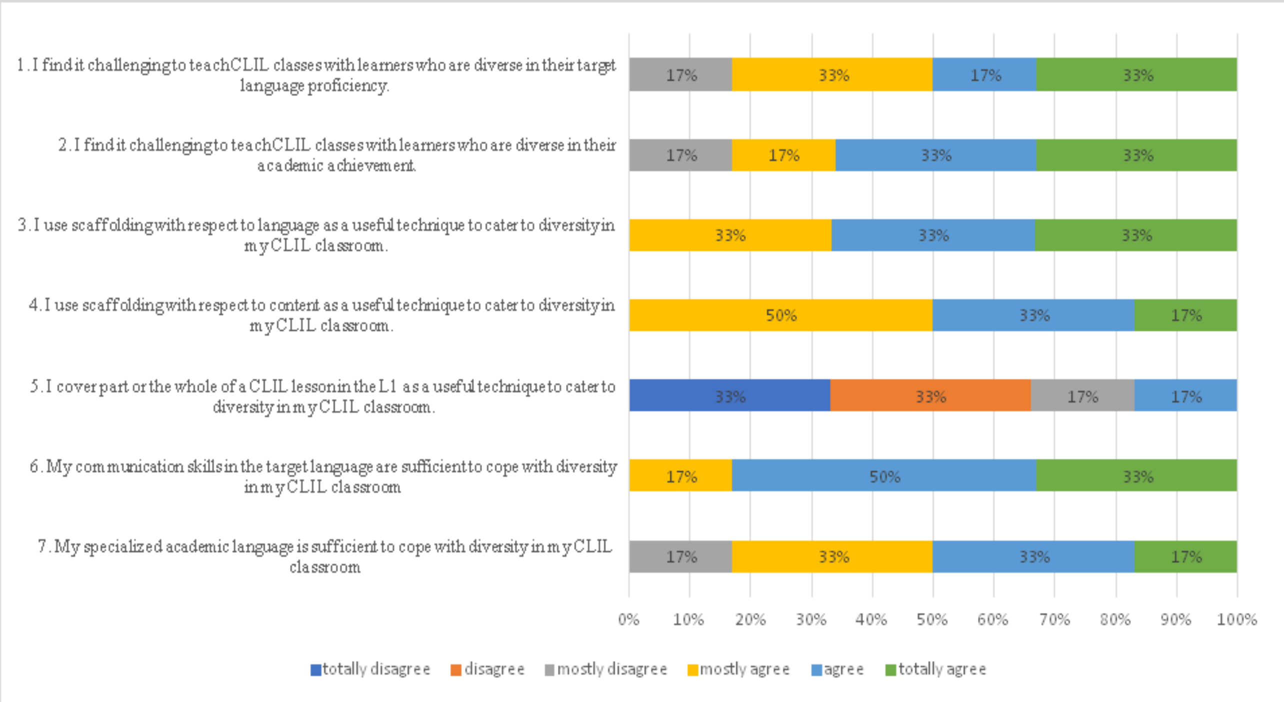
Teacher	Age (years)	Subject Area / coordinator	Foreign/Spanish	Years' teaching experience (in a bilingual school)	Permanent contract
A	50-55	Social Science / Non-coordinator	Native English speaker	7	Yes
B	35-40	Science / Non-coordinator	Spanish (C1 English certificate)	9	Yes
C	35-40	Humanities / Coordinator	Spanish (B2 English certificate)	10	Yes
D	30-35	Humanities / Non-coordinator	Spanish (C2 English certificate)	2	Yes
E	40-45	Technology / Non-coordinator	Native English speaker	1	No
F	30-35	Technology / Non-coordinator	Native English speaker	2	Yes

V. RESULTS

A. *Linguistic Aspects*

Per responses from the questionnaires, the majority of the cohort agrees it is challenging for them to teach CLIL classes with diverse learners, both academically and linguistically (items 1 and 2) and all affirm they are using scaffolding in terms of language and content (items 3 and 4). Regarding L1 use (item 5), only one teacher reports covering part or the whole lesson in Spanish as a way to cater to diversity. All of the teachers report sufficient levels of BICS in the target language (item 6) and only one teacher reports having insufficient knowledge of academic language (item 7).

TABLE 2
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES LINGUISTIC ASPECTS



In the interviews, the L2 was identified as being very challenging by two of the native-English teachers (E and F), specifically concerning newcomers, as well as students who hold neither English nor Spanish as the L1, of which there is a significant population at the school. These two teachers acknowledged that they themselves have little knowledge of the Spanish language. Both of these teachers, therefore, noted an inability to use Spanish in class, instead relying on peer-support or online translations for students who need help understanding the concepts in the L1. To help students linguistically, all of the teachers agreed to relying on peer support.

The entirety of the cohort emphasizes that attending to diversity is hard across the board, although they found this affects their teaching mostly when the students differ in their linguistic capacities: "I find it very challenging [to teach classes with diverse learners] because you can tell clearly the children that are getting everything and others that are not getting anything. In general, they pay much less attention when you speak in English than when you speak in their native language," (Teacher D).

Of the six teachers, only one (A) acknowledged repeating large parts or entire lessons in Spanish as a scaffolding mechanism. For their part, the other five teachers say they do not repeat large chunks of their lessons in Spanish and never repeat entire lessons in the L1, although the three Spanish nationals did report more use of Spanish in their classes compared to the native-English teachers, save for teacher A. For their part, teacher B mentioned using the L1 as a way to go over the most important concepts as well as periodically using it during the lesson to help with understanding. This teacher made explicit mention of code-switching, especially considering the high percentage of foreign students: "I think it's important for them to control the concepts in both languages, at the end [of a lesson] I translate a few of the major ideas on the board, since some words are so technical, some of the words are very different in Spanish and English, and of course, Chinese." Most of the teachers agreed that they are "not used to speaking Spanish in the class" (Teacher E). For their part, teacher D mentioned their use of Spanish was not systematic, but more spontaneous: "When I see a kid is lost, the blank eyes, I have to go in and speak and Spanish." One of the Spanish teachers (B) noted lesson preparation was important for them, in the subject of science: "Actually, I usually prepare and organize all the contents beforehand and vocabulary, since it's important to control since every day there are new discoveries [and even though] many words [in the subject area] are similar in Spanish and English but it's important to be prepared."

However, perhaps the most palpable conclusion that can be drawn is the sentiment held that school directives, and parents, place heightened emphasis on English language acquisition, as teacher C reasons: "[these CLIL] classes are not so essential, it's just a way of giving (the students) more classes in English, like giving them more hours of English, I think we could strategize them a bit better."

Another perception held is the notion that the CLIL classes functionality and easiness for students impinges on the subject matter. Teacher C mentions visual CLIL classes such as art: "I think any class is difficult [when kids' FL competences vary] … but [the subject] helps them also figure things out … so even if they don't speak English, or Spanish even, they seem to be able to pick up pretty quickly what we are doing in class." For their part, teacher F argues that some CLIL subjects are easier to understand than others, especially those that are more visual and have been done in Spanish by the kids before. They said they personally use the content [computer science] as a way to attend to the different levels of academic achievement, going so far to argue that: "you could do the class entirely without language and [the students] could understand it."

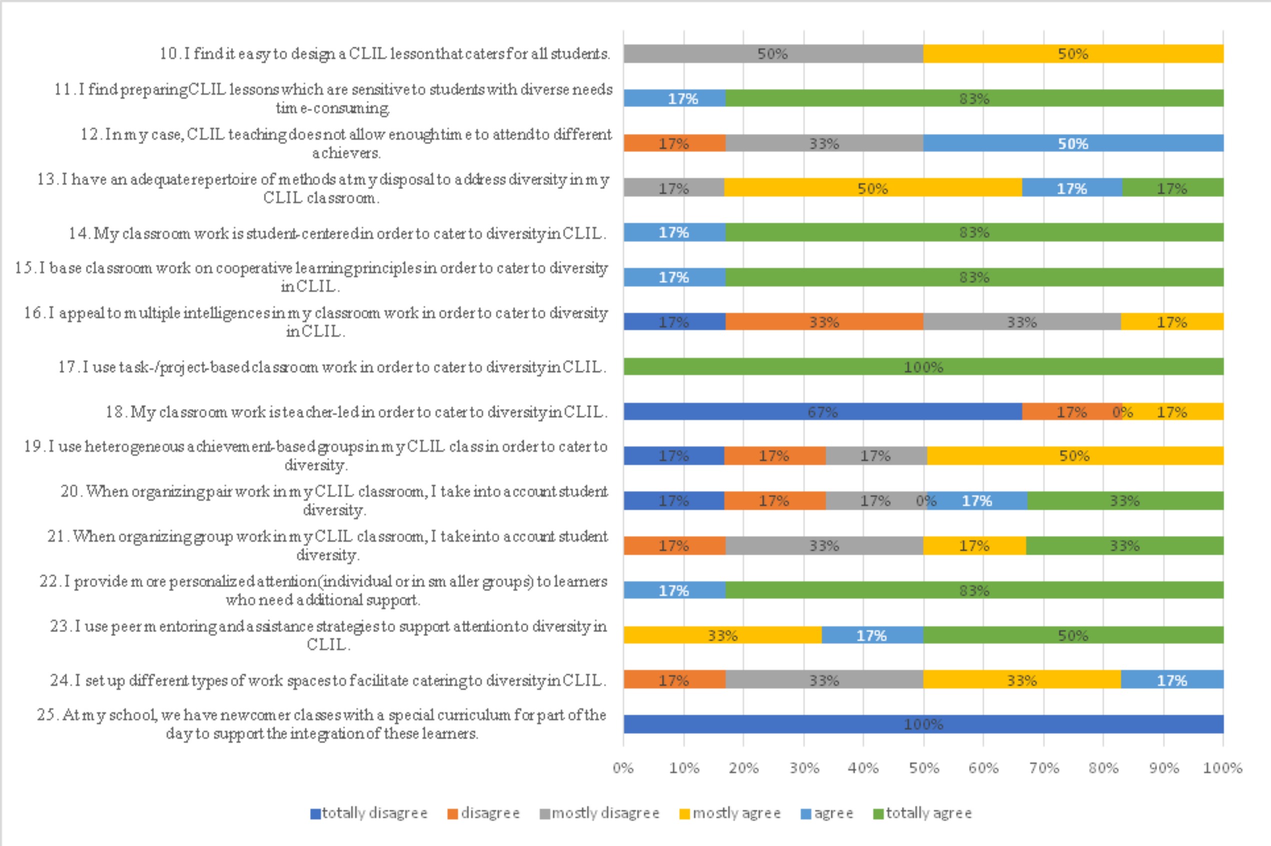
Finally, direct observation gave insight into the linguistic strategies the teachers are using. The biology teacher (B), made use of more systematic translanguaging, and it was clear that they had prepared beforehand. The business teacher (F), used no translanguaging and the class was given entirely in English. As for linguistically challenged students, in the biology lesson, one of the students was given time at the end of class to copy down and translate English vocabulary into their notebook into Chinese.

B. Methodology and Groupings

Insight gleaned from the second block shows that the teachers are divided when it comes to the easiness of planning a lesson that caters to diversity (item 10). The entirety of the cohort believes planning CLIL classes is time-consuming (item 11), and half of the teachers report that CLIL classes are not long enough to attend to diversity (item 12). This particular point was flushed out during the interviews, the teachers were adamant that the forty-five minute sessions (at the end of the day) are not long enough to successfully teach a CLIL class properly, insisting that an hour is necessary. The majority of the cohort believes they have an adequate repertoire of strategies to use with diverse students (item 13), and self-report the use of student-centered methodologies (item 14). All six teachers say they are using cooperative (item 15) and task- and project-based learning (item 17). However, only one teacher responded positively to using multiple intelligences (item 16). The majority of the cohort does not agree their classrooms are teacher-led (item 18), save one who affirms its use as an attention to diversity measure.

There is a degree of uncertainty about taking student diversity into account when organizing mixed-ability or group- and pair-work (items 19, 20 and 21). The entirety of the cohort reports giving personalized attention to learners who need more support (item 22) as well as the use of peer-mentoring and assistance strategies (item 23). Half of the cohort report utilizing varied work spaces to cater to diversity (item 24) but all deny the presence of newcomer classes at the school (item 25) and, in that same vein, all disagree that new students are given a special curriculum to follow.

TABLE 3
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES METHODOLOGY AND GROUPINGS



For their part, the interviews served to give further detailing into the workings of each teacher and their CLIL methodology. The use of peer-support, mainly in the form of pairing mixed-ability (linguistically) students, notably students in the class with high levels of L2 competence, acting as translators for students who are struggling with the English language is the most common. In addition, personalized and individualized attention and scaffolding are the most popular techniques that the teachers report they are employing as a way to cater to diversity. One teacher (D) mentions the use of "common sense" to see if a student is struggling or not. The direct observations confirmed this and personalized attention was used throughout both lessons, the teachers were moving around the class helping out specific students. Teacher (B) notes that personalized attention for homework is very important for them, and while some of the students are able to be more autonomous in their learning and activity completion, other students need more vigorous control and teacher assistance. However, during the observation, neither homework nor activities were seen to be differentiated. As for the newcomer classes, all of the teachers voiced their concern for the lack of this in the interviews, arguing that newcomer classes would be of great benefit, especially considering the student population is made up of mostly students who have been in the school since primary, and newcomers at the secondary level have a hard time catching up linguistically, and it is equally hard for the teachers to aid them sufficiently.

The majority of the teachers reported their classrooms to be student-led, which the direct observations confirmed. The biology class relied heavily on scaffolding via the use of teacher-led demonstrations, teacher B saying: "the students have to learn by watching" as well as the use of project-based learning, emphasized by the teachers to be fundamental for the classes, in line with implementation of the International Baccalaureate *Middle Years Program* (MYP) which focuses heavily on projects. Teacher F notes that their classes: "are very motivating and dynamic and practical. Most all the students in my class want to show me what they have learned." Teacher B notes their methodology is about putting theory into practice: "it is for sure a student-based, because it is based on the creativity but I try to guide them so I'm giving a lot of examples, I don't like to take the tools, I like to let them try and experiment."

Touching upon lack of time, it seems to be a real problem at this school when it comes to attending to diversity. Teacher D says: "I vary rarely use any methodology or plan methodology to help, cater to diversity, because one of the main reasons is we have too many students and too many hours to have the energy nor the time to cope with these things, obviously I try to make sure everyone understands what I am saying, in a very traditional way which is going around in the class and seeing if they understand the activities and are doing the activities, but in a very general way, I don't use any strategies." Similarly, teacher A reasons: "the amount of hours and number of students are too much… the teachers do not have the energy left for them." It should be noted that teachers in private schools teach more hours than in the charter and public schools. Class sizes are also quite populous at this school in first, second and third of CSE, most having close to 30 students per class. However, fourth of CSE was still relatively small, with a median of 20 students per class at this grade level.

As for participation and confidence, teacher B notes that some students might be hesitant to participate in class due to shyness or fear so they never pressure students to participate unless the student feels ready to do so on his or her own accord. Other teachers expressed this sentiment, and only one teacher (A) says they penalize students for lack of participation.

When it comes to differentiation, teacher (B) mentions the use of "extra activities" for the more advanced students, or overachievers, emphasizing the importance of recognizing that these students also require and deserve a chance "to continue learning and not be bored." This same teacher expressed the desire for a supplemental teacher in the classroom, specifically related to CLIL in science-specific subjects: "either to help with those who need more help or to continue with extension activities with those students who can and should continue learning." However, on the whole, it seemed that no teacher was really taking on differentiation methodology, teacher E says: "I'm going to be honest, with the weaker students, I haven't developed anything to give them any support, I give them all the same activities, I haven't had time to plan anything for all of these kids."

Group-work, as mentioned before, mainly in the form of project-based learning, was regarded by all the teachers to be absolutely essential for their CLIL classes. On forming groups and seating arrangements, teacher D says they let the students choose their groups but ensures the weak students are mixed with students with higher levels of English. All six teachers report allowing students to choose their seats in the class. Teacher C notes: "the students sit where they want. I don't really talk to them for that long, I usually project my screen or show them a video and then let them work in pairs or individually, they seem to help each other more than I can." For their part, teacher B uses mixed-ability groups to cater to diversity: "We usually work in small groups, and if I find that activity is going to be hard for anyone I try to do a balance of the groups out [sic]."

Teacher F touched upon the importance of creating a comfortable, relaxed environment in the classroom, especially when it comes to newcomer students: "Just breaking the ice, [the weaker students] are uncomfortable, [they're] afraid to talk, [they're] afraid to do anything, especially if you're in a new place, that can take half a year, I engage with them in discussions, but it's not the questions that will put them on the spot, no hard questions, just getting them comfortable and getting them to participate, I don't really have a system or a method but I just make sure that they are incorporated because if not, it's easy for them to disappear into the back."

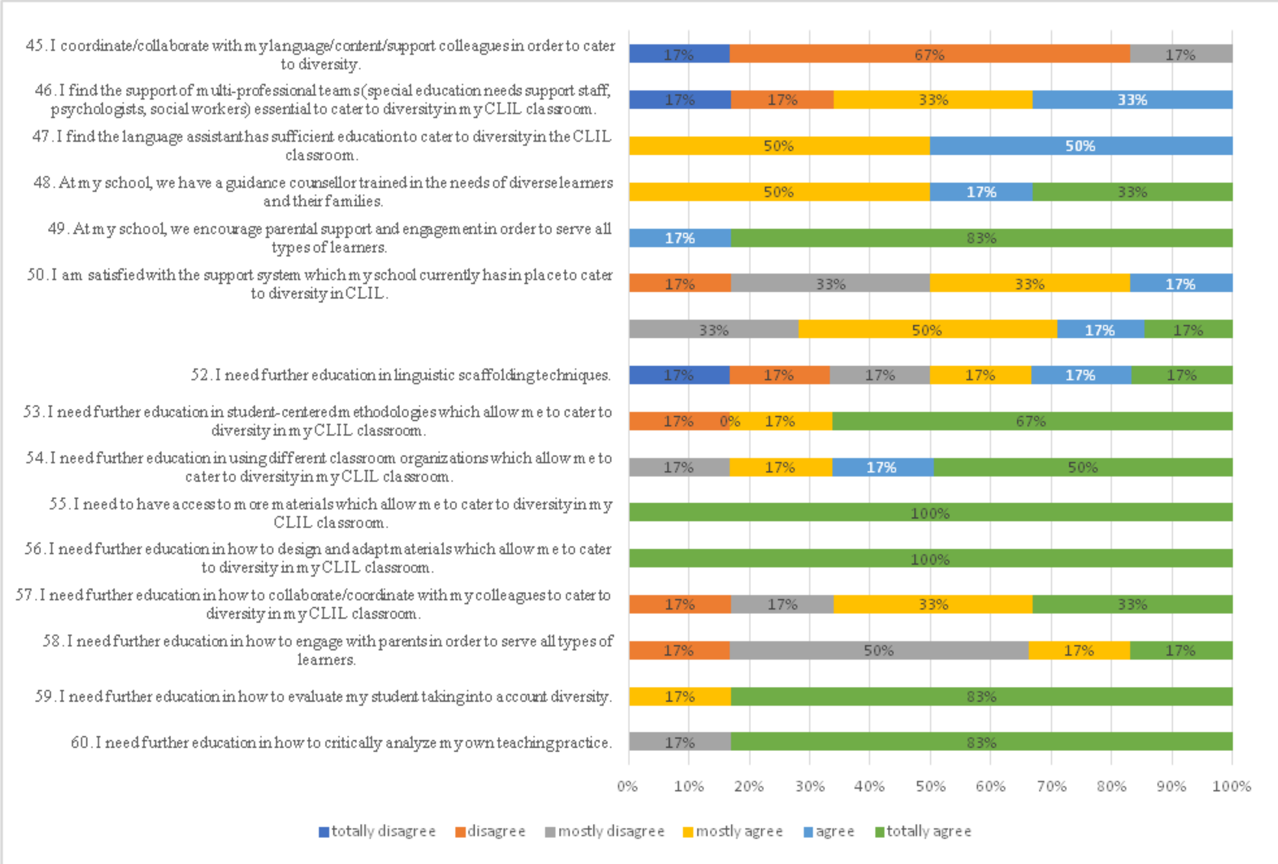
The observations confirmed the teachers' self-reports, and student-centered methodology was taking place although some teacher-led learning was happening. As for work spaces, both the classes featured a standard classroom with a projector, with single standing desks that were joined together in pairs. For group work, in both classes the children were not grouped in any specific way, and the teachers left them to work with whom they desired. The majority, if not all, of the groups were single-sex as well as single-nationality. Technology played an integral role in both of the classes, all of the students had personal devices, and the teachers did not use a textbook.

C. Teacher Development and Collaboration

Teacher collaboration, support and training are problematic areas, as highlighted by the questionnaire responses. None of the teachers report coordinating or collaborating with their colleagues (item 45) and, despite denying the presence of such at the school, the majority of teachers believe the support of a multi-professional team is necessary to cater to diversity (item 46). On a positive note, the cohort believes the language assistants have sufficient knowledge to cater to diversity in the classroom (item 47) and affirm that the guidance counselor at the school is trained in the needs of diverse students (item 48). The entirety of the cohort encourages parental support and engagement (item 49), however only half of the cohort is satisfied with the support system at the school (item 50). The majority believes that a more adequate multi-tiered support system is needed (item 51) in order to properly cater to diversity.

When it comes to teacher training needs, the cohort is divided: all six teachers respond differently in regard to needing more education in linguistic scaffolding techniques (the three native teachers disagreed in various degrees whilst the three non-native teachers, agreed, item 52). When it comes to teaching practices, the majority of the cohort confirms they need more education in student-centered methodologies (item 53) and in classroom organization strategies (item 54). Likewise, the teachers corroborate their need to have access to more materials and resources (item 55) and in needing further education in designing and adapting resources (item 56). Similarly, the teachers desire more education in collaboration and coordination with colleagues (item 57). Parental support is confirmed by all to be quite satisfactory at the school, only one teacher believes they need more education in parental support and engagement (item 58). When it comes to assessment for diversity, the cohort pleas for more education (item 59) and confirms the need for training in regard to critical analysis of teaching practices (item 60).

TABLE 4
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES TEACHER COLLABORATION AND DEVELOPMENT



Per responses from the interviews, there is very little coordination occurring amongst the teachers. Teacher B notes that there was an attempt in the past to coordinate with a co-worker from the English department who tried to facilitate a synchronized effort between departments but insisted that was only in the case of a specific teacher who "was interested in doing that." One other specific moment of collaboration was a shared unit between science and history. Albeit positively reflected upon by teacher B, it had only been done once: "When we did this, the kids were really interested. We [the teachers] were also more motivated to prepare interesting activities […] I think we should do these types of things more often, but the teachers don't make time to sit down with each other to plan them out because we have so much other stuff going on. It's a pity."

Teacher E says they "never" coordinate or collaborate with other teachers: "For me, it's healthy to collaborate with others but I feel like there is a lack of cooperation here in the school, we probably need someone to help us with coordination." For their part, teacher D says: "I've never cross-coordinated on anything."

When it comes to multi-professional teams and support, there is little evidence of it, as teacher E maintains: "I'm not aware of a real strong integration type plan. I haven't really heard of anything. I think we have some sort type of English support."

For their part, teacher C insists more support needs to be given to CLIL subjects, insinuating the school gives preferential treatment to the language classes: "More coordination, more importance given to [other] subjects and not just English, which seems to be the only focus [at this school]."

The support of a multi-professional team was unanimously agreed upon to be essential to teach CLIL classes, expressed by teacher F: "Without a doubt, there are specialized needs and even if you understand some of those needs, you need help to actually know what to do" or as teacher B says: "for knowing how to approach any issue." Teacher D notes: "Undeniably, that's [the support of multi-professional teams] like the most important part."

Likewise, majority of the teachers were not satisfied with the school's support system as a way to cater to diversity: teacher D says: "it has to be improved for sure." Regarding specific adaptation measures, teacher C says: "I think it would really help if the school psychologist, which I think this school has, was a bit more communicative about students and their needs and like what I need to be doing to help them." On the complete other side of the spectrum, the parental support at the school is positively viewed by all six teachers.

Teacher training regarding diversity measures in the classroom is desired by many of the teachers: Teacher D says: "It would be helpful to have some training to address diversity, mostly about techniques for, I don't know, scaffolding the diversity in class, like how to create materials, how to organize groups. Any kind of training to address it would be necessary."

Some of the teachers express their concern over lack of knowledge of catering to diversity and, correspondingly emphasize a need of more training in this field, such as teacher C: “I think I’m not addressing [diversity] properly.” Or teacher D: “I think I don’t really understand what is [attention to diversity], I would like to have more training in that area, to understand better what it is that I should be doing, because I am kind of just now like realizing that I am not doing anything related to [diversity].”

Other teacher training areas in need of bolstering are ICT skills, mainly for the purpose of material creation so as to be able to create more interesting, interactive activities as opposed to just fill-in-the-blank or multiple-choice worksheets”. For their part, teacher E says they wish they had more knowledge about: “student-centered teaching and the adaptation, if you think about it, if the goals are equal to learn the content and the language […] it would make sense to adapt the class in a way so that the students aren’t left behind but so that the high level higher achievers [sic] don’t think the class has been dumbed down, we need more adapted materials and cross-communication between classes, like tenses in English class.”

The cohort expresses a desire for more training in how to deal with FLs that are not English or Spanish, specifically, as previously mentioned, the particularly high percentage of students who hold Chinese as an L1, teacher B explains: “I see [my] two Chinese students try to organize information in English using google translator,” or “I sometimes speak in Spanish and English but for students who cannot even communicate anything to the teacher we the teachers have to take the first step and I need help with this.”

The classroom observations revealed the teachers did not have access to the language assistants, who were used only for supplemental conversation classes related to the subject of English. The large amount of reported contact and support of parents was reinforced during the direct observations, as both teachers, at the termination of the classes, said they had to email some parents regarding the behavior and work of several students in the class. They said this was a regular feature of their job, staying in touch with parents, although they did note that this support was unbalanced, and they were only in regular contact with some parents, while other parents they hardly ever or never communicated with.

VI. Limitations

This study was based on teacher perceptions of classroom practices in one context within Europe. This in itself provides a rather narrow outlook on the topic, also owning to the fact that some of the teachers in this study have very little teaching experience and the disparity that exists between the nationalities of the teachers and distinctions in regard to their educational backgrounds and professional development. Furthermore, this sample is also extremely limited in the fact that it only comprises of six teachers in one private school.

This particular set of stakeholders does not paint an entirely representative picture of the reality of teachers in Spain, mostly in regard to the FL competence, since three of the six are native-English speakers, and two of the three Spanish nationals have a C1 or higher English proficiency level. Undeniably, this sample is able to provide only a miniscule glimpse into the grassroots workings of CLIL in a private-school context.

VII. Conclusions

This article aimed to bring to light teachers’ perspectives in a specific CLIL context regarding measures that are being taken to cater to learner variance in a secondary school using three data collection points: questionnaires, interviews and lesson observations, with a view to round out the self-reported perceptions. This section will now examine the conclusions that have been drawn.

Linguistically, the findings show that the majority of the teachers are not engaging the students in both languages, but are using the L2 almost exclusively in the classroom and only use Spanish rarely or spontaneously, concurrent with findings by Siepmann et al. (2021). Moreover, it can be concluded that there is a wide disparity between CLIL implementation linguistically in this particular context when it comes to the native vs. non-native English-speaking teachers. However, heightened awareness of L2 variance in the students at the school, mainly due to the relatively high percentage of foreign and newcomer students, has led many of the teachers to implement diversity measures at their discretion.

As for methodology and groupings, this set of teachers does not believe they have enough training regarding diversity nor are they utilizing mixed-ability groupings routinely. While there is some heterogeneous grouping happening, it is almost exclusively used to support students linguistically. On a positive note, personalized and individualized attention is a core feature of these classes, as self-reported by the teachers and confirmed in the interviews and direct observations. Interestingly, these teachers perceive their CLIL lessons to be overwhelmingly student-based, however, student-centered methodologies are something they desire more training in, albeit an integral part of their classes. The entirety of the teachers report using project-based learning and say it forms the basis of their CLIL classrooms, confirmed by the classroom observations.

Teacher collaboration and support was one of the weakest areas noted in this particular study. The teachers are still working on their own, and do not report any significant or consistent collaboration with their coworkers. In that same vein, support systems in the form of guidance counselors, supplemental teachers, multi-tiered teams, or newcomer classes are reported to be nonexistent or unavailable. However, in complete juxtaposition to these deficiencies, parental support is one of the main pillars of this CLIL scheme, and the teachers are adamant that they are in contact with many of the parents on regular basis.

The general consensus is that the lack of coordination and guidelines for CLIL and diversity are heeding these teachers in their intent to attend to the diverse student population. Of special concern in this context is also the relatively high percentage of foreign students who do not speak English or Spanish, coupled with the native English-speaking teachers who have relatively low Spanish language proficiency. Notably, several factors have arisen as in need of addressing, mainly the lack of newcomer classes, training related to diversity, and teacher collaboration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express her sincerest gratitude to Dra. María Luisa Pérez-Cañado for all her guidance, words of encouragement, and support, as well as a deep appreciation for the teachers who dedicated their valuable time to participate in the study.

REFERENCES

[1] Bauer-Marschallinger, S., Dalton-Puffer, C., Heaney, H., Katzinger, L. and Smit, U. (2021). "CLIL for all? An Exploratory Study of Reported Pedagogical Practices in Austrian Secondary Schools", in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2021.1996533.

[2] Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). "Using thematic analysis in psychology", in *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3,* 2: 77-101. DOI: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

[3] Bruton, A. (2011). "Is CLIL so beneficial or just selective? Re-evaluating some of the research", in *System 39*, 4: 523-532.

[4] Casal, S. and P. Moore. (2009). "The Andalusian Bilingual Sections Scheme: Evaluation and Consultancy", in *International CLIL Research Journal,* 1, 2: 36-46.

[5] Casas-Pedrosa, A. V. and Rascón-Moreno, D. (2021). "Attention to diversity in bilingual education: Student and teacher perspectives in Spain", in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2021.1997902.

[6] Cenoz, J. (2015). "Content-based Instruction and Content and Language Integrated Learning: The Same or Different?", in *Language, Culture & Curriculum 28,* 1: 8–24.

[7] Cinganotto, L. (2016). CLIL In Italy: A general overview. *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning, 9,* 2: 374-400. DOI: 10.5294/laclil.2016.9.2.6

[8] Cioè-Peña, M. (2017). "The intersectional gap: how bilingual students in the United States are excluded from inclusion", in *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 21,* 9: 906-919.

[9] Coyle, D. (2010). "Foreword", In D. Lasagabaster & Y. Ruíz de Zarobe (Eds.), *CLIL in Spain: Implementation, results and teacher training,* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars: vii-viii.

[10] Eurydice. (2012). *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe.* Brussels: Eurydice.

[11] Fernández, R. & Halbach, A. (2011). "Analysing the Situation of Teachers in the Madrid Bilingual Project", In Y. Ruiz de Zarobe, J. M. Sierra, & Gallardo del Puerto (eds.), *Content and Foreign Language Integrated Learning. Contributions to Multilingualism in European Contexts.* Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 103-127.

[12] Fernández-Sanjurjo, J., Fernández-Costales, A., and Arias Blanco, J. M. (2017). "Analysing students' content-learning in science in LIL vs. non-CLIL programmes: Empirical evidence from Spain", in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 20*: 1-14.

[13] Grieve, A. M. & Haining, I. (2011). "Inclusive practice? Supporting isolated bilingual learners in a mainstream school", in *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15,* 3: 763-774.

[14] Halbach, A. (2008). "Bilingual Methodology in Primary Schools", in *Revista de Educación, 1*: 346: 455–466.

[15] INEE. National Institute of Educational Evaluation. (2016). *OECD Review of Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of Resource Use in Schools. Country Report* – Spain, Madrid.

[16] Lancaster, N. (2016). "Stakeholders perspectives on CLIL in a monolingual context", in *English Language Teaching, 9,* 2: 148-77.

[17] Lasagabaster, D. and Ruíz, Y. (eds.). (2010). *CLIL in Spain: Implementation, Results and Teacher Training.* Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

[18] Madrid, D. & Hughes, S. (eds.) (2011). *Studies in bilingual education*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

[19] Madrid, D. & Pérez-Cañado, M. L. (2018). "Innovations and challenges in attending to diversity through CLIL", in *Theory Into Practice, 57,* 3: 241-249.

[20] Martín-Pastor, E., & Durán-Martínez, R. (2019). "La inclusión educativa en los programas bilingües de educación primaria: un análisis documental", in *Revista Complutense De Educación, 30,* 2: 589-604. DOI: 10.5209/RCED.57871.

[21] Mehisto, P. & Asser, H. (2007). "Stakeholder perspectives: CLIL programme management in Estonia", in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 10,* 5: 683–701.

[22] Nikula, T., Dalton-Puffer, C. and Llinares, A. (2013). "CLIL classroom discourse: Research from Europe", in *Journal of Immersion and Content-Based Language Education, 1*: 70–100.

[23] Nunan, D. (1991). "Communicative Tasks and the Language Curriculum", in *TESOL Quarterly, 25,* 2: 279-295. DOI: 10.2307/3587464.

[24] Pena-Díaz, C. & Porto-Requejo, M. D. (2008). "Teacher Beliefs in a CLIL Education Project", in *Porta Linguarum, 10*: 151–161.

[25] Pérez-Cañado, M. L. (2016). "Are teachers ready for CLIL? Evidence from a European study", in *European Journal of Teacher Education. 39,* 2: 202-221. DOI: 1080/02619768.2016.1138104.

[26] Pérez-Cañado, M. L. (2021a). “Introduction”, in M. L. Pérez Cañado (ed.), *Content and language integrated learning in monolingual settings: New insights from the Spanish context*. Springer: Multilingual Education, 1-8. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-68329-0_3.
[27] Pérez-Cañado, M. L. (2021b). “Inclusion and diversity in bilingual education: A European comparative study”, in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2021.2013770.
[28] Pérez-Cañado, M. L., Coyle, D., Ting T., Nikula, T., Dalton-Puffer, C., Matz, F., Jerez-Montoya T., et al. (2019). *ADiBE Project. CLIL for All: Attention to Diversity in Bilingual Education.* Accessed March 2021. Available one: https://adibeproject.com/.
[29] Pérez-Cañado, M. L, Rascón-Moreno, D., and Cueva-López, V. (2021). Identifying difficulties and best practices in catering to diversity in CLIL: Instrument design and validation”, in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*: 1-9. DOI: 10.1080.13670050.2021.1988050.
[30] Roiha, A. S. (2014). “Teachers’ views on differentiation in content and language integrated learning (CLIL): Perceptions, practices and challenges”, in *Languages and Education*, *28,* 1: 1-18.
[31] Ruíz, Y. and Lasagabaster. (2010). “Introduction. The emergence of CLIL in Spain: An educational challenge”, In D. Lasagabaster & Y. Ruíz (Eds.), *CLIL in Spain: Implementation, Results and Teacher Training*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, ix-xvii.
[32] Scanlan, M. (2011). “Inclusión: How school leaders can accent inclusion for bilingual students, families and communities”, in *Multicultural Education*, *18,* 2: 5-9.
[33] Siepmann, P., Rumlich, D., Matz, F. and Römhild, R. (2021). “Attention to diversity in German CLIL classrooms: multi-perspective research on students’ and teachers’ perceptions”, in *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism.* DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2021.1981821.
[34] Somers, T. (2017). “Content and Language Integrated Learning and the inclusion of immigrant minority language students: A research review”, in *International Review of Education*, *63,* 4: 495-520.

Grace H. McClintic is from the United States (Washington, D.C.). She graduated from the University of South Carolina in 2012 with a B.A. in Public Relations and a minor in Spanish. She holds an M.A. in Secondary Teaching and another in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language, both from the University of Jaén. At the moment, she is finishing her doctoral studies at the same institution in the department of Languages and Cultures, under the mentorship of the highly distinguished and celebrated Doctor Maria Luisa Pérez-Cañado.

She currently teaches Geography and History in a high school in Cádiz, and has also been involved in many charities throughout the years, including The Ronald McDonald House Charity; Children’s Chance; Meals on Wheels; and the Salvation Army. Her interests are attention to diversity in marginalized populations and innovative bilingual education methodologies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 908-915, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.02

The Speech Act of Promising in Political Speeches: A Case Study of Obama's Speeches

Dorinë Rakaj
Department of English Language and Literature, University ''Ukshin Hoti'' Prizren, Kosovo

***Abstract*—This study tried to present a pragmatic analysis of the act of promising made by Barack Obama during the presidential campaigns of 2008 and 2012. It utilized a qualitative approach and the data were collected through speeches. However, this study also employed a quantitative method to calculate and present the frequency of promising utterances and performative verbs and their percentages. The researcher used Searle's taxonomy to analyze Obama's speeches. The findings showed that assuring, confirming, and reconfirming were the most frequent intentions of the speaker's speeches during the two election campaigns. Further analysis revealed that Obama used the performative verb ''promise'' in 7 samples. Moreover, the study showed that the speaker used the modal verb ''will'' and the form ''be going to + infinitive'' as ways of promising instead of the performative verb ''promise.'' Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that further studies should be conducted in other contexts to obtain more comprehensive data regarding the act of promising.**

***Index Terms*—commissive, campaigns, promise, performative, speech acts**

I. Introduction

Promises are an integral part of the theory of speech acts in the field of pragmatics. The act of promising is an area of research which has received a lot of attention not only from linguists, but also from philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists. Very little research has been conducted in Kosovo in the field of speech acts, particularly on the topic of promising utterances. Politics cannot be conducted without language, which is known to be a powerful tool of communication for politicians to convey their ideas and to persuade their audience. Therefore, promises are unavoidable; especially during election campaigns when politicians show their character, individuality, responsibility, and other virtues. This study tried to present a pragmatic analysis of the act of promising made by Barack Obama during the two election campaigns in 2008 and 2012. It was guided by three research questions (RQs):

RQ1. What are the intentions of the promising utterances in Obama's speeches in 2008?
RQ2. What are the intentions of the promising utterances in Obama's speeches in 2012?
RQ3. Do all utterances made by Obama contain the performative verb ''promise''?

II. Literature Review

A. Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory has become one of the most important topics in the field of pragmatics as well as linguistics. The founder of the theory of speech acts is often considered to be the philosopher John Austin (1962), with his work *How to Do Things with Words.* Speeches play an important role in our daily life, especially in politics, when politicians want to attract the audience with their expressions. What does the word ''speech'' mean? According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (n.d.), the word speech is defined as ''a talk, especially a formal one about a particular subject, given to a group of people.'' Similarly, Oxford Dictionary (n.d.) defines speech as ''the ability to talk, the activity of talking, or a piece of spoken language.''

But what is a speech act? Yule (1996, p. 47) defined speech acts as ''actions performed via utterances.'' Thus, through their communicative utterances, speakers convey requests, pledges, promises, etc. Hence, the idea drawn based on Yule's definitions is that the speech act is the procedure of performing different actions while uttering words. Austin is known for the classification of speech acts; therefore, all later studies made by other scholars are based on his classification. When the speaker produces an utterance, he uses three acts, and according to Levinson (1983, p.236), "Austin isolates three basic senses or dimensions in which saying something one is doing something." The three dimensions of a speech act are as follows:

1) locutionary act
2) illocutionary act
3) perlocutionary act

These three elements or levels have great importance and, according to Yule (1996), the locutionary act produces a meaningful linguistic expression. Lodge et al. (1997, p.168) claimed that ‘‘the locutionary act is the act of actually producing an utterance with specific references and meaning.’’

Another important issue related to speech acts is that people do not produce utterances without purpose. So, the second element is known as the illocutionary act. Yule (1996) claimed that the illocutionary act is performed via the communication force of an utterance. According to Lodge et al. (1997, p.168), ‘‘the illocutionary act is the act of making a promise, a threat, even a statement, by virtue of producing an utterance.’’ Many linguists put emphasis on the social conventions as important factors of any utterance. Hurford et al. (2007, p.273) added that ‘‘the illocutionary act carried out by a speaker making an utterance is the act viewed in terms of the utterance’s significance within a conventional system of social interaction. One way to think about the illocutionary act is that it reflects the intention of the speaker in making the utterance in the first place.’’

The third element or the perlocutionary act deals with the effect of utterances upon the listener. Speakers do not make utterances without intending them to have an effect (Yule, 1996). In line with this, Lodge et al. (1997, p.168) added that ‘‘the perlocutionary act is the act of producing an effect on the addressees by producing an utterance.’’ Further, perlocutionary effect has more importance because it tells us more about why people use a particular speech act (Mey, 2001). Hurford et al. (2007, p.271) claimed that ‘‘the perlocutionary act carried out by a speaker making an utterance is the act of causing a certain effect on the hearer and others.’’

Another viewpoint is from Sadock. He discussed the role of communication when it comes to the difference between illocution and perlocution. Sadock (1974, p.8) stated that illocutionary acts are ‘‘acts that are performed in order to communicate,’’ whereas perlocutionary acts are ‘‘the by-products of acts of communication.’’ In conclusion: locution deals with the uttered words, illocution with the intention of the utterance, and perlocution concerns the effect of the utterance.

B. IFIDs (Illocutionary Force Indicating Device)

How can the illocutionary force be recognized? Two important issues related to speech acts, for indicating the illocutionary force are IFIDs - illocutionary force indicating devices and felicity conditions. The illocutionary force indicating device or IFID is ‘‘an expression that focuses on verbs that explicitly names the illocutionary act being performed (Yule, 1996, p.49). Such a verb can be called a performative verb (Vp).’’ e.g. I (Vp) you that......

Furthermore, there are other devices that can be taken into consideration to identify the illocutionary force of an utterance, such as word order, mood, stress, punctuation, intonation contour, performative verbs, context, and the role of the speaker (Yule, 1996). Finally, there are some specific conditions that should be satisfied to perform a speech act correctly, known as the felicity conditions.

It was Austin who introduced the notion of performatives. According to Austin (1962, p. 6), ‘‘the name performative is derived from ‘‘perform,’’ the usual verb with the noun ‘‘action;’’ it indicates that the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action– it is not normally thought of as just saying something.’’ So, according to Austin, a person is not only saying something, but he is also doing something. Performatives stand for an utterance that creates an act which is described by the verb (The Free Dictionary, n.d.). Levinson (1983, p. 244) claimed that “the structure is: “I (hereby) Vp you (that) S’, where V is a performative sentence while S’ is a complement sentence.” Based on Yule’s book, the subject must be in the first person singular ‘‘I’’ followed by the adverb ‘‘hereby,’’ and the utterance should be in the present simple tense. Austin distinguished two types of performatives, implicit and explicit (as cited in Yule, 1996, p. 52).

e.g. a. ***The work was done by Elaine and myself.***

b. ***I hereby tell you that the work was done by Elaine and myself.***

Thus, based on Yule’s comments, example (b) is used by the speaker as an explicit performative, whereas (a) is an implicit performative, sometimes called a primary performative. Implicit and explicit performatives are not equivalent. Yule (1995, p.52) stated that uttering the explicit performative version of a command has ‘‘much more serious impact than uttering the implicit version.’’ Palmer (1976) claimed that implicit performatives do not have expressions that name the act, whereas explicit performatives contain expressions that name the act explicitly performed.

How can performative verbs be identified? Vanderveken listed 270 performative verbs according to their illocutionary point, however, many speech act verbs have several uses and can name different illocutionary forces, e.g. one can swear that a proposition is true or one can swear that one will perform some future deed (as cited in Briggs, 2001, p. 99). On the other hand, Briggs (2003, p. 28) added that ‘‘all speech acts are performative, but some are more performative than others.’’ Further, he claimed that it is helpful to consider illocutionary acts ranging from strong to weak. Every utterance is a weak illocutionary act; while strong illocutionary utterances hold more power comparatively. Moreover, there are cases where the performative verb is not present, but there are other forms of verbs which help the hearer to identify whether the utterance is a form of promising or not. Similarly, Mey (2001) stated that there are cases where promises are given without the verb ‘‘promise.’’ Furthermore, some linguists are concerned with what the utterance describes. According to Hurford et al. (2007, p. 263), *‘‘I promise to repay you tomorrow’’* is performative because in saying it the speaker actually does what the utterance describes, e.g. he promises to repay the hearer the next day. That is, the utterance both describes and is a ‘‘promise.’’ But, if the verb is changed into the past simple tense, then the conventions of the speech act theory are violated; thus the utterance should be in the present simple tense.

C. Felicity Conditions on the Act of Promising

As previously mentioned, there are some conditions that must be fulfilled for a speech act to be felicitous. What are the conditions that must be fulfilled for a speech act of promising to achieve its goal? There are cases when linguists do not focus on the truth or falsehood of promises because their target is the person. According to Lodge et al. (1997, p.167), ‘‘now, with promises, the question of truth or falsehood is not really important.’’ The following conditions must be fulfilled for the act of promising (Lodge et al., 1997, p. 167):

1. First, the person making the promise must be in a position to carry it out.
2. Secondly, that person must also be sincere in making the promise. Producing utterances with a rather ironical tone, referring to part of a course which is renowned as difficult and dry, would clearly not constitute that promise.
3. The promise must be equally acknowledged as such by those involved in the interaction.

Searle developed some conditions what are known as the ‘‘Searlean conditions,’’ but as mentioned above, Yule refined his classification into general, content, preparatory, sincerity, and essential conditions. According to Yule (1996, p.50), these are specifics for each condition:

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF THE FELICITY CONDITIONS ON THE ACT OF PROMISING

FELICITY CONDITIONS	
General conditions	Participants understand the language being
Content condition	used The speaker’s utterance must be a future action
Preparatory condition	The hearer wants the speaker to carry the promised act
Sincerity condition	The speaker intends to do the promised act
Essential condition	The speaker undertakes to do the promised act

D. What Is It That Counts as a ‘‘Promise?’’

Some scholars put emphasis on the circumstances, the context, the people who promise, the situation, and the setting as important elements to count an utterance as a promise. According to Mey (2001, p. 97), ‘‘all depends on the circumstances of the promises: in some cases, we pay attention to the people who promise, rather than to their exact words, while in other contexts, we focus on the social frame in which the promise is given.’’ Similarly, Shopen (2007, p. 277) claimed that ‘‘the precise speech act performed by an utterance is the result of an interaction between these properties and various contextual factors, such as the social situation, the current state of an interaction, and the background knowledge of the speaker and hearer.’’ It should be noted that there are many ways to interpret whether or not an utterance is a promise; however, it is often the context that determines the meaning of an utterance.

Griffiths (2006) also stated that it depends on the context when we want to count an utterance as a promise, and that the same utterance can have more than one meaning. He gives the example as *“I promise to be there,”* which could be considered a threat rather than a promise if the addressee would be intimidated by the speaker’s presence in the place referred to, and so on. It is also worth saying that Geis discussed the role of the interaction between the *H* and *S*, and suggested (1996, p. 5), ‘‘promises are normally uttered in contexts in which the promisor believes that the addressee has some need or desire that she wishes the promisor specifically to satisfy.’’ Whereas, Vanhoozer (2005, p. 64) claimed that the propositional content of the utterance does not make it a promise; an utterance becomes a promise only when an agent uses words to commit herself or himself to a course of future action. To summarize, there are many social and psychological factors that may help the hearer to decode the hidden meaning of any utterance.

E. Previous Studies on the Act of Promising

One of the more general existing studies was conducted by Suwandi (2013) with her research “A pragmatic analysis of promising utterances in Barack Obama speeches.” The researcher focused on the pragmalinguistic forms of promising utterance, and identified illocutionary acts of promising utterances. Suwandi analyzed five selected speeches delivered by Barack Obama. The researcher found 36 instances of the constative form (92%) and 3 instances for the performative form of promising utterance (8%). Further analysis showed intentions such as reconfirming (3%), influencing (3%), offering (5%), assuring (43%), and affirming (46%).

Rahayu (2009) conducted a qualitative study entitled “A socio-pragmatic analysis of promising utterance in Barack Obama campaign speeches.” The intentions of promising utterances were shown to be in the categories of giving a response, stating purpose, assuring, persuading, describing, inviting, and requesting. Attention, regret, cooperation, responsibility, relationship, mercy, affection, and prestige were the reasons of for these promising utterances.

Furthermore, Pudjilestari’s (2012) “Promising utterances in some manuscripts” showed that there are three kinds of sentences, including declarative sentences, imperative sentences, and interrogative sentences. There were five intentions for a speaker to make an utterance --command, assure, request, affirm, describe--and there were eight reasons of the speaker--responsibility, hope, anger, relationship, affection, teasing, attention, and misunderstanding.

Some scholars have analyzed the act of promising from different perspectives. One of them was Inge Egner (2002) with the study entitled “The speech act of promising in an intercultural perspective.” He studied the speech act of promising used by Africans and Westerners. Egner found out that the African way of promising differs from the Western one. He claimed that for ‘‘an African speaker, just stating an intention to perform an act in the hearer's favour does not yet imply commitment or even presuppose the ability to carry out the fact’’ (Egner, 2002, p.10).

All the previous studies have similarities and differences. The similarity is that all studies focus on the act of promising. But the researchers used different data. For example, Pudjilestari conducted research about promises in some movie manuscripts, whereas Suwandi conducted research on promising utterances in political speeches, but the data of her research was focused on only five speeches made by Obama. Therefore, from all the previous studies, this study analyzed promising utterances in two election campaigns made by Obama, including the intentions and performative verbs.

III. Research Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive qualitative method because the researcher wanted to find out how the act of promising is used in political discourse and what effects it may have on the audience. However, this study also employed a quantitative method to calculate and present the frequency of intentions and performative verbs. The data for the study were collected from the transcriptions of speeches delivered by Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. The full texts or the transcriptions of the speeches were downloaded from the website of The American Presidency Project (ucsb.edu), and YouTube videos.

A. Data Collection

The promising utterances were divided into two groups. The first group included promising utterances taken from Obama’s election campaign in 2008, whereas the second group covered promises from the 2012 election campaign. Each group consisted of 10 samples. The procedure of data collection for the study was as follows:

1. Selecting speeches from Barack Obama’s election campaigns in 2008 and 2012;
2. Reading the transcripts of selected speeches;
4. Selecting the utterances – focusing on commissive utterances;
5. Identifying the promising utterances;
6. Categorizing the utterances based on their intention;
7. Describing the performative verbs;
9. Analyzing the utterances based on Searle’s theory of speech acts.

B. Data Analysis

For the purpose of data analysis, Searle’s classification of speech acts was used as a framework to analyze the act of promising. The locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts of promising utterances made by Barack Obama were investigated in the first phase of the analysis. Secondly, the focus was on the intentions of Obama’s utterances in 2008 and 2012. Finally, the last phase analyzed performative verbs and other forms of verbs as ways of promising.

IV. Results

This section shows the findings collected from the presidential campaigns in 2008 and 2012. Table 2 shows utterances from the 2008 election campaign, and Table 3 shows utterances delivered by Obama during the 2012 election campaign.

TABLE 2
OBAMA'S 2008 PROMISES

Sample 1: **Locutionary act:** *I **promise** you we will win and you and I together will change this country and change the world. There is nothing we cannot do.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – assuring* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 2: **Locutionary act:** *I will make our government more open and transparent. No more secrecy, that is a commitment I am making to you as a president.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – assuring* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Responsibility*
Sample 3: **Locutionary:** *I believe in the Constitution and I will obey the Constitution of the United States. We are not going to use signing statements as a way of doing an end-run around Congress.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive (promising) – affirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 4: **Locutionary:** *I will **promise** you this, that if we have not gotten our troops out by the time I am president, it is the first thing I will do. I will get our troops home. We will bring an end to this war. You can take that to the bank.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – confirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination and hopefulness*
Sample 5: **Locutionary:** *I **promise** you that if you give me the extraordinary honor of serving as your president, I will work every single day, tirelessly, on your behalf and on the behalf of the future of our children.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – showing aims* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Hopefulness and encouragement*
Sample 6: **Locutionary:** *When I am in the White House, I will put on a comfortable pair of shoes myself, I will walk on that picket line with you as President of the United States of America because workers deserve to know that somebody is standing in their corner.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – inspiring* **Perlocutionary effect**: *Hopefulness*
Sample 7: **Locutionary:** *The first thing I would do as President is- sign the Freedom of Choice Act.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – confirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination and hopefulness*
Sample 8: **Locutionary:** *I will end this war in Iraq responsibly…* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising)- assuring* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 9: **Locutionary:** *I'll invest in early childhood education.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – confirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 10: **Locutionary:** *And -- and as someone who watched my mother argue with insurance companies while she lay in bed dying of cancer, I will make certain those companies stop discriminating against those who are sick and need care the most.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – reconfirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*

Table 2 shows the most dominant intentions performed by Barack Obama in the 2008 election campaign. Obama used reconfirming 1 (20%), confirming 3 (30%), assuring 3 (30%), inspiring 1 (10%), showing aims 1 (10%), and affirming 1 (1%). Further results showed that Obama used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ three times in 10 samples. He used ‘‘will’’ and the form ‘‘be going to+ infinitive’’ as ways of promising.

TABLE 3
OBAMA'S 2012 PROMISES

Sample 1: **Locutionary act:** *I **promise** you, you will continue to have a President who hears your voices, a President who fights for your families, a President who spends every waking hour trying to figure out how I can make sure that your lives are a little bit better and, more importantly, that all of our children's lives are a whole lot brighter.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – guaranteeing* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Inspiration and determination*
Sample 2: **Locutionary act:** *I believe we can seize this future together because we are not as divided as our politics suggests. We are not as cynical as the pundits believe. We are greater than the sum of our individual ambitions, and we remain more than a collection of red states and blue states. We are and forever will be the United States of America. And together with your help and God's grace we will continue our journey forward … and remind the world just why it is that we live in the greatest nation on Earth. Thank you, America. God bless you. God bless these United States.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – reconfirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Inspiration and hopefulness*
Sample 3: **Locutionary act:** *We may not get there in one year or even in one term. But, America, I have never been more hopeful than I am tonight that we will get there. I **promise** you, we as a people will get there. Yes, we can ... and those who tell us that we cannot, we will respond with that timeless creed that sums up the spirit of a people. Yes, we can.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – inviting* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Hopefulness and encouragement*
Sample 4: **Locutionary act:** *I will work with anybody of, any party, to move this country forward. And if you want to break the gridlock in Congress, you will vote for leaders who feel the same way -- whether they are Democrats, Republicans, Independents -- Tom and Christie Vilsack, and Tom Harkin, and Leonard Boswell and Bruce Braley, and my great friends, Tom Miller and Mike Fitzgerald.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – reconfirming* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Inspiration and hopefulness*
Sample 5: **Locutionary act:** *I will never turn Medicare into a voucher system. No American should have to spend their golden years at the mercy of insurance companies. They should retire with the dignity and the respect and the care that they have earned.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – assuring* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 6: **Locutionary act:** *Now, four years ago when I stood on this stage I said that I would cut taxes for middle-class families. And that's exactly what I did. We cut taxes for middle-class families by about $3,600. And the reason is because I believe we do best when the middle class is doing well. We do have to lower the cost of health care. Not just in Medicare and -- and overall.* *But I also believe that government has the capacity -- the federal government has the capacity to help open up opportunity and create ladders of opportunity and to create frameworks where the American people can succeed. But I also on behalf of the American people and the middle class and all those who are striving to get in the middle class. I have kept that promise and if you will vote for me, then I **promise** I will fight just as hard in a second term.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – inviting* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Hopefulness and encouragement*
Sample 7: **Locutionary act:** *As long as I am Commander in Chief, I will pursue our enemies with the strongest military the world has ever known. But it is time to use the savings from ending the war in Iraq, from transitioning out of Afghanistan, to pay down our debt, rebuild America, put people back to work repairing roads, making our schools state of the art, hiring our veterans, because if you fought for this country, you should not have to fight for a job when you come home. That is my commitment. That is what is at stake in this election.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – persuading* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Hopefulness and determination*
Sample 8: **Locutionary act:** *But to the issue of Iran as long as I am president of the United States, Iran will not get a nuclear weapon.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – assuring* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Determination*
Sample 9: **Locutionary act:** *So if you are willing to stand with me and work with me and knock on some doors with me and make some phone calls with me I **promise** you we will finish what we started in 2008, and we will remind the world just why it is that is the greatest nation on Earth.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – guaranteeing* **Perlocutionary effect:** *Inspiration and hopefulness*
Sample 10: **Locutionary act:** *We'll improve any aspect of [the healthcare] law, and any recommendations and suggestions that those who actually know the health care system and aren't just playing politics put forward. But we're going to implement [the Affordable Care Act] and America is going to be better for it.* **Illocutionary act:** *Commissive act (promising) – assuring*

Perlocutionary effect: *Determination and hopefulness*

Table 3 shows the most dominant intentions performed by Barack Obama in the 2012 election campaign. The results showed that Obama used guaranteeing 1 (10%), reconfirming 3 (30%), inviting 2 (20%), assuring 3 (30%), and persuading 1 (10%). Obama used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ in four samples. Again, he used ‘‘will’’ and the form ‘‘be going to+ infinitive’’ as ways of promising.

V. Discussion

It was sometimes difficult to decide for the intentions of the speaker in the selected samples. According to Palmer (1976), it is sometimes the case that ‘‘even the speaker may not have a clear idea of his intentions.’’ The context of the situation has its role in interpreting the pragmatic aspects of speech acts employed in promising utterances because it is an essential factor in revealing the intended messages said by the speaker. According to Yule (1996, p.21), ‘‘the physical environment or context has a powerful impact on how referring expressions are to be interpreted.’’ Therefore, context, intonation, short pauses, and breaths helped the researcher to analyze Obama’s utterances.

Regarding the first research question, the results of the present study indicated that the speaker used assuring, confirming, reconfirming, affirming, inspiring, and showing the aim. The perlocutionary effects seemed to be almost the same; therefore, the study revealed determination and hopefulness as effects of his utterances.

Regarding the second research questions in 2012, the speaker used reconfirming, guaranteeing, inviting, assuring, and persuading as his intentions, perhaps because he wanted to sound more prestigious than his opponent, Governor Romney. Inspiration, determination, and hopefulness seemed to be the perlocutionary effects of his utterances. The findings of this study are consistent with those of previous studies conducted by Suwandi (2013) and Rayahu (2009).

Regarding the third research question, both in 2008 and 2012, Obama used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ in 7 samples. The speaker used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ more in the 2012 samples. The study found four samples where the speaker used the performative verb ‘‘promise.’’ He used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ because he believed himself to be a better prepared and dedicated candidate than his opponents in both election campaigns. Also, he used the modal verb ‘‘will’’ and the form ‘‘be going to + infinitive’’ as ways of promising instead of the performative verb “promise.” In line with this, according to Palmer (1976), people can promise without using the verb promise. According to Greenbaum et al. (1985), the modal verb ‘‘will’’ is used with future meaning; then the form ‘‘be going to + infinitive’’ can be used to express future fulfillment of present intention.

VI. Conclusions

The study showed that Obama used confirming, reconfirming, guaranteeing, and assuring as intentions during his two election campaigns in 2008 and 2012. His intentions were almost the same in both election campaigns. Hopefulness, determination, and inspiration appeared to be the most frequent perlocutionary effects of the promising utterances in both election campaigns. The speaker used the performative verb ‘‘promise’’ in 7 samples. Further analysis showed that the speaker frequently used the modal verb ‘‘will’’ and the form ‘‘be going to + infinitive’’ as ways of promising. However, the other forms of verbs did not decrease the force of his utterances. He seemed to be equal in both campaigns when it comes to implicit and explicit performatives.

A. Limitations of the Study

The focus of this study was on the promising utterances delivered by the former President of the United States, Barack Obama, during his two election campaigns in 2008 and 2012. The researcher faced some unavoidable limitations. Firstly, the research was conducted on a small number of samples; in order to generalize the results of findings, the study would have benefitted from more speeches, including those of other politicians. Secondly, the study did not discuss all types of illocutionary acts. Ultimately, the researcher did not attempt to analyze whether Obama fulfilled the felicity conditions in both election campaigns. However, the present analysis provided sufficient information about the commissive utterances – that is, promises, made by Barack Obama.

B. Recommendations for Further Studies

Firstly, future studies might investigate promising utterances made by American and Albanian politicians. Secondly, another way to study promises could be the frequency of promising expressions among different cultures. Finally, further research may explore the use of other speech acts not only in political contexts but in other contexts as well.

References

[1] Austin, L. J. (1962). *How to do things with words, The William James Lectures delivered at Harward University in 1955.* London: Oxford at the Clarendon Press.
[2] Briggs, R. (2003). Getting Involved. *Anvil, 20* (1), 25-34
[3] Egner, I. (2002). *The speech act of promising in an intercultural perspective.* SIL International.
[4] Geis, L. M. (1996). *Speech acts and conversational interaction.* Cambridge University Press.

[5] Griffiths, P. (2006). *An introduction to English semantics and pragmatics.* Edinburgh University Press.
[6] Hurford, J. R., Heasley, B., & Smith, M. B. (2007). *Semantics: A Coursebook.* Cambridge University Press.
[7] Levinson, S. (1983). *Pragmatics.* Cambridge University Press.
[8] Lodge, R., Shelton, J., Ellis, Y., & Armstrong, N. (1997). *Exploring the French language.* Cambridge University Press.
[9] Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online. (n.d.). *Speech.* Retrieved May 5, 2022, from https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/speech
[10] Mey, J. (2001). *Pragmatics: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.
[11] Oxford Dictionary. (n.d.). *Speech.* Retrieved May 5, 2022 from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/speech
[12] Pudjilestari, H. (2012). *A socio- pragmatics analysis on promising utterance in some movie manuscripts.* [Unpublished Research Paper]. Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.
[13] Rahayu, S. (2009). *A socio-pragmatic analysis of promising utterance in Barack Obama campaign speeches.* Unpublished Research Paper. Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta
[14] Sadock, M. J. (1974). *Toward a linguistic theory of speech acts.* Academic Press.
[15] Searle, J. V. (1985). *Foundations of illocutionary logic.* Cambridge University Press.
[16] Shopen, T. (Ed.). (2007). *Language Typology and Syntactic Description* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[17] Suwandi, W. (2013). *A pragmatics analysis of promising utterances in Barack Obama speeches.* [Unpublished Research Paper]. Surakarta: Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.
[18] The Free Dictionary. (n.d.). *Performatives.* Retrieved May 6, 2022 from https://www.thefreedictionary.com/performatives
[19] Vanderveken, D., & Kubo, S. (2001). *Essays in speech act theory.* John Benjamins Publishing.
[20] Vanhoozer, J. K. (2005). *The drama doctrine: A canonical-linguistic approach to christian theology.* Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville: Cambridge University Press.
[21] Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics.* Cambridge University Press.

Dorinë Rakaj is a teaching assistant in the Department of English Language and Literature at the University ‘‘Ukshin Hoti’’ Prizren, Kosovo. Her research interests include applied linguistics, pragmatics, and morphology. She has published in many international journals.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 916-924, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.03

Creative Ways of Enhancing Foreign Language Linguistic and Cultural Skills for the Students of Economics

Manjola Lumani Zaçellari
Department of Albanian Language, University of Durrës, Albania

Lediana Beshaj
Department of Law, Wisdom College University, Tirana, Albania

***Abstract*—This study aims to bring to attention the importance of providing creative ideas on how to enhance the foreign language linguistic skills especially for the student of economics, expanding intercultural awareness and knowledge in business and some tailored made exercises which would come to help in this specific study program. Albanian people who speak English are increasing day by day, but most of them show deficiency in their English when it comes to using it in their profession, in regard to their area of expertise. Most of the Albanians learn English at school, then at university level they learn English for specific purpose. Therefore, the universities must make an effort into providing the students with the right textbook (from all the available ones existing in the market), to be used in their tertiary level of studies. This would facilitate the learning process for the students because they will learn and expand their vocabulary in the area they are actually majoring in. Adopting and by making use of the right book, it will enable and promote the use of creative ideas. Technology and multilingualism are ruling over and in the context of a globalized world, specialized languages flourish at an extremely fast pace, and creativity becomes a necessary instrument in the ESP classroom. In Albania, almost all the study programs have English as a mandatory course for the whole academic year and most of the universities offer it in the first and second year of Bachelor level.**

***Index Terms*—linguistic skills, enhance, culture, language, creative ways**

I. Introduction

Language is our primary source of communication. It is the method through which we share our ideas and thoughts with others. Foreign or Second Language Acquisition has come a long way from the conventional classroom where the teacher dictated grammar rules to the learners and required of them to master the art of translation as the one and only means of learning the target language. In modern times, “communication rather than mastery of grammar rules has taken the centre stage in the EFL” (Makrami et al., 2020, p. 41).

Currently, English is the primary language not only of the states affected by British imperialism, but of many business and cultural spheres dominated by these states. As such, it is a necessary language to learn. In many countries, children are taught and encouraged to learn English as a second language, while the acquisition of this language by university students is imperative if we want young people capable of responding to the challenges of the time.

Nowadays, the growing importance of the English language is evident, not just because it is a must in today’s academic achievements, but also for its pragmatic aspect in one’s life. Economy is the indicator that shows a country’s power, status and development. For Albania, which is a developing country, and is making huge efforts to increase the economy by having many international businesses invest in Albania, the learning of English is a market demand. In the current situation, Albania is offering many facilities and easy procedures to attract foreign investors and businesses. Foreign companies need people who know English because they do not know Albanian. Most of the businesses and particularly those international ones in Albania demand the proof/certification of the English Language. The level required is B1 or B2 and most of the universities offer English as a foreign language, due to its use as a lingua franca.

Students learn English because it is essential if one wants to be able to participate and compete in a globalised labour market, especially the students who graduate in business management and economics who will also face many situations of doing business with foreigners. Foreign language knowledge and skills represent a form of human assets that can be rewarded in the labour market. In addition, one cannot deny the fact that English is the language of the world trade and not only, but also of politics, international relations, tourism, etc. Therefore, the students who study economics must master the English language because in doing business, both parties involved have to interact by using a common language and avoid the misunderstanding that can emerge. Thus, “Business” is the title of the book used as ESP at Wisdom University College and it is part of the curricula for the bachelor study program in Economics (Business Management and Finance and Banking). Lesiak-Bielawska (2015, p. 1) state that “the whole course of the ESP, its content and objectives are based on the specific needs of target learners”. Good command of English means the mastering of the four basic skills and in ESP the four basic skills are also learnt, but in a traditional way. So, there must be creative ways of teaching English as a foreign language in order to make the learner more motivated and enjoy the course. It must be emphasized that the method which the teacher will use must be carefully selected in order to have all the four skills, field-oriented and a method (book) which leaves space for creative teaching and learning, so that the student, in our case the students of the economic study program are faced to authentic materials, real life situation, native speakers listening materials, business appropriate language, etc. The focus must be on lexis and chunks of language, rather than words. Extra materials selected by the lecturer must also transmit intercultural awareness not only regarding the culture of the foreign language, but also regarding the culture in that specific study program that the students are following, which might be business administration, finance and banking. Culture-specific features, embedding the reality of everyday business talk of real people must be carefully chosen. The selection regarding the method to be used during the course and the methodology used depend on the lecturer. Both must help students acquire the foreign language taught in the easiest way possible, but also use it in the business communication. The way the students are exposed to such selected texts containing business terminology really makes the difference. The students will successfully accomplish their goals in the learning and will be able to use the right vocabulary in the business field. However, behind a certain language, it is a certain culture and the interaction between people is well established when appropriate language is used, following not only the rules and regulations, but also the cultural mindsets of the people involved in the conversation. Achieving a successful communication means that both participants in the conversation are aware of the one another expectations.

English is recognized as undoubtedly the most important language to learn for the increasingly mobile international community, and it has now become the official language of the business and scientific world (Schütz, 2005).

While conducting research on “creative ways of enhancing foreign language skills for the students of economics”, it deserves a mention that Europe mostly paid much attention to the foreign language linguistic skills for those students who studied economics, and for that reason it is stated in the book of Mautner and Rainer (2017), that the teaching of a foreign language has an impact since from the beginning. By beginning it is meant after the First World War. It is also interesting to know that there were specific colleges named “Higher Commercial Colleges” in Germany, Netherland, Austria, Switzerland, etc., which apart from teaching business subjects as mandatory ones, they would also offer foreign language classes. However, there were some controversies in that time, whether the lecturer who would teach foreign language had to be graduated in Linguistics or in Economics. It is true that the jargon used in a specific field is better mastered by the expert on the field, but however the proper use of it, is highly assessed by the linguists.

Lecturers of the economy highlight the necessity of teaching the terminology, whereas the linguists stress the need of making use of the everyday English in a business context. Doyle (2012, p. 107) proposes “designating as Business Language Studies (BLS) a curriculum consisting of business + language + culture because of lingering doubts regarding the legitimacy of business language (BL) in terms of theory, intellectual foundations, that is, as an unobjectionable field of inquiry, research, and publication”. This is the reason why there must be foreign language departments in each Faculty in Albania. Tirana University has 7 faculties and no faculty has a department of foreign languages. It would be more effective if the faculty had a foreign language department and invest somehow in the development of the foreign language lecturers’ skills, because as it has been mentioned earlier, the lecturer of a foreign language in ESP must also learn the jargon of that specific area, in this case that of the business and economy. The lecturers in Albania are free to choose the method to use in ESP. At Wisdom University College it is used a method titled “The Business” with interactive workbook, which incorporates sections of business dilemmas and & videos, published by Macmillan. It is a well-organized method, which provides reading business texts loaded with new business vocabulary and exercises, which are relevant to the students’ study program and their area of expertise. Using authentic materials selected from scientific texts and journals in the field of business, enables students improve their basic skills. This textbook provides sufficient material for a language class and many exercises.

In addition, it must be emphasized that the importance of the ESP is undisputable, the methods are way too vital for the successful ongoing of the teaching and learning process, but teaching in a creative way is better and more effective. Creative ways are used during the academic year 2019 – 2020 and a questionnaire was delivered to the students to see the impact that the creative ways have had on students.

II. Literature Review

Learning a foreign language is one of the demands in the global economy. Research in the field has shown that mastering foreign languages makes possible to have more job opportunities and higher salaries (Araújo et al., 2015; Saiz & Zoido, 2002; Euromonitor International, 2012). Career and educational expectations can be good predictors of occupational and educational outcomes (Rojewski, 2005; Ou & Reynolds, 2008; Mello, 2008; Portes et al., 2010; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011; Andrew & Hauser, 2011; Roth, 2017; Schoon & Parsons, 2002).

Most of the economics students who learn a foreign language have a purpose; not only to communicate in their everyday activity, but also to be able to use it in a business environment. In the TEFLIN journal, Astika (1999) points out that the development of technology and the expansion of commerce are the key factors that impact directly to the rise of ESP. In Albania, children start learning a foreign language since the 1st grade and most of them when entering a study program for the Bachelor cycle know general English. The level of these students goes to the intermediate one and this is an advantage for both the teacher and the students, because Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p. 1), suggest that ESP is mostly designed for students of an intermediate level or advanced one. This is due to the fact that the students who learn a foreign language have already acquired the basic knowledge of that specific language. In addition, (Robinson, 1991, p. 1) states that an ESP must be considered as “an enterprise involving education, training and practice and drawing upon three major realms of knowledge; language, pedagogy, and students’ / participants’ specialist area of interest. It must be highlighted that when a student graduated and starts his/her career as a specialist or professional in a certain area, he/she will make use of a specific vocabulary, which is closely linked to the linguistic use in a professional context, which per se differs in many aspects from the everyday language. The “Handbook of Foreign Language Communication and Learning” edited by Knapp and Seidlhofer (2009) describes the typical ESP linguistic features like: the specific selection, use and frequency of morpho-syntactic features and the high degree of standardization of vocabulary. Therefore, there are certain relevant objectives when teaching ESP, as they are mostly based on the learners needs. In addition to the differences between the 2 types of foreign language teaching and learning; English for general purpose and English for specific purpose, do not only rely on the difference in the linguistic perspective, but also there is concern in the communication competence in terms of intercultural perspective in an ESP context. The term intercultural competence is relatively a recent one (Zarate et al., 2004), which focus more on the speaker’s experience when using the language and try to consider not only the linguistic aspects, but also the culture and the identity, rather than on being close to the native speakers in regards to the linguistics norm. Kramsch (1993) states that when we communicate we also share culture and because of this, methodologists have to consider the correlation that exist between language and culture. Hence, based on the cultural dimension it must be stated that a method cannot be focused on all the cultural differences of the countries in the world, but it is the task of the lecturer to provide new materials, creative ways of teaching a foreign language, adopting it to the needs of the students. This way the students find it more interesting in regard to what they want to learn, based on their needs and interests.

III. Research Methodology

The research methodology being used in our article is based on qualitative approach. We have analyzed a wide range of literature concerning the topic being investigated, in order to have a thorough understanding of the importance of enhancing the foreign language linguistic skills for every student, but especially for the students of economics. We have also distributed questionnaires with the purpose to investigate student’s perceptions regarding the learning of ESP and how important is for them the creativity in teaching and learning a foreign language in a globalized world. There are 100 questionnaires being delivered, not only to the students of Bachelor who take ESP in the first and the second year, but also to the students of the third and the Masters of Science students, who actually do not take any more ESP during their master years, but have taken it in the Bachelor study program.

There are restrictions regarding the universities which are taken into account, because the questionnaire was delivered to students of the Economics department at University College Wisdom. This study is also limited, as it only focuses on the development of the ESP in class, its content, the materials being used, the intercultural dimension incorporated and the skills needed to be improved by making use of creative ideas.

IV. Results

A. Importance of Enhancing the Foreign Language Linguistic Skills in ESP in a Creative Way

As stated earlier, learning a foreign language is important in this global world of ours, especially for developing countries such as Albania. In the era of globalization, “the role of teachers at higher education is not only simply transferring knowledge, but also give them opportunities to build their own mind through a process of translating information they could acquire into their own understandings” (Utami, 2018, p. 78). When it comes to tertiary levels of education this need becomes more evident. Student no longer want to study a foreign language only for general communication, but they see it as an instrument which would help them in their career life and profession. In this paper it is aimed to give a few ways of conducting a lesson in ESP in a creative way. By creativity in teaching is meant “teaching outside the box”, not following the conventional forms of teaching and limiting the teacher to conduct exercises or make use of the texts provided only within the method, which is being used when teaching a foreign language.

Learning a language becomes easier if learned in a creative way because:

a) First of all, it increases their interests and it is inclusive; students find creative ways like: 1- interactive dialogues, where the students not only use the targeted specific vocabulary, but also the cultural dimension and context. They feel more comfortable to get involved due to the conventional- free dialogues. They do not follow the traditional pattern, but it gives the students the opportunity to imagine, create and use the language learnt.
b) Secondly, students become more motivated; this makes the learning enjoyable. A 2nd type of creative and interactive exercises is providing texts or supplements which contain curiosities in their field of study, which make the students motivated to learn the new vocabulary because they will want to understand the material

provided. Another 3rd- creative way is to divide the class into two groups to build up quizzes based on the texts provided, and then they are asked to compete with each – other. This way the aim of the ESP (know the jargon used in the field of studies) is accomplished.

c) Thirdly, it boosts their critical thinking. A specific activity is to provide various topics (like the speaking topics in the TOEFL or IELTS) so that they can think creatively and critically and prepare short speeches. This will help in language fluency by using their imagination and creativity in providing an effective response. This directly will contribute to the development of intercultural and multicultural understanding, which go parallel, when using a foreign language.

B. "The Business" Method

As mentioned earlier, in the University College Wisdom students of the Faculty of Economics study ESP. The method is titled "The Business" with interactive workbook, which incorporates sections like: business dilemmas and & videos, by Macmillan, and the division of each unit are: About Business; Vocabulary; Grammar; Speaking; Writing; Case studies.

Based on the types of objectives described by Stern (1989, p. 207-221), who distinguished four types of ESP teaching objectives as such as: proficiency, knowledge, affective, and transfer. The ESP lecturers at Wisdom University College try to incorporate the 4 objectives into the teaching process. The first objective, that Stern names as proficiency, has to do with the acquisition of the 4 basic skills such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. As stated earlier the book used at UCW incorporates the 4 skills. The section "about business" provides authentic materials on kinds of businesses and business issues. There is an extensive vocabulary, which latter is developed in the Vocabulary section. Here it is advised to use creative ways of providing feedback on the texts and also creating crosswords. Students also bring extra information the next class they will have; the information must be similar to the topic used in the texts. The second one has to do with the teaching and learning of the linguistic aspects and cultural skills which is based on the norms of the society and cultural related issues. The book offers many cultural and intercultural perspective via the exercises offered in all the sections like: in the discussion section, where it is asked about the office etiquette, dresses code etc. Students are encouraged to also do some research on that, and bring it to class the next time they have lessons. This develops their awareness towards the other cultures in business. Here it is worth mentioning even some questions of the type: Which work culture would you prefer to work in? Which would be the most difficult to adopt? Why? This objective is fully covered in all the 4 basic skill exercises. Affective objective according to Stern (1992) regards the desire of the learners to learn and acquire the language.

In the questionnaire delivered to the students regarding the desire to learn Business English by the ESP method selected, titled "The Business", the majority of them, around 90 % answered that they like the language and they would like to have ESP and not general English, because it would help them to enhance their capacities in their English linguistic skills. The figure below shows the percentage of students who like to take courses on general English, and the percentage who desire to have ESP courses.

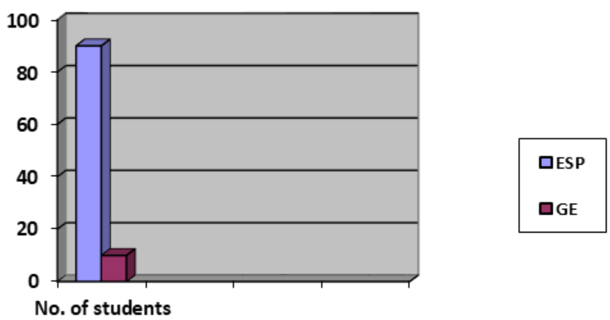


Figure 1 Students Choice for English Courses

Whereas, when asked for the purpose of why they are learning the English language (1.for pleasure, 2. because it is a mandatory academic course or, 3. Because it is a necessity) almost all of them, 95 % circled "because it is a necessity in the global world and economy".

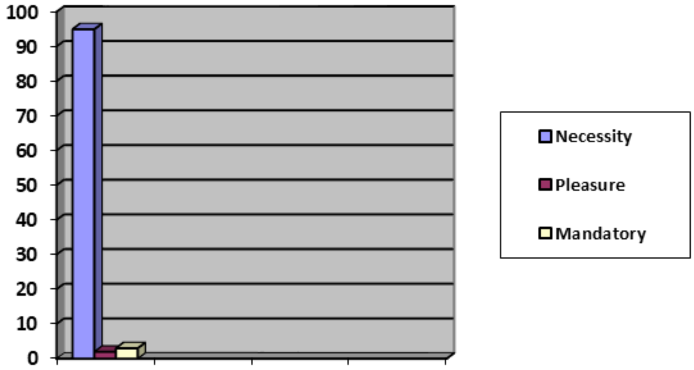


Figure 2 Students Purposes of Learning English

If the students had circled option 3, because it is a necessity, they had to answer the other following question "Why do you think it is a necessity". The answer was that most of them want to go abroad (which is very sad) and they see the English language as a bridge to connect them with all the other European community and the business world. Just a few of them declared that they want to be hired by the "big four" companies like Ernest and Young, Deloitte, PWC or TPA, or other international companies.

Regarding question, no. 3 of the questionnaire on the method used, 100% of them were satisfied with the method chosen. They would prefer ESP because they have had English for general purpose during their primary and the high school years. Regarding question 4, 95% stated that it is a necessity to know English proficiently. This is true in the Albanian reality because international companies require a high level of competency in the English language, and 100% (question 5) of them declare that they must have an English certificate as a document for the vacancies opened in such prestigious companies, which require as a prerequisite a high level of English, which goes to C1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Managers also appreciate enhanced skills in English as a means of not only establishing good and effective communication, but also as being superior in regard to the company performance and qualification, which will make them compete and be renown in the international markets. While researching on the issue Grenier (2015) states a very interesting fact that knowing English provides important returns for the individuals, and also for the companies which hire people who are good in the foreign language communication skills. Regarding question 6, if the methodology of teaching is better by making use of creative ideas, almost 95% (Figure 3) declared that it is, and the reasons they state are numerous. Most of them said that it allowed them to express themselves, be more interested in material provided because it contains a lot of the specific jargon and this makes them more interested in the language (Figure 4).

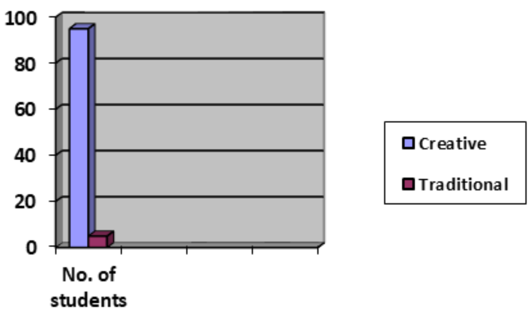


Figure 3 Methods of Teaching

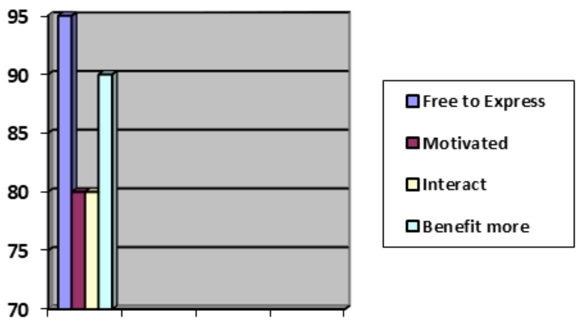


Figure 4 Benefits of ESP

Question 6-7 asked the students if they have used the English Language outside and if they have used the vocabulary learnt. There were some of the students (30 %) who declared that they had used the language in their internships. They also state that, first when you start an internship, you are expected to know English. English language used in their internships was mostly business English. Those who mentioned that they use English in their part time job (35%) stated that they get many benefits as far as the salary is concerned, but also in regards to the opportunities being provided by the company to include them in various trainings conducted by foreign experts. In addition, it is important also the contacts they create when working in such international companies. Therefore, the statement mentioned by Grenier (2015, p. 8) that "the earnings advantage is 10–20% for people who are fluent in a foreign language", may be true after all.

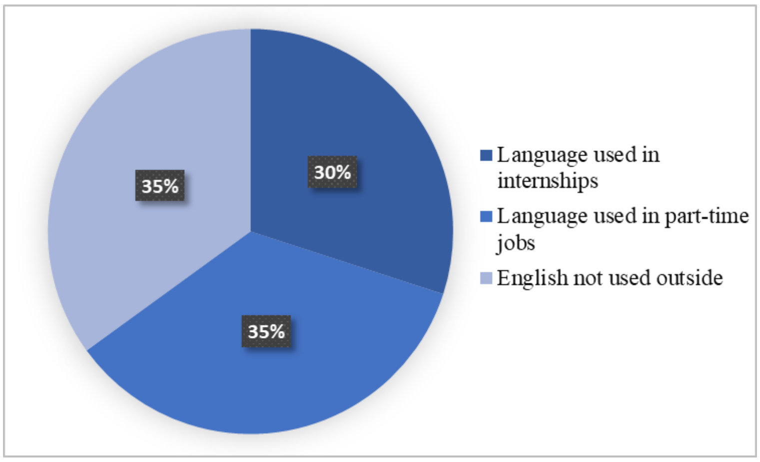


Figure 5 English Used Outside

The last objective in teaching ESP according to Stern is the transfer objective, which has as a focus the skill to transfer learnt knowledge from one situation to another. This is also true and it is happening because in the answers of the questionnaire regarding question 8 and 9 some of the students claimed that knowing business English and having ESP was very useful for them in the training that they had in Croatia, where the focus was on entrepreneurship, start-ups etc., the language used all the time was English, which served as a lingua franca and specifically business terminology. Here, it is the case to emphasize the role of intercultural competencies, because in the communication built between the two people, who are not from the country of the language being spoken, it is vital the understanding of the context because it may cause some misunderstanding as sometimes the original meaning may be vague due to the fact that there may be no such word in the other's people's language or culture. Proper attention must be paid when people try to use idioms or slang, to show that they have an extensive knowledge of English, but for the other (the interlocutor) may cause trouble in understanding. An idiom often confused is "up in the air" and someone would look up in the air.

To question 10, whether the creative ways of teaching are used in the 4 basic skills, they said that they enjoy the classes because each of the 4 basic skills is given the proper time and the audio materials are with native speakers. They were all in favour of the creative ways of being used in teaching and learning the 4 basic skills and not the traditional ways.

In addition, when learning a foreign language, you cannot avoid the cultural/intercultural aspect, which for our students is integrated to the right extend. A study on Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence indicates that intercultural communicative is needed in globalization era and in international trade. In order not to be left behind, intercultural competence is insisted to be developed to pace the world economy (Edi, 2018).

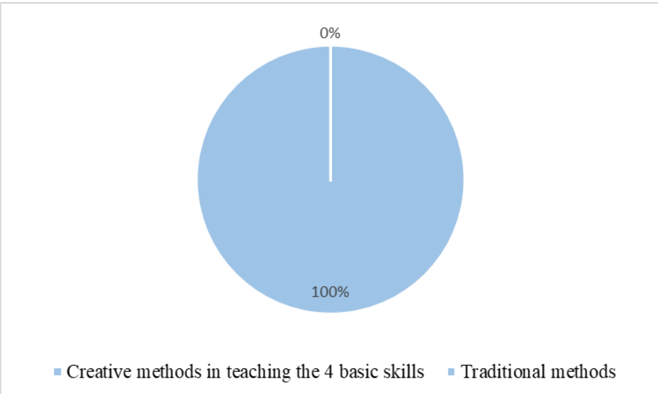


Figure 6 Creative Methods vs Traditional Methods

This is true because most of the students have the chance to practice business English when they start a part time job, or after they graduate and will try to do business with foreigners, where one of the most important things is to know the foreigners culture.

V. Discusion

Creativity plays an immense role in the development of humanity. It has brought major breakthroughs in our life, but in teaching and learning a foreign language, it is a good strategy to make the whole process more enjoyable (Burton, 2010; Cremion & Barnes, 2009; Fisher, 2004; Dornye, 2001; Jones, 2012; Maley, 1997; Sternberg, 1999). Moreover, making use of various digital sources and modern tools will lead to an enhancement in creative capacities of the students; capacities which will help them in their future careers and life. Providing a creative course in ESP requires dedication and effort in search of innovative ideas, interesting materials of the specific study program (Bocanegra-Valle, 2018). Moreover, creative course tasks prompt the students to become more interested, wanting to know more, pro-active participants, who will take a great joy in learning a foreign language (Ellis & Barrs, 2008; Ferrari et al., 2009; Kampylis & Berki, 2014).

Creative teaching and learning tries to find solutions to the challenges occurring due to the cultural and socioeconomic diversity of the students. The creative teaching in ESP teaching and learning contributes undisputedly in the developing of the twenty-first century skills, such as effective communication, pro-active collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendation

English for the students of economics means the language of the future, extensively due to its global dimension received, in order to understand the business setting, business world, establishing business relations, negotiations etc. it is notice that apart from the tomorrow's jobs they might have, using ESP has served them in other various situations like in the international students' workshops and conferences, in projects and students exchange programs. As a conclusion it can be drawn that enhancing the ESP skills is indispensable, and it goes parallel with the creative ways used in teaching and learning ESP. Conducting a class by making use of creative ideas, interactive exercises, interesting reading texts will definitely lead to efficient teaching and learning. From a lecturer's perspective I would strongly advice the student to continue reading in English, even though they finish having the ESP classes after the second year of the bachelor level. This way they will be in touch with the language and the business vocabulary and terminology, but also business culture. This strategy leads also to the enrichment of the knowledge in the business English and also enhances capacities in the linguistic skills. In this paper via the questionnaire it was made evident that improving the ESP skills is a priority to be reached by making use of creative ways. It can be assessed that the students are satisfied with the methods used, methodology, the materials use and the logistics offered by the UCW. However, a recommendation mostly assessed was the necessity to have ESP even in the master studies; this would help students refresh the knowledge and expand the vocabulary, be more in touch with the culture via the language and not spend money on English business courses, which are expensive considering the Albanian reality.

References

[1] Andrew, M. and R. Hauser. (2011). Adoption? Adaptation? Evaluating the Formation of Educational Expectations. *Social Forces*, *90*(2), 497-520.

[2] Araújo, L. Dinis Da Costa, P. Flisi, S. Soto. Calvo, E. (2015). *Languages and Employability*. European Commission. Retrieved March 13, 2021, from https://crell.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/files/JRC97544.pdf.

[3] Astika, G. (1999). The Role of Needs Analysis in English for Specific Purposes. *TEFLIN Journal*, *10*(1), 31-47 http://dx.doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v10i1/31-47

[4] Basturkmen, H., Bocanegra-Valle, A. (2018). Materials design processes, beliefs and practices of experienced ESP teachers in university settings in Spain. In Y. Kirkgoz and K. Dikilitas (Eds.), *Key issues in English for specific purposes in higher education* (pp. 13-28). Cham: Springer.

[5] Burton, P. (2010). Creativity in Hong Kong schools. *World Englishes*, *29* (4), 493-507.

[6] Cremin, T., Barnes, J., Scoffham, S. (2009). *Creative teaching for tomorrow: Fostering a creative state of mind*. Retrieved May 20, 2021, from https://www.academia.edu/19272398/Creative_Teaching_for_Tomorrow_Fostering_a_Creative_State_of_Mind

[7] Edi. (2018). Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence Model for English Students in Indonesia University Context. *The Asian EFL Journal*, *20*(11), 174-198. Retrieved May 20, 2021 from https://www.asian-efl-journal.com/wp-content/uploads/AEFLJ-Volume-20-Issue-11-November-2018.pdf

[8] Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom* (Cambridge Language Teaching Library). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511667343

[9] Doyle, M. S. (2012). Business Language Studies in the United States: On Nomenclature, Context, Theory, and Method. *The Modern Language Journal*, *96*, 105–121. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41478794

[10] Dudley-Evans, T. and St John, M.J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: nA multidisciplinary approach*. Cambridge University Press.

[11] Ellis, S., Barrs, M. (2008). The assessment of Creative Learning. In: J. Sefton-Green (Ed.), *Creative Learning* (pp. 73-89). UK: Arts Council England.

[12] Euromonitor International (2012). *The Benefits of the English Language for Individuals and Societies*: *Quantitative Indicators from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen*. Retrieved February 20 from https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/Euromonitor%20report%20final%20July%202012.pdf

[13] Ferrari, A., Cachia, C., Punie, Y. (2009). *Innovation and creativity in education and training in the EU member states: Fostering creative learning and supporting innovative teaching*. European Commission Joint Research Centre. Retrieved May 27, 2021 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265996963_Innovation_and_Creativity_in_Education_and_Training_in_the_EU_Member_States_Fostering_Creative_Learning_and_Supporting_Innovative_Teaching_Literature_review_on_Innovation_and_Creativity_in_ET_in_the_E

[14] Fisher, R. (2004). What is creativity? In R. Fisher & M. Williams (Eds.), *Unlocking creativity: Teaching across the curriculum*

(pp. 6-20). New York: Routledge.
[15] Grenier, G., Zhang, W. (2021). The value of language skills. *IZA World of Labor, 205,* Doi:10.15185/izawol. 205.v2.
[16] Kampylis, P., Berki, E. (2014). Nurturing Creative Thinking. *The International Academy of Education*. *1*(1). 1-28
[17] Knapp, K. Seidlhofer, B. (2009). *Handbook of Foreign Language Communication and Learning (Vol. 6)*. De Gruyter. Inc.
[18] Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language education*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
[19] Lesiak-Bielawska, E. D. (2015). Technology in English for specific purposes pedagogy. *English for Specific Purposes World, 48*(16), 1-23.
[20] Makrami, B. and Al-Awaid, S. (2020). English Vocabulary Learning Strategies Used by EFL Arab Learners. *Asian EFL Journal, 27*(1), 40-66.
[21] Maley, A. (1997). Creativity with a small 'c'. *The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning and Teaching*, *4.* 1-11.
[22] Mautner, B. Rainer, F. (2017). *Handbook of Business Communication: Linguistic Approaches.* De Gruyter, Inc.
[23] Mello Z. R. (2008). Gender variation in developmental trajectories of educational and occupational expectations and attainment from adolescence to adulthood. *Developmental psychology*, *44*(4), 1069–1080. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.44.4.1069.
[24] Ou, S. and A. Reynolds. (2008). Predictors of Educational Attainment in the Chicago Longitudinal Study, *School Psychology Quarterly*, *23*/2, 199-229.
[25] Robinson, P. C. (1991). *ESP Today: A Practitioner's Guide*. Prentice Hall.
[26] Rojewski, J. W. (2005). Occupational Aspirations: Constructs, Meanings, and Application. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work* (pp. 131–154). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
[27] Roth, T. (2017). Interpersonal influences on educational expectations: New evidence for Germany. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, *48*, 68-84.
[28] Saiz, A. and E. Zoido (2002). *The returns to speaking a second language*. *16*(2). Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia. Retrieved July 10, 2021 from: https://www.phil.frb.org/-/media/research-anddata/publications/working-papers/2002/wp02-16.pdf.
[29] Schoon, I., Parsons, S. (2002). Teenage aspirations for future careers and occupational outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *60*(2), 262–288.
[30] Schütz, R. (2005). *English-The international language.* Retrieved December 20, 2021 from http://www.sk.com.br/sk-ingl.html.
[31] Sciarra, D. and K. Ambrosino (2011). Post-Secondary Expectations and Educational Attainment. *Professional School Counselling*, *14*(3), 231-241.
[32] Stern, H. H.; Johnson, K. (Ed.) (1989). Seeing the wood AND the trees: some thoughts on language teaching analysis. *The second language curriculum.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 207–221. doi: 10.1017/cbo9781139524520.015
[33] Stern, H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[34] Sternberg, R. J. (ed.) (1999). *Handbook of creativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
[35] Utami, S. (2018). Developing Lifelong Learners by Implementing Group Investigation Technique at Higher Education. *The Asian EFL Journal*. *20*(11), 77-82.
[36] Zarate, G. Gohard-Radenkovic, A. Lussier, D. Penz, H. (2004). *Cultural mediation in language learning and teaching*. European Centre for Modern Languages. Retrieved December 22, 2021 from https://archive.ecml.at/documents/pub122e2004_zarate.pdf

Manjola Lumani Zaçellari
Korca, Albamia 21/05/1983
Bachelor degree in Languages and Literature from Tirana University, Albania in 2005
Master of Science degree in Linguistics from Tirana University, Albania in 2009
Doctorate degree in Linguistics from Academy of Albanological Studies, Albania 2014
Master of science degree in Civil Law from Wisdom College University, Albania 2020-2022 (ongoing)

Dr. Manjola Lumani Zaçellari is a full-time lecturer at Aleksandër Moisiu University, Durrës, Albania. She is the Executive Director of Arbëria News Center and Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the media portal Arberianews.net. She is the Didactic director of Centre of Languages, at Wisdom College University. She teaches Pedagogy, Didactics, Lexicology/ Semantics. She is the Academic Coordinator of the newly EU founded Jean Monnet Module "EU multilingualism, Language Education and Intercultural Dialogue" (EUMLEID). She is part of the project for compiling the Great Dictionary of Albanian Language as a lexicographer. She has been part of the Erasmus + project "Introducing modules on law and rights in programs of teacher training and educational sciences: A contribution to building rights-based education systems in countries in transition" (EduLAw) as an education expert and researcher. She has teaching experience abroad, as a visiting lecturer at Kodolanyi Janos University in Budapest, Hungary, where she teaches the course "A European approach to teach and learn 21st century skills". She works as a peer reviewer for Education and Self Development Journal, published by Kazan Federal University, Russia.

Publications:
[1] Lumani, M. (2015). Conceptual fields in Albanian phraseology. Publisher: Naimi, ISBN: 978-9928-109-90-3, 311 pages (monograph)
[2] Lumani, M. Beshaj, L. (2021*).* Study on Youth Employment in the Western Balkans. Publisher: Regional Cooperation Council. Co-funded by the European Union. 138 pages. Retrieved from https://www.rcc.int/docs/573/study-on-youth-employment-in-the-western-balkans
[3] Lumani, M. (2019). Teaching Practice in the Albanian Context: Student-Teachers' Perceptions regarding their Experience in Teaching, in Kowalczuk-Waledziak, Korzeniecka-Bondar, Danilewicz, Lauwers, 'Rethinking Teacher Education for the 21st Century'. Verlag Barbara Budrich. 159-175. Book chapter 11, p. 168-183, ISBN: 978-3-8474-2241-9.

[4] Lauwers, G. Lumani, M. Miço, H. (2019). Introductory Textbook On Law and Rights for Students in Teacher Training and Educational Sciences. English version published by: Wolf Publisher, Netherlands (ISBN: 9789462405622). English-Albanian version published by: Mileniumi i Ri, Albania (ISBN 978-9928-174-65-9).

Dr. Lumani Zaçellari is a member of Association of Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE), a board member of Union of Albanian Journalists (UGSH), member of the Board of Recommendation of Literary Books, Ministry of Education, Albania, member of the editorial board, Journal of Educational Sciences BJES, Beder University, Albania, member of editorial board Journal of Educational Studies and Multidisciplinary Approaches, Turkey, member of scientific committee International Conference on Modern Education Studies, Konya, Turkey, member of scientific committee 4th IMSC-2021 Multidisciplinary Approach to Problem-Solving in Teaching Language, Literature and Culture, North Macedonia, member of Global Engagement Program, Abu Dhabi University.

Lediana Beshaj
Trana, Albamia 19/09/1979
Bachelor degree in English Languages and Literature from Tirana University, Albania in 2001
Master of Science degree in Linguistics from Tirana University, Albania in 2010
Doctorate degree in Linguistics from Tirana University, Albania 2014
Associate Professor, Tirana University, Albania, 2021

Prof.Assoc. Dr. Lediana Beshaj is a lecturer at Tirana University and a private University in Albania. Since 2015 she is the executive director of the Research and Development Institute Wisdom, which is an NGO in support of the University College Wisdom in Tirana. Recently she is involved in preparation of project proposal, project management and monitoring projects and has demonstrated efficient management, coordination and communication abilities. She is a sworn translator by the Ministry of Justice, she is the Test center administrator of TOEFL exam. Recently, she is has run successfully the projects funded by the EU and accorded by Save the children, UNDP, Erasmus plus K2 Strategic Partnership in the field of Higher Education Agreement n n. 2018-1-IT02-KA203-048091, entitled Cultural Studies in Business. She is part of the EU founded Jean Monnet Module “EU multilingualism, Language Education and Intercultural Dialogue” (EUMLEID) as a lecturer.

Publications:

[1] Beshaj, L. (2014). Motivation and Etymology of Phraseological Units in English and Albanian Language. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences. Scopus indexed. DOI: 10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n1p189
[2] Beshaj, L. (2016). Bilingualism in Albania and Its Benefits. Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies. Scopus indexed. DOI: 10.5901/ajis.2016.v5n3s1p436
[3] Lumani, M. Beshaj, L. (2021). Study on Youth Employment in the Western Balkans. Publisher: Regional Cooperation Council. Co-funded by the European Union. 138 pages. Retrieved from https://www.rcc.int/docs/573/study-on-youth-employment-in-the-western-balkans

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 925-935, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.04

Factors Contributing to the Gap Between Listening and Speaking Skills Performance Among University Students Post COVID-19

Amal Abdelsattar Metwally*
Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia

Sabreen Ahmed A. Hakami
Jazan University, Saudi Arabia

Abeer Hussien Alabdaly
Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The present study explores the improvement in speaking skill as compared to the listening skill in EFL traditional classrooms post COVID-19. In this context, the grades of 168 female students at the intermediate level at the department of English language, faculty of languages and translation, King Khalid University were analyzed. A comparative analysis of the data of both listening and speaking exams was conducted to find out the gap between both skills. The data were gathered then analyzed using the SPSS statistical analysis and Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between the variables. The results indicated that students' listening exam grades are better than their speaking grades. The investigations suggest that nonlinguistic factors (i.e. anxiety, stress because of speaking in front of the class, and other psychological fears) significantly affect the students' speaking skill. The students were also requested to complete a survey about their experiences with traditional speaking sessions and face-to-face speaking exams. The study is both descriptive as well as prescriptive. It describes the current situation of the gap between students' skills and the nonlinguistic factors resulting in students' lower grades in speaking as compared to the listening skill. It ends up with suggesting some guidelines to help teachers improve their students' speaking skill and overcome their fears of face-to-face speaking exams especially after a long period of virtual learning and examination environment. The study provides invaluable insights to make the best possible, data-based recommendations to optimize speaking skill in EFL traditional classrooms.**

***Index Terms*—listening skill, speaking skill, gap, traditional classroom, non-linguistic factors, post COVID-19, recommendations**

I. Introduction

The primary purpose of learning a language is to enable learners to communicate using the language. Listening and speaking constitute the main components of oral language, and the existence of listening skills empowers and improves speaking. However, in terms of language acquisition listening is prior to speaking. As such, listening and speaking are interrelated, and this close relationship between the two skills is studied by researchers in two fundamental ways. Firstly, listening is the cognitive process and the interpretation of the auditory codes (i.e. the semantics). Secondly, listening triggers, supervises and organizes speaking (Richards, 2008; Buck, 2001; Erickzon, 2015 as cited in Demir, 2017, p. 1457).

The fundamental question about listening and speaking skills is how they could be improved in the traditional context of learning a second language. Our students listen to lectures, explanations, and read aloud material, and they also speak in small groups. Nevertheless, in every way, making students write a lot does not necessarily results into making them good writers, forcing them to listen a lot does not necessarily results into forcing them to be good listeners, and making them speak in front of the class does not guarantee that they will be effective communicators (Palmer, 2014, p. 2). There is significant work to be done to help the learners excel in both skills areas.

A. Research Significance

The purpose of this paper is to scrutinize the reasons of the gap between the students' grades in their listening and speaking exams. The study indicates that there is a gap between the students grades in both skills and proposes significant suggestions to help learners achieve more progress in the speaking skill.

B. Aim of the Study

* corresponding author

By examining the grades students received on final tests that included these two skills, this study seeks to determine the relationship between listening and speaking abilities. The study also explores the reasons for students' anxiety during their speaking sessions or while sitting for their speaking exam. Specifically, the study suggests certain solutions to help students overcome their fears about traditional speaking practices and face-to-face exams.

C. Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Are the listening and speaking grades significantly correlated among the faculty of languages and translation, King Khalid University EFL intermediate levels female Students?,
2. What are the reasons contributing to the existing gap between Listening and Speaking skills?, and
3. What are the perceptions of teachers towards the solutions of this gap?

D. Limitations of the Study

The current study is limited to the faculty of languages and translation, King Khalid University EFL female students studying listening & speaking in levels 2 & 3, during the first semester of the academic year 2021- 2022.

II. Review of Literature

In this section, the researchers review studies on listening and speaking skills, their improvement, the gap between listening and speaking grades, the non-linguistic factors affecting speaking improvement (Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, 1982), and the impact of COVID-19 on students' face-to-face performance after a long time attending online classes.

Listening and speaking are inter-related skills and it is for this reason that they are usually delivered to students as one course. Listening is a receptive skill which precedes speaking as a productive skill. Noblitt (1995) stated that language learning begins with listening and reading (i.e. declarative knowledge). Therefore, students should engage with this knowledge so that they can generate language and adapt their spoken language. Many researchers suggest that promoting the speaking skill is deeply related to students' progress in the listening skill (Bozorgian, 2012; Richard, 2008; Feyten, 1991). In this context, a study by Zhang (2009) adopted Krashen's Input Hypothesis to highlight the impact of listening skill progress on the learners' oral fluency (i.e. speaking skill). Zhang (2009) pointed out that it is only through listening to authentic materials by native speakers learners can improve their use of features like stress and intonation and produce correct punctuation.

Although listening is often considered a passive skill because it is developed internally or because it is a cognitive process, some studies such as Richards (2008), Vandergrift (2004), Mendelssohn (1989) have discovered that listening is an active process. This requires a variety of activities such as identifying sounds, understanding words and grammar, and interpreting intonation and other rules of phonetics. This demonstrates the need to study listening in relation to how language comprehension systems work and how language is used to convey meaning. In exploring the role of listening in language acquisition, Bozorgian (2012) conducted a study examining the relationship between listening and other skills in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). She specifically pointed out that improving listening in the classroom led to significant improvements in other skills. Based on her results, she emphasized that listening is most important for language acquisition. Furthermore, it may be deduced from this study that listening is closely related to speech development.

Speaking is a productive skill that is acquired mostly from listening. It is a form of putting ideas into speech (Alsaedi, 2012; Fulcher, 2003). In investigating the factors affecting Saudi undergraduate students' speaking skills, Alharbi (2015) indicated that practicing English in authentic situations is difficult in EFL contexts. Another factor is that the focus in education institutions is on improving writing skills. This is supported by a study by Al-Ahdal et al. (2014) who examined Saudi students' L2 speaking and writing skills. The findings revealed that participants' writing skills were better than their speaking skills. The researchers recommended that there should be cooperation between teachers and their students to create a suitable environment to practice speaking in English.

In order to investigate the attitudes of students towards English- speaking skills, Ali et al. (2019) conducted a study that found that students had positive attitudes towards speaking in English. Galindo et al. (2020) utilized the strategy of encouraging the students to individually create a video in which they explained the solution to one of their assignments. Research results showed that this activity helped improve students' oral presentation skills. Castillo (2016) used virtual world of Second Life and a distance learning course platform to develop adult learners' oral communication skills in EFL. The results show that Second Life's virtual world plays an important role in improving adult learners' listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, the results suggest that using various web-based technologies for language learning can be a useful strategy for improving student engagement, classroom practice, and complementing the interactive aspects of these tools. In another study, Volle (2005) studied the development of speaking skills in an online course of 19 students enrolled in the first semester for learning Spanish as a Second Language. The researcher measured the development of the students' Spanish speaking skills in a rigorous online course based on students' pronunciation in two recorded speaking activities and two real-time conversations. The results showed significant progress in the development of the students' speaking skills in Spanish (as cited in Al-Jarf, 2021).

A. *The Impact of Listening on Speaking*

The impact of learners' listening skill on their speaking skill has been investigated by many researchers. Celik and Yavuz (2015) conducted a study to find the correlation between speaking and listening grades at university level. To carry out this study, the participants were allowed a training of listening to short passages followed by different activities. Following the training, they set for a listening exam and an oral speaking exam. The results showed that the correlation between the speaking and listening grades proved to be very low, contrary to the researchers' expectations. Similarly, Jaiyote (2015) examined the relationship between test-takers' L1, listening proficiency and their performance on paired speaking tests. The results showed a significant correlation between the listening and speaking tests. However, no statistically significant correlation was found between listening scores and monologue performance scores. Moreover, Bozorgian (2012) explored the relationship between listening and other language skills in *International English Language Testing System* (IELTS). The descriptive analysis demonstrated that the lowest grades of all the skills were those of the speaking skill. The pairwise correlation coefficient proved the existence of a strong positive correlation between listening and speaking. The analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores demonstrated the existence of a strong relationship between listening proficiency and a "slight" improvement in the oral skills. In a similar way, Pinem (2006) examined the correlation between listening as an independent variable with speaking as a dependent variable, and the participants were found to do better in the listening exam than in the speaking exam.

B. *Speaking as a Challenging Skill*

Listening and speaking are intermingled skills and like all skills they can be greatly improved with careful instruction and focused practice (Palmer, 2014, p. 2). Although listening comprehension has not taken much interest in the considerations of several researchers, many people regard speaking skill as the central index of language skills (Dirjal et al., 2021, p. 178). It can be observed from the reviewed studies that speaking in English is challenging for EFL learners. Of the four skills in English, mastering speaking is a priority for most L2 learners (Alzamil, 2021, p.20) as a means of communication. According to previous research, people use writing in 9% of their communication while they use reading in 16% of it. Surprisingly, people spend 30% of their communication time in speaking and 45% in listening (Worth as cited in Palmer, 2014, p. 5). This highlights the significant role of the listening and speaking skills towards enhancing students' communication. Nevertheless, the speaking skill is developed with great effort in EFL classroom due to many barriers. EFL learners face a lack of exposure, input and output in English. Longcope (2010) stated that EFL learners have approximately three times less exposure to English than ESL learners. As a result, EFL learners have a limited second-language environment, and this situation creates problems in the speaker's comprehension, requiring constant repetition and recall during oral performance. Brown (2004) pointed out that some speaking activities are useful for EFL learners. These are minimal oral pair identifications, oral imitation tasks, dialogue completion, role play, and visual descriptions. Longcope (2010) stated that EFL learners have less interaction in the classroom and they rephrase messages instead of understanding them. Furthermore, EFL learners are incapable of generating spoken messages in context. On the other hand, ESL learners are exposed to more second languages over a continuous period of time; they receive information that is easier to understand (krashen, 1982) and also elicit information that is easier to understand.

Speaking is challenging skill because of the psychological barriers facing EFL students as well as other linguistic and non-linguistic factors. A study conducted by Ariyanti (2016) investigated the psychological barriers faced by Indonesian students which affect their speaking performance. The results showed that students tend to feel nervous when speaking for fear of making mistakes. On the other hand, Manurung and Izar (2019) conducted a study to investigate the students' speaking problems and seeks the underlying factors contributing those matters by analyzing 125 EFL second year students' responses to a questionnaire, individual interviews with lecturers, and class. Most surprisingly, the results showed that internal factors dominated the difficulties in students' performance, that is, students lack vocabulary and are hesitant or afraid to make mistakes and fear being judged. Another study by Al-Jamal and Al-Jamal (2013) explored possible difficulties in six Jordanian public universities by collecting data from a survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that most of the students involved faced challenges related to speaking ability limitations. Poor speaking skills, lack of speaking time and overcrowded classes are the factors that get the most attention (as cited in Manurung & Izar, 2019).

The present study focuses on the impact of non-linguistic factors (i.e. psychological barrier) on students' performance in speaking sessions and consequently, how this affects their grades in speaking exams.

C. *Teaching EFL Post Covid-19*

The unique circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the shifting to online or electronic learning. However, the extent to which online learning was employed during the time of the pandemic varies from one institution to the other. Using email in communication and correspondences and E-books in teaching has become one of the common practices in in many universities around the world (Harandi, 2015). Also, using all the options provide in LMS (learning management systems) as Blackboard for the delivery of virtual classes was adopted in many Saudi universities.

Many studies conducted in different educational institutes all over the world investigated the perceptions of EFL teachers and learners about using online learning. A recent study conducted by Fansury et al. (2020) explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on learning. The results showed that students were happy with online learning and preferred online classes to traditional learning. Nevertheless, teachers and students complained about technical issues such as internet disconnections and internet data costs. Another recent study was conducted by Mahyoob (2020) to explore the challenges of e-learning experienced by EFL learners during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was achieved by analyzing 184 learners' responses to a survey- based questionnaire. The results show that most EFL learners are dissatisfied with continuing their online learning and are not achieving the expected progress in language production.

Rohaizat, Ang, and Yunus published a paper in 2021 describing how ESL learning via social media impacted the learning skills of students. This study concentrated on the use of online social media websites that assisted in practising the English language. Livemocha was the site that was analysed for its performance as an ESL tool. The researchers concluded that Livemocha users felt more at ease, motivated and willing to speak English via social media in comparison to participating in a classroom environment. The interactive face filter proved to be an educational asset that helped learners disguise their natural faces with the use of technology, consequently giving them a private space for speaking in English on social media without feeling embarrassed or being watched by a large live audience.

The studies reviewed above about online learning during the pandemic show the positive attitude students have towards online learning. However, it is not clear whether students prefer it simply because it is a new form of teaching, or because it is more effective. The present study fill the gap in the literature about the shift back to traditional classes post the COVID-19 and its impact on students' learning and achievement.

D. Affective Filter Hypothesis and the Speaking Skill

Krashen (1985) pointed out that certain affective filters have impact on language acquisition. An "affective filter" is a mental block that prevents the receiver from fully using the intelligible input they receive to acquire a language (Krashen, 1985, p.3). When the affective filter is high, successful acquisition is largely impossible because although the learner may comprehend what is being learnt, the input will not reach the LAD (i.e. language acquisition device). According to Krashen, this may occur when the learner experiences high anxiety, low self-esteem, and low motivation. When the filter is low, comprehensible input will easily reach the LAD and this will positively affect the learner's improvement.

Many studies were conducted to find the impact of such affective filters on the improvement of the speaking skill. Grieve et al. (2021) conducted a study in which a qualitative investigation has indicated that public speaking tasks have an overall negative effect on learning for those students with a fear of public speaking and oral presentations. The findings of the study have indicated that many students' main anxiety is mainly due to the fear of being judged, being uncertain about the topic and the physical symptoms students experience while taking part in a speaking session (p. 1287).

Alrasheedi (2020) examined the factors that affected Saudi students and inhibited them from progressing satisfactorily in the skill of speaking English. This study discovered the main causes that led to low ability and performance in the speaking skill. Five factors that influenced this lack of academic progress included a poor language immersion rate, unwillingness to learn to speak English, insufficient ESL understanding and a weak teaching infrastructure. The researchers concluded that individual attention should be given to students, teacher training should incorporate appropriate methodologies, ESL materials should be easily accessible and students should be encouraged to speak the target language outside and beyond the academic circle.

Campbell and Larson (2013) analysed the variable stress levels in students whilst giving a speech in a traditional classroom context as compared to a speech given via technology. The audience in the traditional classroom was present physically however the speeches given via technology had a remote audience. The second aim of the study was to determine whether traditional classrooms should incorporate an aspect of web based learning or not. The results of the heart rate data underlined a slight difference between stress levels during online and off-line speeches. It found that the heart rate of speakers was faster when they presented their topic before an audience which was physically in the same place. However, the student survey concluded that students felt more nervous whilst giving online speeches. The study concluded that understanding stress was an area which needed further conclusive research.

The above review of literature showed that there are no studies that explore the progress of speaking skill as compared to the listening skill in EFL classroom post COVID-19 at Saudi universities with an investigation about the non-linguistic factors students' encounter in the process of speaking practice sessions and face-to-face exams. The present study aims to fill a gap in this area and propose some recommendations to help both teachers and students in EFL classrooms to cross the barrier of anxiety and the possible fears in the speaking practices and small speeches in front of the class or during the speaking exams.

III. Methodology

This study was conducted using the grades of students of intermediate level (both level 2 & 3) at the department of English, KKU. A total of 168 female students' grades were included in the analysis. The participants in this study are 168 female students enrolled in the ENG114 & ENG compulsory courses. The participants' ages range between 18-22 years old. Moreover, the participants were requested to complete a survey about their experiences with face-to-face speaking sessions, their fears and the possible solutions to the non-linguistic factors affecting their performance. A total of 145 students participated in the survey.

A. *Instrument*

The researchers utilized the grades obtained from the final listening and speaking exams. The students' results in listening and speaking exams were analyzed to find the progress in both skills and the correlation between listening comprehension and speaking ability. The sample which consisted of the results obtained by (168) female students registered in levels two & three (ENG 114 & 210) was analyzed via the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), using both descriptive and informational statistics.

In order to investigate students' perceptions about their speaking practices, speaking exams, their fears, and possible solutions, an online survey was sent to students using Google forms. The survey items were adapted from Grieve et al. (2021), and Kongi (2015), with some changes in order to meet the aim of the present study. Some survey items were also designed by the researchers to answer the research questions.

The survey is composed of 22 closed-ended questions using 5 points Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree), and is sub-divided into three parts. It begins with section one; "demographic information", to get data about students' age and level, and students were ensured in the survey that their personal data were not collected. Section two is designed to figure out the levels of anxiety among the students during their speaking practice. It is also designed to point out the aspects that make the students more worried about sitting for their face-to-face speaking exam. The third section consists of items to explore the possible solutions to reduce students' levels of fear in speaking practice sessions and speaking exams.

B. *Statistical Analysis*

In order to answer the research questions and measure the gap between the speaking ability and listening comprehension in EFL classroom, students final results in both written and oral tests were used. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software, version 19. The study examines the correlation between listening as an independent variable with speaking as a dependent variable. The students performed better on the listening test (M = 17,295) than on the speaking test (M = 11, 7693). Pearson correlation was used and the results showed the presence of a positive correlation between the two variables, (=.000) (i.e. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed), which proves that learners' ability in listening influences the way they responded in the speaking exam.

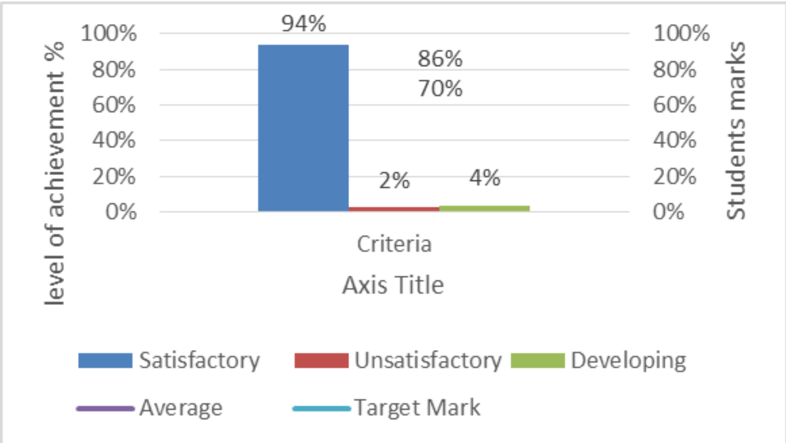


Figure 1. Listening Final Exam Analysis

Figure 1 above shows the listening exam results. The target that should be achieved in the course learning outcomes is 70%, and the average successfully achieved is 86%. This clearly indicates that the outcome has been achieved. According to Table (1) below, the results showed that 94% of the students achieved satisfactory level, 4% of them were at developing level, while 2% of the students achieved unsatisfactory level.

TABLE 1
LISTENING FINAL EXAM LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

Number of student	Criteria	level of achievement %	Average	Target Mark
158	Satisfactory	94%	86%	70%
4	Unsatisfactory	2%	86%	70%
6	Developing	4%	86%	70%

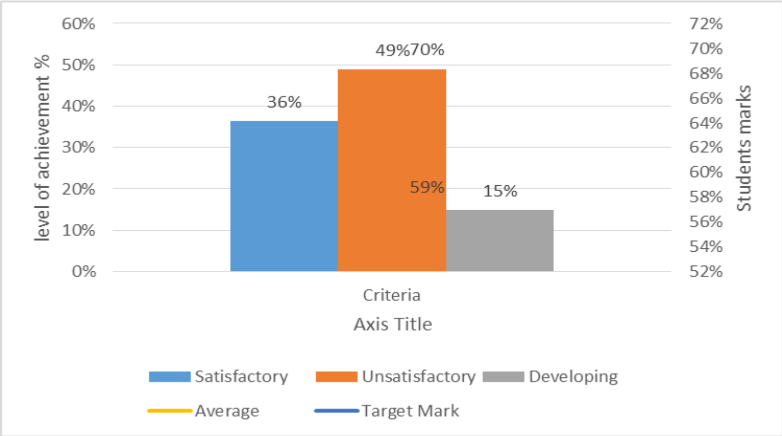


Figure 2. Speaking Final Exam Analysis

Figure 2 shows the speaking exam results. According to the course learning outcomes, the target is 70%. It appears that the achieved average is 59%. This clearly indicates that the outcome has not been achieved. As clarified in Table (2) below, the results showed that 36% of the students achieved satisfactory level, 15% of them were at developing level, while 49% of the students achieved unsatisfactory level.

TABLE 2
SPEAKING FINAL EXAM LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT

Number of student	**Criteria**	**level of achievement %**	**Average**	**Target Mark**
61	Satisfactory	36%	59%	70%
82	Unsatisfactory	49%	59%	70%
25	Developing	15%	59%	70%

C. Summary of Results and Discussion

A summary of the listening and speaking results analysis is presented in this section. Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics for listening comprehension results. The mean score of listening comprehension is 17.295. It means that the average score that the students obtained is 17. The highest score of the listening test is 20 out of 20 while the lowest is 5.0. The standard deviation is 2.3903.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF LISTENING COMPREHENSION RESULTS

Statistics		
Listening		
N	Valid	168
	Missing	0
Mean		17.295
Std. Deviation		2.3903
Skewness		-1.409-
Minimum		5.0
Maximum		20.00

Table 4 reflects the descriptive statistics of the speaking results. As shown in Table 4 below, the mean is 11.7693, which is lower than the mean of listening results. The highest score is 20.00 whereas the lowest score is 3.0. The standard deviation is 3.96561.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF SPEAKING SKILL RESULTS

Statistics		
Speaking		
N	Valid	168
	Missing	0
Mean		11.7693
Std. Deviation		3.96561
Skewness		.073
Minimum		3.00
Maximum		20.00

The following two diagrams show the mean, standard deviation and skewness of both skills.

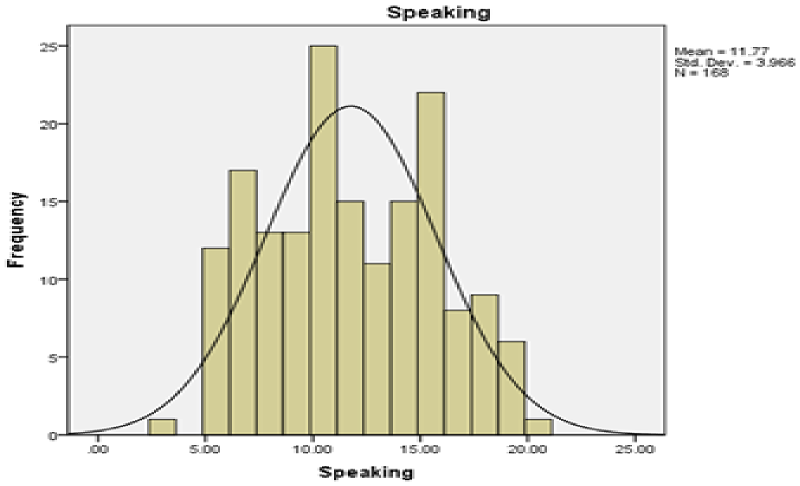


Figure 3. Histogram of Speaking Results

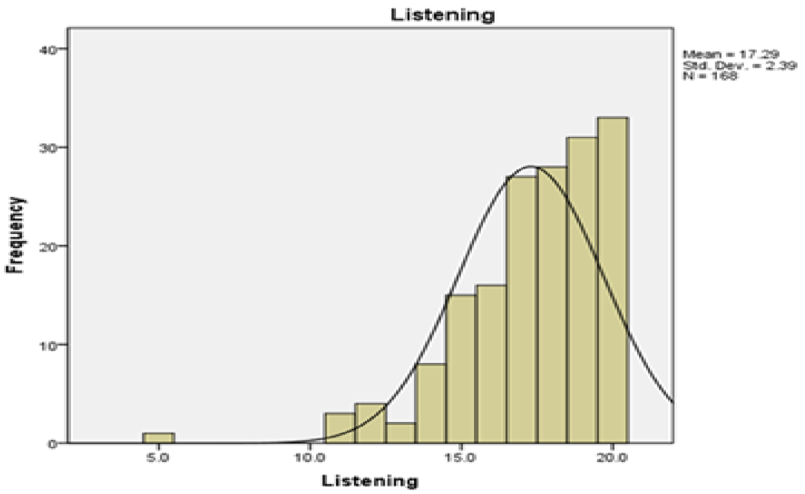


Figure 4. Histogram of Listening Results

The Pearson correlation below (Table 5) means from the 168 students shows that the correlation between listening and speaking results is 0.688, which means that the correlation is positive or there is a correlation between the two variables (listening comprehension and the speaking ability).

TABLE 5
CORRELATION BETWEEN THE TWO SKILLS

		Listening	Speaking
Listening	Pearson Correlation	1	.688**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	168	168
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	.688**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	168	168

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

Consequently, the researchers found that an online survey should be sent to the students to unveil the reasons behind the gap between speaking and listening exams. The survey was sent to the students after the end of the semester. 145 students responded to the 22 question survey, and their responses were analyzed. The results of the survey analysis revealed that many students suffer from anxiety about speaking practice sessions and speaking exams. 90.3% students revealed that they feel worried about making mistakes when they speak in a speaking practice session. 86% stated that they feel worried when they know that they will be asked to participate during a speaking session. The same number of students also indicated that it makes them panic if they have to speak up without preparation time in a speaking session. When asked about the fear of getting low marks in the speaking exam, 96.5% students agreed that they had such fears. 85.5% students indicated that they could feel so nervous to the extent that they forget even things they already knew before. 77% of students also revealed that they feel more insecure in speaking practice sessions than in other lectures.

Significantly, 71% students asserted that the traditional speaking class is more stressful than the virtual speaking class. Also, 69% of the students indicated that they have fears of being judged in their speaking practice. 90.3% students agreed that it makes them anxious when they are uncertain about the topic of discussion. In responding to different questions about anxiety, 92.4% students indicated that they feel anxious about forgetting parts of what they need to say, 91.7% feel anxious about using incorrect vocabulary, and 88.9% feel anxious about not using grammatical structures. Significantly, 77.9% students indicated that they mess up even more when they forget what they are supposed to say.

In responding to questions about possible solutions to speaking anxiety, 89.6% students agreed that opportunities to practice are important to improve their speaking skills. 93.7% students also agreed that it is important to be given the chance to choose the topic they will speak about in a speaking session. 87% of the students indicated that scaffolded instructions are helpful to improve their speaking skills. When asked whether recording their speaking practice is helpful to get ready for their speaking exams, 76.5% students agreed that this could be a helpful strategy. However, only 37% students agreed that rehearsal in front of their peers will help them do better in their speaking exam. 64.8% students think that using digital tools designed for speaking practice is important to improve their skill. However, only 57% of the students consider using cooperative activities in speaking sessions is important. 69.6% of the students think that role-plays, discussions, and self-made dialogues will help them to reduce stress before a speaking session.

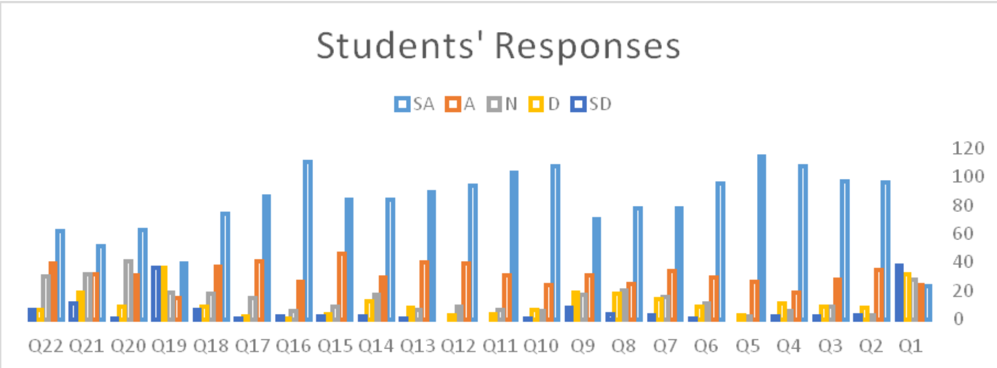


Figure 5. Number of Students' Responses to the 22 Survey Questions

IV. Conclusion

Listening and speaking skills are so deeply embedded in so many aspects of our lives that most of educators don't think about them much, and they are mostly taken for granted. It is time to bring them to the forefront of educators' minds (Palmer, 2014, p. 10), investigate the reasons of students' anxiety, propose solutions and implement the recommendations to purposefully teach them towards better communication and effective language use.

The present study explored the gap between the students' grades in their listening and speaking exams. The results indicated that students' grades in their listening exam are higher than their grades in their speaking exam. 94% of the students got satisfactory grades in their listening exam while only 36% of the students got satisfactory grades in their speaking exam. Accordingly, the researchers needed to explore the factors contributing to such gab by designing an online survey which indicated that the shift back to traditional face-to-face classes post COVID-19 had negative impact on students' performance in their speaking face-to-face assessments. The students revealed that they had anxiety, fear of being judged, messing up, and forgetting parts of what they needed to say in their speaking exams. Specifically, the survey declared that there are non-linguistic factors constituting a barrier to actual improvement in the speaking skill. The recommendation section proposed pedagogical solutions to educators towards reducing the psychological gab and effectively employing speaking sessions in scaffolded activities to motivate learners and prepare them for their speaking exams and the actual use of the language in their communication.

V. Recommendations

The findings of the statistical analysis show that there is a significance correlation between the listening and speaking grades among intermediate level students at the Department of English, faculty of languages and translation at KKU. In the light of the current findings, pedagogical and technical recommendations are found to be of significance for further research. Teachers can help learners achieve more progress in the speaking skill in many different ways. More time should be devoted to the speaking practice sessions. Scaffolded instructions during a speaking session are recommended. Moreover, students should be encouraged to take part in debates and discussions, and the teacher can help them with stimulating questions or clues.

Furthermore, teachers are recommended to adopt active learning in teaching these two skills, namely; listening and speaking. Teachers should motivate their EFL students to interact during the speaking sessions by applying the techniques of learning by doing (i.e. to be involved in the design of the activities, the choice of their roles in role-play, etc.). When students find that they are decision makers in taking part in different activities during the speaking session, they will be more willing to participate and it will also lower their anxiety when it comes to this skill (i.e. speaking). A procedure that was found to be very useful in helping students to speak loud and express themselves is to ask the class to have a session in the form of a round-table discussion. For instance, the teacher asks the students to set in a round table classroom setup in order to face their colleagues which will bolster their courage to speak and express themselves.

Another recommended technique to strengthen students' perceptions about themselves during the speaking session is to start with brainstorming. The teacher may allow a 3- minute time for the students to think of the ideas they will talk about in a specific topic. This technique helps the students to get confident and believe that they can find ideas and put these ideas into words. In addition, teachers should make sure that students are exposed to authentic listening tracks that could provide students with the vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structure they need to use in their speaking sessions. It is also recommended to provide the students with online websites that could help them in practicing their speaking skill.

New research may focus on the role of technology in boosting students' speaking skills by employing ICALL (Intelligent Computer-Assisted Language Learning) tools. The results support the finding of Côté and Gaffney (2018) who indicated that online learners were largely less anxious than those who attended traditional classrooms. Also, future studies can compare the results of both male and female students to find how students of different gender are achieving progress in the speaking skill to present a fuller profile of speaking skill improvement as compared to listening post the pandemic in face-to face contexts. Particularly, the results of the present study have implications for rethinking the foundations of future research towards the improvement of the speaking skill.

APPENDIX. ONLINE SURVEY

Section One: Demographic Information

Age :

Level :

Section Two: Anxiety about Speaking practice Sessions & Speaking Exams

1. Do you feel fine when you have to speak up in a speaking practice sessions? [2]
2. Are you worried about making mistakes when you speak in a speaking practice session? [2]
3. Does it make you worried when you know that you will be asked during a speaking session? [2]
4. Does it make you panic if you have to speak up without preparation time in a speaking session? [2]
5. Are you worried about getting low marks in your speaking exam? [3]
6. Can you get so nervous in the English class that you forget even the things you knew before? [2]
7. Do you feel more insecure in speaking practice sessions than in other lectures? [2]
8. Do you think the traditional speaking class more stressful than the virtual speaking class? [2]
9. Do you have fears of being judged in your speaking practice? [1]
10. Does it make you anxious when you are uncertain about the topic of discussion? [1]
11. Do you feel anxious about forgetting parts of what you need to say? [1]
12. Do you feel anxious about using incorrect vocabulary? [3]
13. Do you feel anxious about not using grammatical structures? [3]
14. When I forget what I`m supposed to say, I mess up even more. [1]

3. Possible Solutions to Anxiety

15. Do you think opportunities to practice are important to improve your speaking skills? [3]
16. Do you find that it is important to choose the topic you will speak about in a speaking session? 2
17. Do you think Scaffolded instructions are helpful to improve your speaking skills? 3
18. Do you think recording a practice presentation for yourself is helpful to get ready for your speaking exam? 1
19. Do you think rehearsal in front of your peers will help you to do better in your speaking exam? 3
20. Do you think using digital tools designed for speaking practice is important to improve your skill? 3
21. Do you consider using cooperative activities in speaking sessions is important? 2
22. Do you think role-plays, discussions, and self-made dialogues will help you to reduce your stress before a speaking session? [2]

[1] Adapted from Grieve, Woodley, Hunt, & McKay (2021)

[2] Adapted from Kongi (2015),

[3] Developed by the researchers

REFERENCES

[1] Al-Ahdal, A., Alfallaj, F., Al-Awaied, S., & Al-Hattami, A. (2014). A comparative study of proficiency in speaking and writing among EFL learners in Saudi Arabia. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 4*(2), 141-149. Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[2] Alharbi, H. A. (2015). Improving Students' English Speaking Proficiency in Saudi Public Schools. *International Journal of Instruction, 8*(1), 105-116. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2015.818a

[3] Ali, J. K. M., Shamsan, M. A., Guduru, R., & Yemmela, N. (2019). Attitudes of Saudi EFL learners towards speaking skills. *Arab World English Journal, 10*(2), 53-264. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no2.27 Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[4] Al-Jamal, D. A., & Al-Jamal, G. A. (2014). An Investigation of the difficulties faced by EFL undergraduates in speaking skills. *English Language Teaching*, *7*(1), 19-27. Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[5] [5] Al-Jarf, R. S. (2021). EFL speaking practice in distance learning during the Coronavirus pandemic 2020-2021. *International Journal of Research - GRANTHAALAYAH, 9*(7), 179-196. Doi:10.2139/ssrn.3900425 Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[6] Alsaedi, A. (2012). *The teaching of EFL speaking in developed secondary public schools for females in Saudi Arabia: A case study*, (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Southampton, Southampton, UK. Retrieved on February 28, 2022

[7] Alzamil, A. (2021). Teaching English speaking online versus face-to-face: Saudi students' experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ), 12*(1), 19-27. Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[8] Ariyanti, A. (2016). Psychological factors affecting EFL students' speaking performance. *ASIAN TEFL Journal of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 91-102. Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[9] Bozorgian, H. (2012). The relationship between listening and other language skills in international language testing system. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *2*(4), 657-663. http://dx.doi.org/10.4304/tpls.2.4.657-663 Retrieved on February 24, 2022

[10] Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.

[11] Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved on January 8, 2022

[12] Campbell,S. & Larson, J. (2013). Public Speaking Anxiety: Comparing Face to Face and Web- Based Speeches. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 10.* https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1097130.pdf Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[13] Castillo, M. I. (2016). *Using a Virtual World as a Communication Space to Supplement an Online Course Platform for Teaching Oral Communication Skills to Adult English as a Second Language Learners*. Ed.D. Dissertation, Texas A & M University – Kingsville. ERIC ED596393. Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[14] Celik, O., & Yavuz, F. (2015). The Relationship Between Speaking Grades and Listening Grades of University Level Preparatory Students. *Procedia*, *197*, 2137-2140. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.339 Retrieved on January 8, 2022

[15] Côté, S., & Gaffney, C. (2021). The effect of synchronous computer-mediated communication on beginner L2 learners' foreign language anxiety and participation, *The Language Learning Journal*, *49*(1), 105-116, DOI: 10.1080/09571736.2018.1484935 Retrieved on January 17, 2022

[16] Dirjal, A. H., Ghapanchi, Z., & Ghonsooly, B. (2021). The Role of Skype in Developing Listening and Speaking Skills of EFL Learners, *Multicultural Education, 7*(1), 177-190 Retrieved on January 3, 2022

[17] Demir, S. (2017). An evaluation of oral language: The relationship between listening, speaking and self-efficacy. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*. *5*(9), p.1457-1467.Doi: 10.13189/ujer.2017.050903. Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[18] Erickzon, D. A. C. (2015). The relationship between listening proficiency and speaking improvement in higher education: Considerations in assessing speaking and listening. *Higher Learning Research Communications*. *5*(2), p. 34-56. http://dx.doi.org/10.18870/hlrc.v5i2.236. Retrieved on January 8, 2022

[19] Fansury, A. H., Januarty, R., & Ali Wira Rahman, S. (2020). Digital content for millennial generations: Teaching the English foreign language learner on COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University, 55*(3), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.35741/issn.0258- 2724.55.3.40 Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[20] Feyten, C. (1991). The power of Listening ability: An overlooked dimension in language acquisition. *The modern language journal*, *75*(2), 173-180. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1991.tb05348.x Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[21] Fulcher, G. (2003). *Testing Second Language Speaking*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

[22] Galindo, C., Gregori, P., Martínez, V. (2020). Using videos to improve oral presentation skills in distance learning engineering Master's degrees. *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology, 51*(1), 103-114. Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[23] Grieve, R., Woodley, J., Hunt, S. E., & McKay, A. (2021). Student fears of oral presentations and public speaking in higher education: a qualitative survey, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *45*(9), 1281-1293, DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2021.1948509 Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[24] Harandi, S. R. (2015). Effects of e-learning on students' motivation. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 181*, 423-430. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.905 Retrieved on February 11, 2022

[25] Jaiyote, S. (2015). *The Relationship Between Test-Takers' L1, Their Listening Proficiency and Performance on Paired Speaking Tests.* English Language Assessment Research Group, British Council. Retrieved from https://www.britishcouncil.org/exam/aptis/research/publications/relationship-between-l1-and-listening-proficiency Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[26] Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Prentice-Hall International.

[27] Krashen, S. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. New York: Longman.

[28] Longcope, P. (2009). Differences between the EFL and the ESL language learning context. *Studies in Language and Culture*, *30*(2), 203-320. Retrieved from http://ir.nul.nagoya-u.ac.jp Retrieved on February 20, 2022

[29] Mahyoob, M. (2020). Challenges of e-Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic Experienced by EFL Learners. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, *11*(4), 351-362. Retrieved on February 18, 2022

[30] Manurung, Y. H., & Izar, S. L. (2019). Challenging Factors Affecting Students' Speaking Performance. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Language, Literature and Education, ICLLE 2019,* 22-23 August, Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. DOI 10.4108/eai.19-7-2019.2289545 Retrieved on February 18, 2022
[31] Mendelssohn, D. (1989). Testing should reflect teaching. *TESL Canada Journal, 7*(1), 95-108. Retrieved from http://teslcanadajournal.ca/index.php/tesl Retrieved on February 18, 2022
[32] Nation, I. S. P., & Newton, J. (2009). *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking*. New York, NY: Routledge.
[33] Noblitt, J. S. (1995). Cognitive approaches to listening comprehension. In R. M. Terry (Ed.). Dimension '95: The future is now. *Select Proceedings of the Joint Conference of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching and the South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers' Association.* Valdosta, GA: SCOLT.
[34] Palmer, E. (2014). *Teaching the core skills of listening and speaking*, Ascd Alexandria, VA USA.
[35] Pinem, Y. (2014). The Correlation between Listening and Speaking Among High School Students. *ELTICS Journal*, *1*(1), 12-23. Retrieved on February 11, 2022
[36] Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking: From theory to practice.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
[37] Rohaizat, R., Nie, A., &Yunus, M. (2021). Instagram Interactive Face Filter to Motivate Speaking Skill among Year 5 ESL Learners in Rural Sabah: Pupils Perception. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 11*(7), 1286-1296. Retrieved on February 18, 2022
[38] Vandergrift, L. (2004). Listening to learn or learning to listen, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 3- 25. http://dx.doi.org/ 10.1017/S0267190504000017 Retrieved on February 18, 2022
[39] Volle, L. (2005). Analyzing oral skills in voice e-mail and online interviews. *Language Learning & Technology, 9*(3), 146-163. Retrieved on February 18, 2022
[40] Zhang, Y. (2009). An Experimental Study of the Effects of Listening on Speaking for College Students. *English Language Teaching, 2*(3), 194-204. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v2n3p194 Retrieved on February 11, 2022

Amal A. Metwally is currently a lecturer at the faculty of languages and translation, King Khalid University in Abha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She got her PhD in linguistics in 2019, and she is a certified IELTS and TOFEL trainer. She has taught many language skills and linguistics and translation courses. She has published papers in international journals, and she has always been interested in applied linguistics, computational linguistics, translation and CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning).

Sabreen A. Hakami is currently a teaching assistant at Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. She did her BA in English Language from Jazan University in 2018. She teaches English Language courses to undergraduate students. Her research interests include cultural and cognitive aspects of language acquisition and foreign language teaching.

Abeer H. Alabdaly is currently a lecturer at the faculty of Languages and Translations, King Khalid University in Abha. She is an experienced instructor in English as a foreign language in higher education; holds a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics. She has some published papers in international Journals. She is an enthusiastic person who is eager to explore different linguistic issues; particularly related to Arabic and English language. She has an intense interest in scientific research related to sociolinguistics, language acquisition, language policy, and bilingualism.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 936-943, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.05

CALL Project-Based Program to Enhance Student-Teachers' TEFL Skills

Marine Milad
Faculty of Language Studies, Arab Open University, Kuwait

***Abstract*—Students-teachers are students who study to become Teaching English as a Foreign language (TEFL) teachers. They receive teaching trainings, observe certified teachers' teachings performance, and do some supervised teaching practices in EFL classrooms for the elementary and secondary stages. The current study aims at presenting a supplementary program to support a practical course on methods of teaching English as a foreign language for the elementary stage. The supplementary program has been developed by the researcher to enhance Arab Open University (AOU) student-teachers' skills of teaching listening, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary for elementary stage pupils through a language project that focuses on instilling social values in these young pupils. This was mainly done with samples of practical examples, interactive discussions and tasks of practical nature posted on Learning Management System (LMS) following Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) methodology in accordance with the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of the course. The study has adopted the Constructoactive Model developed by Sahakian and Ghoneim (2007) to promote pupils' knowledge of different methods of teaching English as a foreign language and to familiarize young pupils with good social values and their related vocabulary items. In addition, the supplementary program has adopted Stoller's (1997) model for developing project work. The model has proved to be helpful in promoting the student-teachers' performance in teaching different language skills, writing lesson plans and giving demo class presentations for the developed lesson plans by using PowerPoint/Prezi presentations, open-source video/audio links and a number of software programs (such as Kahoot, Quizlet, and Grammarly).**

***Index Terms*—student-teachers, Constructoactive Model, CALL, Top-down/Bottom-up Approaches**

I. Introduction

Being a universal language spoken by nearly two thirds of the world, TEFL has become a thriving career. Henceforth, numerous implications of the teaching process with varied pedagogical frames have been offered. At the present time, computers have become an essential part of modern life. They have been used almost in every field of science which applies to TEFL, and knowledge of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) methodology has become of a paramount importance especially in the contemporary age. Computer-Assisted Language Learning dates back around 1980's, with Davies' and Steel' publication wherein they developed the term (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000). Davies et al. (2012) described CALL as "the search for the study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning". When tracing back the beginning of CALL, we can notice that it used the computers in several phases for language teaching and learning. Computers have been employed as a tutor that presents varied language skill practice and drills to promote class discussion and active interaction. In addition, they have been used as a tool for researching language regularities and discrepancies via concordance programs. Hence, the computers have been considered as a medium of global communication and a source of limitless authentic materials produced by native speakers of English Language (Warschauer, 1996). A typical instance of computer-assisted language teaching would usually involve a teacher using a computer connected to a large data show projector or a TV screen for visual output. The process of language training starts when the teacher asks for responses from students regarding the words or shapes that appear on the screen (Davies et al., 2012). CALL seems to be effective in handling and analysing a variety of simulations and software programs.

CALL has been divided into three main approaches each of which has different uses and perspectives (Warshauer & Healey, 1998). The first approach is behaviouristic CALL which is primarily used for grammar instruction or translation tests. The behaviouristic use of CALL, which started in the 1960s and 1970s, has mainly focused on students' behaviour and learning through drilling where the computer serves as a vehicle for delivering instructional materials to the student (Bulut, 2010). It is claimed that computer is perfect tool for conducting repeated drills and practice because it cannot get tired of presenting the same material several times and it is effective in providing instant neutral feedback. This has proven to be very helpful for students to proceed with the material at their own pace and provide more class time for other activities. CALL drills are still in use at present.

The second approach is the communicative CALL which encourages students to think about the appropriate use of form rather than the form itself to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate assembled language. This is different from the behaviourist approach as this system utilizes a variety of programs to provide skill practice but in a non-drill format. CALL model used for communicative activities involves the "computer as stimulus" (Warshauer, 1996).

The third approach is integrative CALL which focuses more on using technology to encourage and enable the actual use of language via the use of multimedia and hypermedia technology which means that the multimedia resources are all linked together and that learners can navigate their own path simply by pointing and clicking a mouse (Rashid, 2017).

The suggested CALL project-based supplementary program focuses on the communicative and integrative use of CALL. It presents an overview of the main methods and techniques of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). It exposes the student-teachers to the traditional and modern approaches of teaching English as a foreign language, such as the communicative approach and project-based learning to guide them on how to teach the four English language skills while instilling common social values in young learners. The proposed program provides some pedagogical implications in teaching methodology. It also discusses the content-based and task-based instructions as the medium of instruction.

II. Theoretical Framework

From a theoretical point of view, the evolution of CALL was greatly influenced by developments in four areas of research namely individualization of instruction, experiments in programmed instruction, developments in computational linguistics, and work in machine translation in the 1950s (Dhaif, 1989). However, CALL has moved away from programmed learning toward a wide range of applications more in keeping with modern theories of language learning and current pedagogic trends over the past few years (Kenning & Kenning, 1990). Today's programs aim to develop communicative more than linguistic competence (as cited in Abdel-Majeed, 2017).

Several types of CALL programs have been developed and used during the phase of communicative and integrative CALL to provide skill practice, but in a non-drill format. Examples of these types of programs include courseware for paced reading, text reconstruction, and language games. In these programs, like the drill and practice programs, the computer remains within the model of the computer as tutor and computer as stimulus (Warshauer & Healey, 1998). In this case, the purpose of the CALL activity is not so much to have students discover the right answer, but rather to stimulate students' discussion. In contrast to the drill and practice programs, the process of finding the right answer involves a fair amount of student choice, control, and interaction (as cited in Abdel-Majeed, 2017). The hypermedia used in the suggested CALL project-based program provides several advantages for language learning/teaching. First, it presents a more authentic learning environment since listening is combined with real life contexts. Secondly, the four skills are easily integrated since the variety of media makes it natural to combine reading, writing, speaking, and listening in a single activity. Third, learners have great control over their learning, since they can not only go at their own pace but even on their own individual path, going forward and backwards to different parts of the program (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000).

Sahakian and Ghoneim's "Constructoactive Model" (2007) is an instructional model that merges constructivism and active learning into one entity and translates it into pedagogical practice through employing project-based learning. The model is employed as a framework for the CALL project-based supplementary program of the current study since it incorporates learning and teaching by enhancing the learner to be one's own instructor and assessor as well.

Sahakian and Ghoneim's Model considers the different learning styles in a way that; on the one hand, the slow learner(s) or those with poor knowledge begin learning by working in groups to gather *(act & construct)* new data through posing open-ended questions and using research techniques *(knowledge).* These collected data must be relevant to the topic under investigation. Therefore, the learners classify and analyze these raw data *(assess/evaluate).* Then, the learners reflect *(reflect, understand, assess & valuate)* on these data and process them into information that helps them in gaining new experiences and predicting new concepts based on the previously acquired ones *(experience).* These new experiences are judged and assessed *(assess/evaluate)* according to the social values, one's own values and ethics *(values/ethics).* This will result in the development of a new product *(act & produce)* based on all the previous points that are assessed and evaluated at every stage leading to high-quality assurance of the end-product.

On the other hand, the distinguished learners may learn by simply retrieving their previous knowledge and experiences related to the topic under investigation (instilling social values in young learners while studying the English Language). They, then, judge *(assess/evaluate)* these experiences to develop and produce a new product considering social values and one's own ethics *(values and ethics).* This ensures the quality control of a product. All the above take place in an encouraging environment where questions are cherished and valued.

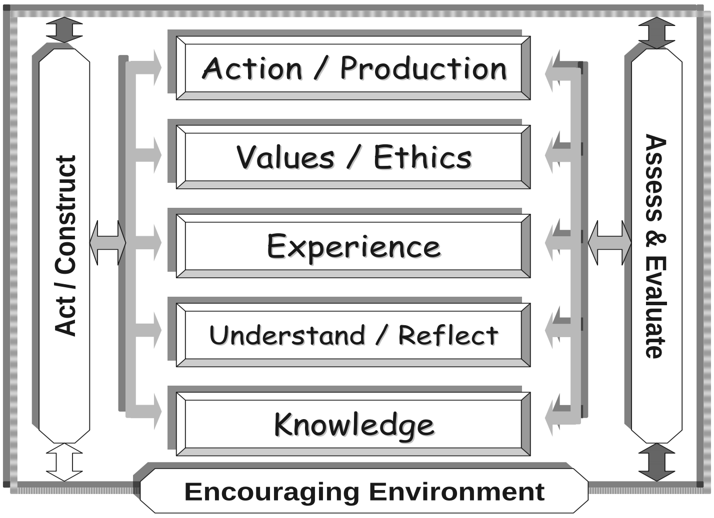


Figure 1 Constructoactive Model (Sahakian & Ghoneim, 2007)

Sahakian and Ghoneim (2007) experimented the above model and reported that "Constructoactive learning thought authentic activities like problem solving and project work assist learners to find meaning and usefulness in their products" (Sahakian & Ghoneim, 2007, p.62). The Constractoactive model is used as a framework of the current study where the learners will *produce* lesson plans through posing open-ended questions and using research techniques to exchange *knowledge.* These collected data are relevant to the requested lesson plans. Hence, the learners classify and analyse these raw data through assessing the processed data.

Then, the learners reflect on the processed data and process them into information that helps them in gaining new experiences and predicting new concepts based on the previously acquired ones to gain experience in writing lesson plans. These new experiences are judged and assessed according to the intended learning outcomes, values, and ethics. This will result in the development of the lesson plans based on all the previous points that are assessed and evaluated at every stage leading to high quality assurance of the end-product (written lesson plans and demo class presentations in this study).

On the other hand, the distinguished learners may learn by simply retrieving their previous knowledge and experiences related to the steps of writing a lesson plan. Then, judge their gained experiences to develop and produce the desired lesson plan in the light of the social values and one's own ethics.

Hence, project work is considered a meaningful activity that can be spread over a series of lessons or a term. One useful tactic is to provide learners with a menu of tasks and a pre-set time schedule of the due time before beginning the work (Fried-Booth, 2002). Thus, learners should know that long or short projects must pass through certain stages of development. These stages are represented in stimulating topic of interest, defining the project’s objectives, practicing language skills, and designing spoken/written materials (product).

Many researchers who studied project work application have reached the same conclusion i.e., project work has certain characteristics which encourage instructors to use this method to develop the learners’ learning (Chard, 1998; Stoller, 1997; Fried-Booth, 2002; Thomas & Macgregor, 2005). These researchers agree that project work focuses on content learning as well as language targets since it improves learners’ content learning and language learning abilities. It is based on real world subject matter and topics of interest.

The ten-steps of Stoller's (1997) model for developing the project work illustrated below summarize all the phases of a project work that have been followed by the student-teachers in implementing their projects of instilling good social values in young learners while teaching them English language. Stoller's model of project work constructs the learners' knowledge and experience step by step reaching an end-product (written lesson plans and demo class presentations).

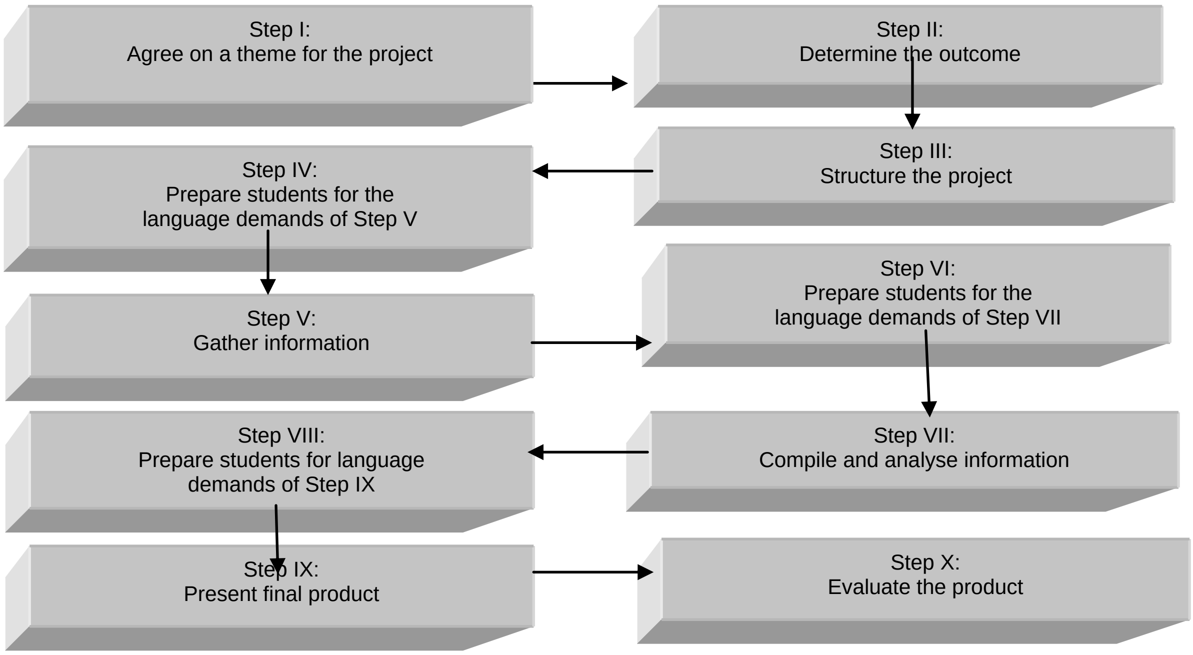


Figure 2 Ten Steps for Developing a Project in a Language Classroom (Stoller, 1997)

As seen in the figure above, Stoller's model of project work constructs the learners' knowledge and experience step by step to reach an end product. Numerous projects that are related to the learners' real life have proven that theory can effectively guide educational practices which are highlighted in the main characteristics of project work (Milad, 2021). Consequently, merging the two models (Sahakian and Stoller) helps attain the purpose of the present study.

III. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this project includes its description, aims, duration, participants, hypnoses, methodology, design, delivery, instruments, assessment, findings, and discussion.

A. Description

The implementation has been administered on a group of Arab Open University (AOU) students registered in Teaching English as a Foreign Language course, Faculty of Language Studies to investigate whether there is a correlation between the students-teachers' performance achievement in writing lesson plans and giving demo class presentations especially after implementing a CALL project-based program as a supplementary module on how to teach the four English language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing). The supplementary program was posted on the Learning Management System (LMS).

The study seeks to implement the constructivist theory and translate it into pedagogical practices highlighting the role of constructive teachers who encourage the active constructions of knowledge. This can be done through applying active learning practices as a means of emphasizing constructivism during adopting CALL project-based approach as an application tool. The project work is applied in AOU students-teachers' developed lesson plans and demo class presentations.

The supplementary program has helped the student-teachers develop their teaching practices of the four skills following bottom-up/top-down approaches. In teaching listening and speaking skills following bottom-up approach, the listeners break down chunks of speech into elements of sound, link these elements to form a word, put the words together to form sentences and join the sentences into texts; from the smallest element, such as a phoneme to words, sentences, and discourse. In following top-down approach, listeners start with the context of the situation: the participants in the interaction and their relationship, the place of talk, the form of talk, and the subject of the talk to get the overall message; from discourse to smaller elements; understanding the context of situation. Then, they choose the appropriate syntactic elements, which require understanding the relationship between language and its context of situation.

In teaching reading and writing following the bottom-up approach, the readers start recognizing the letters and relating them to their sounds, combining these sounds to form words and words into sentences with the purpose of understanding the meaning which is very useful for beginners. Then, they start writing the letters of the alphabet, combining letters into words, then the combination of words becomes sentences. At that point, the students are taught the connectives and the paragraph organization. In following top-down approach, the readers start with the context going downwards to the sentences and words. The meaning with its parts is the most important aspect in this process because words and sentences are meaningless unless they are put in a certain context that gives the meaning. When it comes to writing, the students start with the context of the situation where they start forming an idea about the setting, such as the time and place of the event of writing, and they should have a purpose to deliver to a specific reader in mind. The students here know what genre they are tackling, whether it is a medical report, an advertisement, an email, etc. This will help them choose a suitable structure for the text and the appropriate words and grammatical elements.

B. Aims and Objectives

The study aims at enhancing the students-teachers' knowledge on:

1. identifying different traditional and modern methods of TEFL
2. integrating the communicative approach into classroom practices
3. integrating the natural approach and total physical response into classroom practices
4. adopting content-based and task-based instruction models
5. applying top-down and bottom-up approaches to teach the different language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary)
6. promoting the uses of CALL in language learning and teaching
7. designing a lesson plan incorporating all the learned approaches and instructional models

C. Duration

The implementation started on the first semester of the academic year 2019/2020 and continued through the second semester of the academic year 2019/2020

D. Participants

A wide age range was represented in this experiment with the youngest participant being 18 and the eldest being 40+ years. Most participants were under 30 years of age (77.7%). The participants were 22 female students and 5 males for the experimental group and 19 females and 3 males for the control group.

E. Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant difference between the controlled group and the experimental group in the students' mean scores on writing lesson plans in favour of the experimental group because of the application of the CALL project-based program.

F. Methodology (Design and Instrument)

An experimental design was selected to detect the improvement of the students-teachers' written lesson plans and demo class presentations, if any. An observation checklist was developed by the researcher to assess and evaluate the students-teachers' performance of experimental and control groups. Data for this study were collected from thirty-six questions divided into five sections rayed by the researcher and another tutor for achieving inter-rater reliability.

The Constructoactive model (Sahakian & Ghonime, 2007) is adopted as a framework for the present study. This framework embraces well the ten-steps of Stoller's (1997) model for developing the project work illustrated below. Therefore, Stoller's model was adapted according to the research objectives and limitations.

G. Assessment

The assessment technique used in this experiment is the performance assessment which is a measure of assessment based on authentic tasks such as activities, assignments or tasks that require students to show what they can do (Appendix A). Performance assessment, also known as alternative or authentic assessment, is a form of testing that requires students to perform an authentic task rather than select an answer from a ready-made list or respond to a certain comprehension question. It is to act upon and bring to completion a certain project or assignment. Performance assessment involves displaying one's knowledge effectively to bring to completion a complex product or event (as cited in Milad, 2020). It typically involves the creation of products. "Performance assessment requires students to accomplish approximations of real-life authentic tasks, usually using the productive skills of speaking or writing" (Brown & Hudson, 1998, p.564). Accordingly, this assessment technique was used to evaluate the students-teachers' written lesson plan and demo class presentations using PowerPoint/Prezi presentations, open-source video/audio links and some software programs (such as Kahoot, Quizlet, and Grammarly), regalia, role plays, banners/poster, charts, notes, cards, mind maps, etc.

H. Findings and Discussion

To determine the relative extent of change fostered by the implementation of the project-based program on students' performance in writing lesson plans and to compare the level of skill performance of the controlled group and the experimental group, a *t*-test for two samples was used to determine any statistical differences between the mean scores on the written lesson plans. These findings are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE WRITTEN LESSON PLANS COMPARING THE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP
Two Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	STD. Deviation	STD. Error Mean
Pair 1	Experimental Group	22.0882	27	3.09904	.37581
	Controlled Group	5.4118	22	1.28406	.15572

The statistical results presented in the previous table show that the students' mean scores of the experimental group (22) is higher than the mean scores of the controlled group (5.41). These results indicate that the students' written lesson plans have improved due to the implementation of the project-based program. Then, the *t*-test was conducted to test the significance of the differences between the students' mean scores of the written lesson plans. The results are shown in table (2).

TABLE 2
t-TEST RESULTS OF THE TWO GROUPS COMPARING THE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN WRITING LESSON PLANS
Pair Sample Test

		Paired Differences					
		Mean	STD. Deviation	STD. Error Mean	T	DF	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pair 1	Experimental - Controlled	16.67647	2.26222	0.27433	60.789	26	0.001

Table 2 presents the mean scores, standard deviation, *t*- value and *t*-significance of the students' total scores in the written lesson plans. The above table shows that there are statistically significant differences at 0.001 level between the mean scores of the controlled and experimental groups on the written lesson plans in favour of the experimental one since the *t*-value is 60.7. These results confirm the hypothesis and show the effect of the project-based program on the students' performance.

I. Conclusion

To sum up, students-teachers’ lesson plans in the experimental group were found to be more detailed including all the needed sections of the learned lesson plan, such as lesson details, materials, and resources, learning objectives, employed grammar structures, warm-up, presentation, practice, production, and conclusion. Moreover, their performance in the demo class presentations was found to be more effective in delivering the topics related to the given theme in comparison to the control group who did not have access to the supplementary module on the LMS. This can be attributed to students-teachers’ effort in completing and responding to the project-based program (supplementary module posted on the LMS) which included a variety of activities on how to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The previous findings assert that the developed project-based program posted on the LMS has proved to be effective in developing the written lesson plans for the student-teachers registered in the said Teaching Methodology course. In addition, students' overall achievement has been considered satisfactory since no one failed in writing the requested lesson plan and presenting it in the demo class presentation using PowerPoint/Prezi presentations, opensource video/audio links and some software programs (such as Kahoot, Quizlet, and Grammarly). This is attributed to applying the steps of project work and the moves of the Constructoactive Model that combines various learning/teaching strategies.

APPENDIX A. ORAL DEMO CLASS PRESENTATION OF THE WRITTEN LESSON PLAN

Category	Criteria	Likert Scale				
Presentation	• Does the introduction (warm-up) grab participants' attention? • Does the introduction (warm-up) explain the objectives of the presentation? • Does the presenter follow this by clearly defining the theme/topic of the demo class presentation? • Are the main parts of the lesson plan 3Ps (Present, Practice, Produce) organized in logical sequence? • Do these main parts of the lesson plan 3Ps (Present, Practice, Produce) flow well? • Have these main parts 3Ps (Present, Practice, Produce) been supported by visual aids? • Does the presenter's closing summarize the presentation clearly and concisely? • Is the conclusion strong? • Has the presenter tied the conclusion to the introduction?					
Written Lesson Plan (notes, summaries, slides, flip charts, posters, etc.)	• Is the written lesson plan concise to the point? • Is it grammatically accurate? • Does it contain technical and relevant vocabulary? • Does it contain examples and stories to support the main points? • Does it contain transitions to shift the listener/reader smoothly among the ideas?					
Delivery	• Is the presenter knowledgeable about the theme/topic covered in his/her presentation? • Does the theme/topic have up-to-date information? • Is the theme/topic original? • Does the presenter have his/her notes in order? • Does the presenter hold the participants' attention and involve them in the demo class presentation? • Has the presenter checked the used visual aids to ensure that they are working well before the presentation? • Does the presenter know how to use the visual aids skilfully? • Does the presenter have high sense of time management and make excellent use of the time allowed? • Has the presenter finished on time?					
Visual Aids	• Are the visual aids easy to read and easy to understand? • Are they tied into the points the presenter is trying to deliver? • Can they be easily seen from all areas of the room? • When using a video, does it have good picture with high audio quality?					
Presenter's Characteristics & Appearance	• Does the presenter have high perception of self-confidence and master stresses? • Is the presenter well prepared? • Does the presenter have clear voice? • Can the presenter perform variation of the voice tone when needed throughout the demo class presentation? • Is the presenter pronouncing correctly and accurately? • Does the presenter have high fluency? • Is the presenter dressed and groomed appropriately to keep with the participants' expectations? • Is the presenter paying close attention to his/her body language (i.e. posture gestures, eye contact and body movements)? • Is the presenter looking directly to the audience/students all the time?					

Comments

……
……
……

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Arab Open University, Kuwait Branch, supported this research. The researcher would like to thank AOU research committee for providing insight and expertise that greatly assisted the current research.

REFERENCES

[1] Abdel-Majeed, M. M. (2017). *Computer assisted language learning: models and applications*. English Language Unit, Qatar University. Retried August 2022 from https://qspace.qu.edu.qa/handle/10576/8369

[2] Alan, B. & Stoller, F.L. (2005). Maximizing the benefits of project work in foreign language classrooms. *English Teaching Forum, 43*(4), 10-21.

[3] Brown, J. D., & Hudson, T. (1998). Alternatives in assessment. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(4), 653-675. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587999

[4] Bulut, A. (2010). *English teacher's barriers to the use of CALL in university EFL classes*. Cukurova University. Retrieved December 2020 from http://www.geocities.com/musician_a_b/Important_files/project_2.htm

[5] Brown, J. D., & Hudson, T. (1998). Alternatives in assessment. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(4), 653-675. https://doi.org/10.2307/3587999

[6] Chard, S. (1998). *The project approach: developing the basic framework practical guide 1*. Scholastic.

[7] Davies G. & Steel D. (1981). First steps in computer-assisted language learning at Ealing College of Higher Education. Paper presented at the CAL 81 Symposium, University of Leeds, 8-10 April 1981. Published as part of an article, *Micros in modern languages, Educational Computing*, October *1982*, 30-31.

[8] Davies G., Walker R., Rendall H., & Hewer, S. (2012). Introduction to computer assisted language learning (CALL), ICT4LT module 1.4. In G. Davies (Ed.), *Information and Communications Technology for Language Teachers (ICT4LT).* Slough, Thames Valley University. Retrieved December 2020 from http://www.ict4lt.org/en/en_mod1-4.htm

[9] Dhaif, H. A.(1989).Can computers teach languages? *English teaching forum, 27*(3), 7-19.

[10] Fried-Booth, Diana (2002). "Project Work." *OUP Forum 16*, 15-22. https://archive.org/stream/ERICED578161/ERICED578161djvu.txt

[11] Kenning M.-M. & Kenning M. J. (1990). *Computers and language learning: Current theory and practice.* Ellis Horwood.

[12] Milad, M. (2020). Developing productive skills through an interactive approach: present to learn." *International Journal of Education, Macrothink Institute, 12* (4), 24-35 http://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/ije/article/view/17898https://doi.org/10.5296/ije.v12i4.17898

[13] Milad, M. (2021). Translating constructivism into pedagogy from philosophy to practice: Active project-based learning. *The International Journal of Humanities Education, 19*(1), 39-51. ISSN 2327-0063 https://cgscholar.com/bookstore/works/translating-constructivism-into-pedagogy-from-philosophy-to-practice?category_id=cgrn&path=cgrn%2F228%2F232

[14] Rashid, S. (2017). Computer Assisted Language Learning in Pakistan: Teachers' Perspectives. *The Journal of Asia TEFL, 14*(4), 802-808. e-ISSN 2466-1511/ ISSN 1738-3102 http://journal.asiatefl.org/

[15] Sahakian, S. & Ghoneim, O. (2007). *"Constructoactive learning and quality assurance in applied arts: Developing performance in faculties of specific education."* Eighth Scientific Conference, 61-62.

[16] Thomas, W. R & Macgregor, S. (2005). "Online project-based learning: How collaborative strategies and problem solving processes impact performance." *Journal of Interactive Learning Research, 16* (1), 83–107. https://www.learntechlib.org/p/5059/

[17] Ware, P., & O'Dowd, R. (2008). Peer feedback on language form in telecollaboration. *Language Learning & Technology, 12*(1), 43-63. https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/10125/44130/1/12_01_wareodowd.pdf

[18] Warschauer M. & Healey D. (1998). Computers and language learning: An overview. *Language Teaching 31*, 57-71. https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-teaching/article/abs/computers-and-language-learning-an-overview/0CF20A4837B377B3A214BF410F4775EB

[19] Warschauer, M. (1996). Computer-assisted language learning: An introduction. In S. Fotos (Ed.), *Multimedia language teaching* (pp. 3-20). Logos International. http://www.ict4lt.org/en/warschauer.htm

[20] Warschauer, M., & Meskill, C. (2000). Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning. In J. Rosenthal (Ed), *Handbook of Undergraduate Second Language Education*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Marine Milad is an assistant professor of English Language and Applied Linguistics at Arab Open University (AOU), Kuwait Branch. She has a PhD in TEFL, Curriculum and Instructions from Cairo University with the grade of distinction. She also attained a Master Level Course in ESL/EFL Assessment Techniques from Indiana University, Bloomington, U.S.A. Currently, she is the General Course Chair for four courses: reading comprehension, academic writing, methods of teaching English as a foreign language and grammar in context across eight AOU branches.

Through her teaching/training sessions, she has facilitated the professional development and career advancement of teachers, managers, and employees of some reputable organizations. She has delivered several academic and technical presentations in local and international conferences in the field of Language Learning, E-Learning, Blended Learning, Multiple Intelligences and Brain Colour, Constructivism, Learning by Doing, educational reform and soft skills. Her sessions are student-centred that consider different brain colours, learning styles and multiple intelligences through employing authentic real-life situations and activities. Dr. Marine is currently the president of TESOL Kuwait, affiliated by TESOL International.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 944-955, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.06

Developing EFL Learners' Autonomy in Speaking English: An Investigation Into Teachers' Support at a University in the Mekong Delta

Cang T. Nguyen
Faculty of Foreign Languages, Kien Giang University, Kien Giang, Vietnam

Khanh T. Nguyen
Kien Giang University, Kien Giang, Vietnam

Huyen N. Pham
Faculty of Foreign Languages, Kien Giang University, Kien Giang, Vietnam

Diem T. K. Le
Department of Testing and Quality Assurance, Kien Giang University, Kien Giang, Vietnam

***Abstract*—Learner autonomy (LA) has been concentrated in the Vietnamese educational context for more than two decades as it equips learners the capacity for lifelong learning. For the EFL tertiary context, students encounter various challenges practicing language skills, especially English speaking, because of lacking the language environment (Huyen & Cang, 2021). As the importance of LA and students' English speaking skills in language learning, this study aims at exploring what EFL teachers support to develop LA in speaking English. The study using a mix-method approach was conducted at a university in the Mekong Delta with the participation of 12 EFL teachers. To gain insights into teachers' support to develop LA in speaking English, a questionnaire, recording observations and a semi-structured interview were used to collect data from the participants. The result indicated that the teachers positively supported their learners by offering choices of relevant information belonging to English speaking topics delivered, implementing class discussion and group work activities, encouraging them to self-evaluate and emphasizing the importance of LA in speaking development.**

***Index Terms*—learner autonomy in speaking, teachers' support in learner autonomy**

I. Introduction

For the last decades, many researchers were interested in exploring the teaching methods as well as learning strategies. Among those, associated with independence, the concept of autonomy emerged as the foundation in teaching languages, especially English for the constantly developing western economy (Benson & Voller, 2014). It allows language teachers to address learners' needs in varied circumstances. Supporting this viewpoint, a number of researchers claim that "learner autonomy" (LA) has been taken into account in language education as an ultimate goal (Dang, 2012; Dickinson, 1994). It refers to the capability to be responsible for one's learning process which allows learners to learn a language effectively (Holec, 1979, cited in Joshi, 2011).

Learner autonomy has been much concerned in Vietnam for more than two decades (Loi et al., 2014). More concentration has been put in this issue since 2007 when the credit-based training system has been applied in the training program at universities (see MOET, cited in Thiep, 2007; Nga et al., 2014). Most Vietnamese EFL learners highly appreciate the importance of LA in language learning (Nga et al., 2014). According to Dinh (2017) Vietnamese students are ready for turning the traditional program with the teacher-centered model into the learner-centered one but they still stand there with positive perception towards LA without many learning actions because of various reasons when entering the university.

In the literature, there have been many research studies done in the field of learner autonomy in English language learning, but most of them focus on how learners practice it. Moreover, not many studies concentrate on developing LA for a specific skill in language learning. In Vietnam, the situation is quite similar. Research has mostly been done in developing LA for EFL learners' language skills in general. This paper tends to explore the ways how teachers help develop LA for tertiary English majored students in English speaking skills at a university in the Mekong Delta. More specifically, it aims to answer the question "What do EFL teachers do to support students in developing their autonomy in speaking?"

II. Literature Review

A. Learner Autonomy

Initially, according to Holec (1981), the father of the term, learner autonomy refers to the "*ability to take charge of one's own learning*", and it is "*not inborn but be acquired in either the natural setting or in the formal one*" (cited in Little & Dam, 1998, p. 1). He also clarifies what he called autonomy in learning in five aspects:

- determining the objectives
- defining the contents and progressions
- selecting methods and techniques to be used
- monitoring the procedure of acquisition
- evaluating what has been acquired

In a similar vein, Dickinson (1994, p. 4) claims that an autonomous learner is the one "*who has undertaken the responsibilities in their own learning*". It refers to the learner's involvement in making appropriate decisions in his or her learning. In another viewpoint, Gathercole (1990, p. 16) considers autonomy as a matter of "*the learner's willingness and capacity to control or oversee her own learning*". In this study, learner autonomy in speaking English can be understood regarding three points: *(1) setting learning goals/ plans for English speaking improvement* (ESI), *(2) utilizing activities to perform learning actions for ESI, (3) self-evaluating English speaking performance and processes.*

Little (1999) emphasizes the position of LA for learners' success in learning, claiming that learners should deeply understand that how highly they succeed in learning integrally depends on themselves rather than on the external factors. Also, utilizing LA allows learners to be successful as it provides opportunities to have freedom in learning (Jamila, 2013). In other words, when the learners become autonomous, they are able to carry out learning activities logically with planned actions. Similarly, Little and Dam (1998) claim that autonomous learners are those who are able to reflect on their learning process as well as encourage themselves. Therefore, LA plays a vital role in leading to effective learning as the learners actively control what and how they learn.

In brief, LA exists and has a prominent role not only in formal learning but also in the phase when this process ends. After completing formal education, learners are able to use their knowledge and skills to deal with different situations. However, in the EFL context, it has certain obstacles preventing it from being developed. Since it has numerous challenges, the study focuses on an aspect of language learning, specifically speaking skills.

B. The EFL Teachers' Roles in Supporting Students to Develop Learner Autonomy for English Speaking Improvement

LA has become popular since the end of the 20th century (Jamila, 2013). Utilizing LA in teaching speaking, she draws out six areas: *setting objectives*, *materials, methods, evaluation, teacher-learner relationship*, and *learning environment,* which was developed by Wilson (2005), while conducting research on tertiary level at a private university in Bangladesh. The current study also follows the track exploring teachers' support in English speaking skill development through promoting LA. In the scope of the study, the three areas among those were deliberately considered: *setting objectives, method, evaluation* as they indicate the typical stages in the teaching process. According to Jamila (2013), autonomous learners are able to adjust their objectives based on their needs as well as they are allowed to change them according to current personal circumstances. Method, the second area, typically refers to the classroom activities facilitating students' speaking performance. After doing the activities, evaluation is the next consideration.

To get insight into teachers' support in promoting LA in English speaking class, the researcher integrated Benson's (2003, in Penh, 2016, p.45) suggestions in the three areas. His suggesting guidelines are as follows:

1. Be actively involved in students' learning
2. Provide options and resources
3. Offer choices and decision making opportunities
4. Support learners
5. Encourage reflection

On the basis of these suggestions, the study highlights three components to explore teachers' support to develop LA in English speaking: (1) *offering learners choices and decision-making to develop LA in English speaking,* (2) *creating classroom activities to promote LA in speaking English,* (3) *encouraging learner self-evaluation on their English speaking.*

(a). Offering Learners Choices and Decision-Making to Develop LA in English Speaking

Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) emphasize that learners deciding on what to learn and making choices are a great start to develop LA. However, for traditional classrooms, passing the right of deciding materials to learners is not feasible as the assigned topics among the institutions across the university. Besides, Loi et al. (2014) conclude that the majority of EFL teachers among the university in the Mekong Delta perceive the impossibility of implementing the students' self-decision-making. Nevertheless, the researchers also conclude that they positively desire students to take responsibility.

It means that EFL teachers can partly involve learners in making decisions, not totally change the curriculum design. Supporting this idea, Dang (2012) suggest that adjusting the curriculum affords LA development.

Besides, the positive perception towards LA of student teachers at Gazi University, Turkey recommends that involving students in choosing homework tasks and selected resources should be applied (Balcikanli, 2010). Dam (2011) explains that having to make choices requires learners' reflection. It means that while being asked to make a choice, learners have to reflect on their learning process to make decision. Jamila (2013) argues that autonomous learners have full freedom which leads them to be effective in speaking. Therefore, *offering learners choices* including the option for materials, topics, and assigned tasks in teaching speaking can encourage LA for English speaking improvement.

(b). Creating Activities to Develop LA for ESI

EFL learners need to know how valuable LA is, so that they can understand how LA helps them enhance English speaking skills. This aspect becomes more important since EFL learners encounter numerous problems in English speaking (fears, confidence, …). To help them overcome the difficulties, EFL teachers should play the role of "a counselor" to predict learners' stress and help them solve the problems (Joshi, 2011).

Therefore, advising learners to overcome the difficulties is necessary when they speak English in the classroom. In addition, students are willing to contribute to the discussion if they know the content as well as have time for preparation. As a result, asking students to prepare at home benefits their enthusiasm in classroom discussion. In other words, letting students prepare a particular topic for English classroom activities allows them to have more time finding the relevant information which equips their background knowledge, vocabulary and structures for talking in the classrooms.

Obviously, students cannot perform their preparation without specific activity formed by the teacher. In this case, the teacher performs his/ her role as a facilitator. For English speaking classes, teachers should create classroom discussions or deliver different tasks which create space for students' English speaking performance. Specifically, collaborative tasks such as a project, group work, debate and individual activities are two kinds of classroom activities suggested for promoting LA as they are created to achieve the learning objectives (Conole et al., 2008; Lockyer et al., 2008, cited in Dang, 2012). Besides, making a presentation is suggested in the autonomous classroom (Dam, 2011) as it helps gain confidence among learners.

These activities are beneficial towards English speaking components. In detail, according to Vilímec (2006), to develop fluency, teachers are considered as stimulator, manager, and consultant (see Harmer, 2001, p.275-276), and on the other hand, for accuracy purposes, teachers play the roles of a conductor, an organizer and a monitor (see Byrne, 1991, p.13). As a result, EFL teachers could encourage learners to further practice without the fear of making mistakes for enhancing fluency; monitoring learners' performance to evaluate their presentation to correct language features contributing to the accuracy.

(c). Encouraging Student Self-Evaluating Their English Speaking Skills

Little (1998) asserts "*learner reflection*" is a key principle to promote LA. It refers to assisting learners in their learning process including making plans, monitoring and self-evaluation. In the same vein Joshi (2011) states that as facilitators and organizers encouraging learners in language classrooms, teachers also play the role of "a resource person" who gives feedback to students' performance. Vilímec (2006) supports this idea by confirming that both positive and negative feedback benefit students' English speaking development (see Richard & Lockhart, 1999). Teachers' feedback helps learners know how well they perform speaking tasks, they get more motivation for further practice as well. Therefore, teacher's evaluation can foster LA in practicing English speaking.

Another feature to encourage learners in self-reflecting is the involvement of peer-evaluation. Indeed, encouraging students to self-reflect does not mean that they do it by themselves because teacher-, peer-, and self-assessment, as already mentioned, also contribute to the constant evaluating process (Dam, 1995, cited in Little, 2003). Peer assessment would help the audiences concentrate on the presentation and also allow them to perform better in the end (Brown & Pickford, 2006). Also, Brown and Pickford (2006) claim that negotiation on how their performance will be assessed is valuable because learners can get insights into the rubric. Then, they can self-adjust and complete the tasks better. It is concluded that the teacher and classmates play the certain roles in motivating student self-evaluation.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

In order to investigate EFL teachers' support to EFL learners to develop LA in speaking English, a descriptive study using a mixed-method approach was employed. A mixed-method approach refers to the combination of both quantitative and qualitative study which allows the researcher to gain rich and diverse data so that he or she can get insights into the research topic (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Particularly, the method was designed as the explanatory model in which the quantitative data was collected first to gain generalized information about the research problem, then the qualitative method was carried out to explain those in-depth.

In the quantitative method, the questionnaire was administered to explore EFL teachers' support to develop LA in speaking English. In order to deeply understand what EFL teachers actualize in real speaking classes, classroom observation was conducted. Then the semi-structured interviews were used to recheck as well as get insight into teachers' activities in fostering LA for their speaking.

B. Participants

The participants for the questionnaire in this study consisted of twelve teachers teaching English to English-majored students based on convenience sampling (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Among twelve EFL teachers participating in the questionnaire, three of them were asked for permission for video-recording their classes. Three participants who had already been observed were invited to participate in the interviews. In addition, two other participants who answered the questionnaire were asked to participate in the interview. The information of the participants is presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS FOR THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEWS

Teachers' personal information	**Highest Degree**	**Number (N=12)**	**Selected interviewees**
Gender	Male	4	2
	Female	8	3
Highest Degree	Bachelor's	3	2
	Master's	9	3
Years of learning at university	0-5 years	6	3
	6-10 years	2	1
	> 10 years	4	1

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE OBSERVATION AND INTERVIEWS

Interviewed	**Years of teaching experience**	**Course Instructor**	**Observed**
Teacher 1 (female)	7	Speaking & Specialist	x
Teacher 2 (female)	5	Reading	
Teacher 3 (male)	12	Speaking	x
Teacher 4 (female)	5	Specialist	x
Teacher 5 (male)	3	Listening & Writing	

A. Research Instruments

(a). The Questionnaire

The questionnaire includes two sections. The initial collects the teacher's demographic information, which allows the researcher to know about the teachers' teaching experience, gender, the highest degree they own. The latter includes activities that teachers use to promote students' LA in speaking English.

Based on the crucial elements of LA (Holec, 1981; Little, 1991) as well as speaking aspects were drawn (Bygate, 1998; Gower et al. 1995), the questionnaire aims to examine teachers' support regarding three key components: (1) *offering learners choices and decision-making to develop LA in English speaking,* (2) *creating classroom activities to promote LA in speaking English,* (3) *encouraging learner self-evaluation on their English speaking.*

The participants were invited to reflect on how frequently they support their learners by choosing one among five-point Likert scales: (1) *never*, (2) *rarely,* (3) *sometimes,* (4) *often,* and (5) *always* of 30 items. Cluster 1 consists of 6 items, cluster 2 includes 15 items, and cluster 3 has 9 items, including activities helping learners develop LA in speaking English which were mentioned and discussed in the literature and related studies' results. The items in the questionnaire were adapted from that of Jamila (2013), which was based on Wilson's (2005) questionnaire.

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EFL TEACHERS

Cluster	**Contents**	**Items**
Offering learners choices and decision-making (6 items)	Offering learners choices	1, 2, 3
	Help students in self decision-making	4, 5, 6
Creating activities (15 items):	raising awareness towards the importance of LA	8, 11
	encourage classroom discussion	7, 9, 18
	encourage self-preparation	12, 13
	encourage outside classroom practice	14, 15
	introduce learning source	17, 21
	encourage learners to overcome difficulties in speaking English	10, 19, 20
Encouraging student self-evaluation (5 items)	Teachers' evaluation	22, 23, 24
	Peer evaluation	25, 26
	Self-evaluation	27, 28, 29, 30

(b). The Observation

The observation form includes two main features: overall information and the teachers' activities in the classroom detailed in the checklist divided into categories. The observed data was put into "sub-piles", and that helps the researcher figure out the similarities and differences (Dey, 2003). Various features exist in a classroom meeting, in the scope of the study, teachers' activities created in the speaking class were concentrated. The three categories were included: (1) *offering learners choices*, (2) *talking to students about the importance of LA in ESI and activities involving students in English speaking,* and (3) *evaluating students' speaking performance*, and other notes were taken to make the comparison where relevant.

The semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview aims at getting qualitative data through teachers' self-report of what they have done to help EFL learners develop their autonomy in speaking English. The semi-structured interview carried out by Jamila (2013) was adapted, some questions were redesigned according to the purpose of the current study. Six questions were delivered, mainly focusing on three key components: (1) *offering learners choices and decisions-making to develop their English speaking skills*, (2) *creating activities to develop learners' English speaking skills*, (3) *evaluating English speaking performance*.

TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Instruments	**Questionnaires**	**Observation**	**Interview**
Purposes	To collect data about teachers' support to help students develop LA for their ESI	To further understand the activities teachers actualize in the classroom to develop their LA for ESI	To gain insight into teachers' support with particular activities to develop LA for ESI.
Format	Including 30 items divided into three clusters 1 open-ended question Five-point Likert scales	Including checklists based on clusters of the questionnaire and note-taking	Six questions including three themes
Response format	Written	class recordings	Spoken

B. Data Analysis Method

(a). Analysis of the Questionnaire

The *Descriptive Statistic Tests* and *One Sample T-tests* were computed to examine teachers' support and students' practice to develop LA in speaking English. To define whether the analyzed data is high or low from the range from 1 to 5, the researcher based on the Oxford's (1990) scale (Table 5)

TABLE 5
KEY TO UNDERSTAND THE AVERAGE

Level	**Range**
Very high	4.5 to 5.0
High	3.5 to 4.4
Medium	2.5 to 3.4
Low	1.0 to 2.4

(b). Analysis of the Recording Observations

From the observation checklist, the number of activities that the teachers actualized in the classroom was categorized into the three clusters based on the three clusters embedded in the questionnaire. The comparison among teachers was made in order to identify similar and different kinds of activities implemented in English speaking classes. Also, some relevant data was analyzed in accordance with the questionnaire results to emphasize key results.

(c). Analysis of the Interviews

All the interview recordings conducted on students and teachers were transcribed, and the lines were numbered. Thematic analysis was applied to help the researcher encode the qualitative information (Boyatzis, 1998). Based on the similarity and differences, the participants' responses were clustered into each highlighted theme.

The main themes were defined based on the designed clusters in the interview, which allows the researcher to analyze the data and compare with the questionnaire results and the observation one as well.

For the student interview, the three key themes are: *(1) set up learning goals for ESI, (2) utilize activities to perform learning actions for ESI, (3) self-evaluate ESS and processes.*

For the teacher interview, the three key themes are: *(1) offer learners choices and decision-making to develop LA for in ESS, (2) create activities to develop LA for learners' ESS, (3) evaluate students' English speaking performance.*

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. Findings from the Questionnaire

A *Descriptive Statistic Test* was conducted to examine the Min, Max, Standard Deviation of teachers' support in developing LA in speaking. The result shows in Table 6.

TABLE 6
THE MEAN SCORE OF TEACHERS' SUPPORT TO DEVELOP LA IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teachers' support	12	2.40	4.03	3.50	.50
Valid N (listwise)	12				

It can be seen from the table that the mean score teachers' support in developing LA to help learners develop English speaking (M=3.5, SD=0.5) was high.

One Sample T-test was carried out to check whether the mean score of teachers' practices (M=3.5) and the test value 3.4 are different. The result shows that the mean score of teachers' practices and the test value are significantly the same (t=698, df=11, p= .500). It means that the teachers' support to help EFL students develop LA in speaking was at a rather high level.

The *Scale Tests* were administered to examine the Min, Max, Mean score, SD of each cluster. The results were as in Table 7

TABLE 7
THE MEAN SCORES OF THE THREE CLUSTERS OF TEACHERS' SUPPORT

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Offering learners choices	12	2.00	4.33	3.38	.73
Creating activities	12	3.07	4.27	3.80	.42
Encouraging self-evaluation	12	1.56	4.00	3.08	.65
Valid N (listwise)	12				

It can be seen that the mean score of teachers' activities in the classroom was the highest (M=3.8), the following is the mean of offering learners choices and decision-making (M=3.4), the mean score of encouraging students to self-evaluate English speaking was the lowest (M=3.1).

One Sample T-test was used to check whether the mean score of teachers' activities used in the classroom (M=3.8) is considerably different from the test value 4.5. The result shows that they are totally different (t=-5.751, df=11, p= .000). It means that the teachers' activities in the classroom used to support students were not at a very high level.

For teachers' practice, the first *Frequency Test* was run on 6 items of cluster 1 to find out the specific activities indicating teachers' offering learners choices and decision-making. The results are presented in Table 8.

TABLE 8
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS' SUPPORT OF OFFERING LEARNERS CHOICES AND DECISION-MAKING

Items		**N &R**		**S**		**U & A**	
		F	P (%)	F	P(%)	F	P (%)
1.	For the subjects I am in charge of, I create activities which help learners establish learning objectives for English speaking skills	2	16.6	3	25.0	7	58.4
2.	I encourage learners to adapt their English speaking objective based on their learning goals	4	33.3	4	33.3	4	33.3
3.	I discuss with learners about English speaking skill objectives they want to gain	2	16.6	4	33.3	6	50.0
4.	I discuss with learners about English speaking topic they are interested in	4	33.3	3	25.0	5	41.7
5.	I allow learners to choose extra materials beyond teaching materials for their discussions and presentation in English	1	8.3	4	33.3	7	58.4
6.	I allow learners to choose English task, topic among those I delivered to present in class	2	16.6	3	25.0	7	58.4

With the high level of offering learners choices and decision-making, the table indicates that 58.4% (n=7) EFL teachers form the activities aiding learners to establish learning objectives for ESS development, offer them opportunities to choose a task, topic among the delivered ones as well as encourage them to search for the information on the resources beyond the textbook. Half of the teachers discuss with learners about the English speaking objectives they desire to gain (50%, n=6), but the frequency of encouraging them to adapt their English speaking objectives based on their learning goals equally ranges from never to always (33.3%, n=4).

Another *Frequency Test* was run to examine which items of *creating activities in the classroom* gained high level of frequency. The results are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS' SUPPORT OF CREATING ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP LA IN ENGLISH SPEAKING

		N &R		S		U & A	
Items		F	P (%)	F	P(%)	F	P (%)
7.	I give learners chances to raise questions, debate in English speaking classes	0	0	0	0	12	100
8.	I tell learners about the importance of LA and self-establishing objective skills in learning for English speaking skill development	0	0	3	25	9	75
9.	I create pair works, group works to let students help each other in English speaking sessions	0	0	1	8	11	92
10	I encourage learners to be confident to speak English, not caring about making grammatical mistakes	0	0	0	0	12	100
11	I encourage learners to be responsible for their learning in English speaking sessions/ lessons	1	8	2	16	9	75
12	I require learners to prepare for in-class discussion in English	2	16	3	25	7	59
13	I deliver homework, tasks requiring English speaking and check whether they have completed	0	0	4	33	8	67
14	I encourage learners to john English club, group to further practice speaking English	1	8	0	0	11	92
15	I encourage learners to practice speaking English outside the classroom	1	8	0	0	11	92
16	I design activities requiring learners to self-evaluate their learning strategies and performance on doing a project of speaking English	3	25	4	33	5	42
17	I introduce to learners websites containing lesson contents to help them have more knowledge for practicing English speaking	1	8	3	25	8	68
18	I design various English speaking tasks to offer learners choices	1	8	6	50	5	42
19	I talk in person with learners outside the classroom to help them deal with English speaking issues	2	16	7	59	3	25
20	I encourage learners to avoid negative thought and attitude regarding learning English	0	0	2	16	10	84
21	I utilize a learning management system to offer knowledge for learners to practice speaking English	6	50	3	25	3	25

The result indicates 100% EFL teachers provide learners chances to raise questions and encourage them to overcome their fear of making mistakes (n=12). The activities that EFL teachers also pay attention to are creating pair work, group work, encouraging learners to join English clubs or practice outside the classroom with the percentage of 92 (n=11). It can be concluded that EFL teachers tend to guide learners to social interaction in and outside the classroom. The third level accounts for 84% (n=10) illustrating teachers' encouragement toward getting rid of learners' negative attitudes regarding learning English.

Among the less frequently applied activities, utilizing a learning management system to provide learners with useful knowledge for practicing was at a high level with 50 % (n=6), 25% teachers just sometimes implemented (n=3).

The last *Frequency Test* was carried on 9 items of cluster 3 to further understanding particular aspect using as encouraging learners to self-evaluating their ESS. The results were presented in Table 10.

TABLE 10
PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS' SUPPORT OF ENCOURAGING STUDENT SELF-EVALUATION

Items		N &R		S		U & A	
		F	P (%)	F	P(%)	F	P (%)
22.	I evaluate students' speaking skills	1	8.0	0		11	92.8
23.	I require learners to self-evaluate their task completion before receiving teacher's feedback	4	33.3	5	41.7	3	25.0
24.	I require learners to self-evaluate their task completion after receiving teacher's feedback	6	50.0	1	8.3	5	41.7
25.	I require learners to self-evaluate their task completion before receiving peer feedback	5	41.7	5	41.7	2	16.7
26.	I require learners to self-evaluate their task completion after receiving peer feedback	6	50.0	3	25.0	3	25.0
27.	I require learners to self-evaluate their English speaking skills	1	8.3	6	50.0	5	41.7
28.	I require learners to make their learning plan to gain more effectiveness in practicing their English speaking skills	4	33.3	5	41.7	3	25.0
29.	I ask learners which point/mark they would like to get in presentation in English and how they will do to achieve their target	4	33.3	4	33.3	4	33.3
30.	I discuss with learners about the rubric for evaluating presentation in English	0	0	6	50	6	50

The table illustrates that EFL teachers regularly evaluate students' English speaking skills as the highest percentage presented (92.8%, n=11). However, the highest rate of requiring learners to self-evaluate their English speaking skills was in the moderate level of frequency (50%, n=6). Teacher rarely or never ask students to self-evaluate after receiving feedback from teacher and friends (50%, n=6).

Regarding criteria for evaluating, 50% (n=6) of EFL teachers normally negotiate with learners how their presentation will be assessed while the rest of teachers does not do it very often (50%, n=6).

The open-ended questions provide further information regarding to activities teachers use to force LA for English speaking development. Specifically, a teacher reports that students are required to retell the content of a passage, explain the meaning of words in English, write down their ideas and report orally latter. Another teacher states that she requires learners to record a speech, answer the common questions in the speaking tests, make a video to present a topic. Another report reveals three extra activities: conversation classes, English corners and final thoughts.

B. Findings from the Observations

The observation result was aligned with the results of the questionnaire. Specifically, it reveals that teachers provide learners choices, create the activities in the class and encourage learner self-evaluation whose levels reach the high level in the questionnaire result. The observation result also indicates the frequent activities used by the teachers.

Regarding learners' choices, it is observed that students were allowed to choose the information that they are interested in and their own way to share in the class meeting. Specifically, students can choose the place to design a tour (Teacher 4), create the situation, form the conversation to give advice for planning a vacation (Teacher 3), or share their experience on the topic (Teacher 1). This result was in line with the questionnaire results with the mean of teachers' offering learners choices was at the high level (M=3.4).

Taking students' concentration to the class meeting under consideration, during the presentation, teacher 4 sent the message to the chat box to remind the others to take note what they observed in the evaluation form. She also emphasized that students should focus on friends' presentations for self-reflection.

"*Please take notes while you are observing to give comments to your friends"*

"Even the presentation was not good, but there may be some points that your friend did well, we learn the good ones, and if we avoid the mistakes that your friend made". (Scenario 1)

On the other hand, in scenario 2, all the cameras were turned off except the ones of presenters while a group was presenting. Also, the other group did not give any comments to their friends' performance, it is assumed that they mainly focus on their own. The students' camera, however, was totally different in the third scenario as all students turned them on during the class meeting. The students showed that they paid attention to the lesson because they were ready to turn on the microphone to answer the teacher's questions.

Pair-work, group-work were prominent in the classroom as they were used in the three classes. They worked in pairs, groups of three or four to make a presentation, role play, and discussion for answering.

In terms of evaluation, the teacher's assessment was used by the teachers. Nevertheless, they are quite different regarding the points they concentrated on. Students in scenario 1 received feedback for their powerpoint displays such as the word sizes, the number of words, and the pronunciation, some of the mistakes in each member's pronunciation, and the content connection among members. Teacher 3 also figured out students' mistakes in pronunciation:

I have been telling you that whenever there is a presentation, make sure you find in the dictionary. For example, we don't call it /ˈaɪslənd/, *we call it* /ˈaɪlənd/ *(Scenario 2)*

Besides, the ones in the second scenario were evaluated in terms of their amount of time in performing, specifically the first comments for the three groups were:

"Your presentation was twenty nine minutes, you did everything, what was Miss N doing? She didn't talk even for two minutes, Why didn't you engage her in the conversation... This should be even distribution..."

"The presentation lasts nine minutes which isn't bad....",

"And you had twenty five minutes..."

And he told his students that they shouldn't base on the scripts:

"The only thing I am not happy is that you were looking on your screen" "...Which is very good, but you were looking on the screen of your laptop"

The crucial difference among the teachers was the combination with self-evaluation and peer feedback. Teacher 4 combines the three modes of assessment in presentation performance. After presenting, students were required to give feedback on their own. For instance:

"I think we have prepared a lot of information about Da Nang, pictures about the places are beautiful... and ...uhm... some of members forget because we don't practice many time,.. we will try next time"

In brief, students were provided with choices to speak English through pair or group work in the class meetings. Nevertheless, it was not sure that they put effort into their work to improve English speaking as they were not involved much in their friends' performance. In other words, when students do not participate in classroom activities, they lack chances to reflect their work and their classmates' presentation. Besides, the result reveals that teachers sometimes mentioned the importance of LA before as well as during the class. What is more, students were encouraged to self-evaluate in some classes, frequently the teacher provided feedback immediately after they finished presenting.

C. Findings from the Interviews

Five teachers were invited to self-report what they have done that they consider as positive ways to develop LA for students' ESI. Their responses were categorized into three themes: offering learner choice and decision-making, creating activities to develop LA for ESI, evaluating students' ESS.

(a). Offer Learners Choices and Decision-Making to Develop LA for in ESS

Initially, the teachers reveal that the lesson objectives were based on the curriculum, students have the choice of topics, but they must be under the general topics. On the other hand, they were allowed to freely consult various related sources to contribute to their speaking performance. The following statement would indicate these points:

"The learners are allowed to choose topics among assigned ones, in Speaking 1 course, there are five topics, and students are allowed to choose among those" (Teacher 1)

"In fact, each module has its goal aims at developing specific goal" but *"learners are encouraged to share other or better sources, what they learn from other resources" (Teacher 4)*

(b). Create Activities to Develop LA for Learners' ESS

Focusing on supporting students through talking and creating the activities, the results reveal two aspects that teachers frequently actualize: raising students' awareness of LA in their ESI and getting students to involve in speaking English by group work. For example, even though LA is not explicitly expressed in the English speaking courses, teacher 2 and teacher 5 emphasize speaking English as well as encourage the learner to be aware of and practice LA. They stated:

"I also tell them that at home, they have to, even if they don't have someone to talk to, they can also find someone to chat with, or talk aimlessly by yourself in English." (Teacher 2)

"I recommend that they try to use the vocabulary and structures they have learned to apply in speaking. It means that the first step I help them know is that the purpose of language learning is to communicate" (Teacher 5)

However, one teacher said that raising students' awareness of LA at university is the role of the academic advisers:

"I do not take defining, explaining clearly the importance of learner autonomy for speaking improvement under consideration that is the academic adviser' responsibility…" (Teacher 1)

It means that she does not deliberately explain to the students how important LA is, she focuses on creating activities forcing students to put effort to study further.

For particular activities, letting students work in group in the class meeting and outsides are used by teachers:

"Group activities help students become more confident.... students can sit together and create their own dialogue, if the group is good, they develop their ideas more, use more diverse structures, more ideas." (Teacher 4)

Or I think it's not just me, but other teachers also direct their students to do more homework, prepare in groups and prepare to study individually, giving them time to prepare the parts that they have not learned or understood on their own yet so that I can talk to them or they can perform their preparations..." (Teacher 2)

For the teachers teaching other modules, the ways they implement are using English as the mean of teaching or creating small talk in the classroom:

"...Instead of asking them to come up to the board to write the answer, I ask a question to let them use that structure to answer like a mini talk which also helps them to react spontaneously, naturally and speak English better..." (Teacher 5)

The language environment is also Teacher's 3 focus, he mentioned both inside and outside the classroom environment

"We should organize outside classroom activities where students will get the environment to speak. For example, we can take them to coffee shop, ok, we have some basic words, I want to order, I want to, you know, they are there, they can have the free at the environment, you take them to the library, it is practical, so we should ignore the theoretical aspects, and focus on practical aspects. The environment where students are is also a factor, the environment is a condition for the students to practice more". (Teacher 3)

While the others introduce some resources for students to practice like ulis.com and many other websites as well as software to practice speaking. Two teachers stated:

"I introduce them to the ulis.com website to help them practice listening, ...so that they can further practice based on listening to these accents. (Teacher 5)

"I just tell you the sources of English learning in general, like youtube or certain websites". (Teacher 2)

(c). Evaluate Students' English Speaking Performance

Reporting about learners' speaking performance evaluation, all assigned tasks are always assessed by teacher:

"That's right, when I give an assignment, I give a learning task, I have to evaluate it". (Teacher 1)

"So these exercises are all presented in class, right?" "Right". (Teacher 4)

Besides, the significant difference is that teacher 1 and teacher 3 do not spend much time in the class letting students self-evaluate or give peer feedback even though they agree that self-evaluation plays an important role. They explained:

"At first, I used to let students receive peer feedback, but I realized that...(pause)..the learners were not, in my opinion, qualified enough to evaluate their friends' performance" (Teacher 1)

"I highly recommend that students can self-assess their skills, especially their presentations, Usually, after giving presentations and especially in groups, ... I'll tell them if they're satisfied with their performance. What do you think you're doing well and not well?" (Teacher 3)

To sum up, teachers encourage students to be aware of their learning process, offering some sources to let them discover and self-study outside that classroom. Prominently, classroom discussion and homework are considered as main activities to motivate students in practicing English speaking. Besides, the result shows that teachers less control what and how students self-evaluate inside and outside the classroom although teachers report that they encourage student to self-reflect their presentations.

V. Discussion

While the majority of previous studies discovered EFL teachers' practice to develop LA in language learning, the current study aims at exploring what teachers do to enhance it in student ESI. Focusing on the aspect in language learning, the EFL teachers provide particular activities as well as explain what and how they support students in the field.

Taking the five categories that Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) conducted in the Asian setting, the highlighted result from the present study is in line with two dimensions, talking to learners the value of LA and delivering tasks demanding learners to look for the relevant information by themselves.

Firstly, most teachers claim that raising students' awareness of LA in their language learning plays an integral role. When students are highly aware of their own learning, they get started focusing on the appropriate goals and materials. It can be regarded as the initial step in developing LA (Nunan, 1997). It is inferred that students would not get involved in learning action promoting LA without the "awareness".

Secondly, presentation, which is considered as a key component to illustrate the speaking function of *taking as performance*, which is one of the three functions of speaking developed by (Jones, 1996; Burns, 1998; Richards, 2008), is used in the English speaking class. By observing the classes, its implementation allows learners to cooperate in practicing English. This result also differs from the previous studies because the researcher could confirm exactly what kind of activities performed in the classroom. Following this, the interview further explains why these kinds of activities chosen. Specifically, consistent result as Le (2019) conducting study on teachers' practice, the finding indicates that implementing group work as a prominent activity in English as the time limitation and large-size classes.

In terms of supporting learners with reliable sources, while giving learners learning resources was encouraged, one teacher is not practically concerned since he believes that students are not willing to further practice outside the classroom, which can be considered as teachers' action toward feasibility confusion of passing responsibility in decision-making to students Loi et al., (2014). On the other hand, teachers are ready to let students choose their favourite sources and relevant information about assigned topics with the desire of involving students in speaking activities. Some resources were mentioned with particular purpose such as unlis.com website facilitating students to practice accuracy in pronunciation, key element allowing language learners to develop both accuracy and fluency in speaking skill (Hedge, 2000, Mazouzi, 2013, cited in Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Thornbury, 2005). A consideration may be the combination of listening skill in teaching speaking. The teachers claim that teachers can use listening sources as the reliable and meaningful input in instructing ESS. Furthermore, as what students learned from the listening session, they absolutely own certain knowledge which can be reused in speaking. This point is claimed again by the student interview.

For evaluating student ESS performance, because of the time limitation, students are provided chances to self-assess their performance but it shows to be not prominent, peer-feedback are also rarely applied in the presentations as teachers sought it impossible in the time-limit English speaking sessions or students' incapacity in cross-evaluating. This finding does not get in line with the Braine's (2003) result which emphasizes that peer feedback could motive student autonomy. The reason for these results may lays on the learners' capacity as teachers report. A significant consideration is that without self or peer evaluation on specific feature in speaking, for learners whose autonomy level is not high, they may feel hard to self-evaluate without their teachers' guidance. Regarding this issue, teachers are suggested to play a role as a facilitator who creating the condition to help learner easily process their learning (Joshi, 2011). On the other hand, the observations show that teachers play the role of a "counsellor" whose advice guides students to construct their learning, it occurs when students do not perform well (Benson & Voller, 2014). Also, for peer assessment, the observation reveals that an EFL teacher applied the evaluating form to get audiences' involvement during the presentation. The result was under the highlighted conclusion of Brown and Pickford (2006) regarding assessing presentation performance. In conclusion, teachers wish to encourage learner self-access, but they did not spend much time focusing on this part in the classroom as they foresee the impossibility. It is inferred that teachers' guidance is a need to facilitate student self-reflection on their English speaking performance as well as the process they prepared for the project.

VI. Implication

As the result illustrates the variety in students' setting goals and student consistency of tracking the learning plans, the EFL teachers may create the activities at the beginning of courses to let student self-reflect and raise more awareness of their learning. In detail, encouraging students to have their own learning plan which gets along with learning procedures in each course could help students be patient with their schedule. They may find their plan beneficial in the courses, and thus, they can keep going. It requires the cooperation of teachers who teach speaking skills, other skills, and specialist courses.

Pair-work, group-work should be frequently created in the class meeting to encourage students to use language.

The teacher's feedback should be combined with peer-evaluation, and especially self-evaluation to let students realize their own performance as the encouragement for their own learning. As the role of facilitator, teachers should offer the way students can self-evaluate such as suggesting recording devices, guiding evaluation form.

Constant exploration of the learning source until figuring out the appropriate one, true source, appropriate learning method would direct students to the effective learning practice. Therefore, various sources could be integrated during the language teaching and learning.

VII. Conclusion

It can be concluded that all the EFL teacher participants in this research considered LA one of the most important keys to success in language learning. With regard to LA in developing ESS, teachers emphasized the role of LA to raise the student's awareness in their own learning. Although they did not create the activities to help students set up learning goals, they positively offered learners as much as they could regarding opting relevant topics, choosing resources, frequently creating pair work, group work assignments as well as encouraging students to self-evaluate. In depth, this encouragement was not highlighted as the time limitation and students' proficiency of ESS stated by EFL teachers.

References

[1] Balcikanli, C. (2010). Learner autonomy in language learning: Student teachers' beliefs. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education (Online), 35*(1), 90-103.
[2] Benson, P., & Voller, P. (2014). *Autonomy and independence in language learning*. Routledge.
[3] Borg, S., & Al-Busaidi, S. (2012). Learner autonomy: English language teachers' beliefs and practices. *ELT Journal*, *12*(7), 1-45.
[4] Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development. Sage.
[5] Brown, S., & Pickford, R. (2006). *Assessing skills and practice*. Routledge.
[6] Bygate, M. (1998). Theoretical perspectives on speaking. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 18,* 20-42.
[7] Dam, L. (2011). Developing learner autonomy with school kids: Principles, practices, results. In D. Gardner (Ed.), *Fostering autonomy in language learning* (pp. 126-136). Zirve University, Gaziantep.
[8] Dang, T. T. (2012). Learner autonomy: A synthesis of theory and practice. *The Internet Journal of Language, Culture and Society*, *35*(1), 52-67.
[9] Dey, I. (2003). *Qualitative data analysis: A user friendly guide for social scientists*. Routledge.
[10] Dickinson, L. (1994). Learner autonomy: What, why, and how. *Autonomy in language learning*, *15*(4), 1-12.
[11] Dinh Thị Hồng Thu. 2017. "Tổng quan về nghiên cứu tính tự chủ trong học ngoại ngữ ở Việt Nam". *Tạp chí nghiên cứu ngoại ngữ, Đại học Quốc gia Hà Nội*. *33*(5). doi: 10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4194.
[12] Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Huyn, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education (8th Ed.).* New York: Mc Graw-Hill Humanities.
[13] Gathercole, I. (1990). *Autonomy in Language Learning*. CILT Publications.
[14] Gower, R., Phillips, D., & Walters, S. (1995). Teaching practice handbook. UK: Macmillan Heinemann.
[15] Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[16] Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy in foreign language learning* (first published 1979, Strasbourg: Council of Europe). Oxford: Pergamon.
[17] Huyen, P. N. & Cang, N. T. (2021). Developing EFL Learners' Autonomy in Speaking English: An Investigation into Students' Practice at a University in the Mekong Delta. *European Journal of Language Teaching. 6*(6) 242-65.
[18] Jamila, M. (2013). Use of Learner Autonomy in Teaching Speaking by Tertiary Level English Language Teachers in Private Universities of Bangladesh. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 18*(4), 29-43.
[19] Joshi, K. R. (2011). Learner perceptions and teacher beliefs about learner autonomy in language learning. *Journal of NELTA, 16*(1-2), 12-29.
[20] Le, A. N. H. (2019). *EFL teachers' and students' perceptions and practices regarding Learner Autonomy: An Exploratory Study at a Vietnamese university in the Mekong Delta*. Doctor of Philosophy Thesis. Hue university.
[21] Le, T. N. A. (2018). EFL students' voices on learner autonomy at a university in the Mekong Delta. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, *34*-(2), 26-38.
[22] Leong, L. M., & Ahmadi, S. M. (2017). An analysis of factors influencing learners' English speaking skill. *International Journal of Research in English Education, 6*(2) 31-41.
[23] Little, D. (1991). Learner autonomy. *Dublin*, *86*(11) 15-22.
[24] Little, D. (1999) Developing learner autonomy in the foreign language classroom: A social-interactive view of learning and three fundamental pedagogical principles. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 38, 77-88.
[25] Little, D. (2003). Learner autonomy and second/foreign language learning. *Guide to Good Practice for Learning and Teaching in Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies*. Dublin.
[26] Little, D., & Dam, L. (1998). Learner autonomy: What and why?. *Language Teacher-KYOTO-JALT-*, *22*, 7-8.
[27] Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied linguistics, 20*(1), 71-94.
[28] Lợi, N. V. (2014). Lớp học nghịch đảo-mô hình dạy học kết hợp trực tiếp và trực tuyến. *Tạp chí Khoa học Trường Đại học Cần Thơ, 34,* 56-61.
[29] Loi, N. V., Hằng, C. T. T., Phạm, T. N. Q. N., & Duyên, T. M. (2014). Nâng cao khả năng tự chủ trong học tập cho sinh viên tiếng Anh-nhận thức của giảng viên tiếng Anh tại một số trường đại học. *Tạp chí Khoa học Trường Đại học Cần Thơ*, *33*(2), 75-83.
[30] Mazouzi, M. S. (2013). *Analysis of some factors affecting learners' oral performance* (Master's thesis).

[31] Najeeb, S. S. (2013). Learner autonomy in language learning. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 70*, 1238-1242.
[32] Nga, P. T. T., Thúy, T. V. D., & Trúc, D. Đ. H. (2014). Tìm hiểu sự tự học môn phương pháp giảng dạy của sinh viên chuyên ngành giảng dạy tiếng Anh theo học chế tín chỉ. *Khoa học xã hội, 9*(1), 101-114.
[33] Nunan, D. (1997). Designing and Adapting Materials to Encourage Learner Autonomy. In P. Benson, & P. Voller (Eds.). *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning* (pp. 192-203). London: Longman.
[34] Oxford, R. (2001). *Integrated Skills in the ESL/EFL Classroom*. ERIC Digest
[35] Penh, P. (2016). *Language Learner Autonomy: Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Asian Contexts*. IDP Education (Cambodia) Ltd.
[36] Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking* (p. 48). Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
[37] Thao, P. T. K. (2018). EFL Vietnamese students towards language learning autonomy. In *UICELL Conference Proceeding* (No. 2, pp. 12-28).
[38] Thiep, L. Q. (2007). Về học chế tín chỉ và việc áp dụng ở Việt Nam. *Tạp chí hoạt động khoa học, số, 3*, 2007, 18-27.
[39] Thornbury, S. (2005). *How to Teach Speaking*. In Harmer, J. (Ed). London: Longman.
[40] Vilímec, E. (2006). *Developing speaking skills*. University of Pardubice.
[41] Wilson, E. K. (2005). The impact of an alternative model of student teacher supervision: Views of the participants. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*, 22-31.

Cang T. Nguyen is a lecturer of English at Kien Giang University, Vietnam. He holds an MA in Applied Linguistics from La Trobe University, Australia and a PhD in Applied Linguistics at The University of Sheffield, UK. His interests are in materials evaluation, curriculum evaluation, language assessment and learner autonomy.

Khanh T. Nguyen is a lecture at Kien Giang University, Vietnam. He holds a PhD in education from the Vietnam National of Educational Sciences, Vietnam. His interests are learner autonomy and self-study management at higher education.

Huyen N. Pham is a lecturer of English at Kien Giang University. She has been teaching English at Kien Giang University since she completed a Bachelor's Degree of English education in 2018. She has just completed MA program at Can Tho University, Vietnam. Her research interests are students' independent learning and motivation.

Diem T. K. Le holds an MA in Educational Management from Hanoi University of Education - Vietnam. She worked as a teacher trainer at Kien Giang Teacher Training College – Vietnam for over 15 years. Since 2015 she moved to Kien Giang University and has been working as a lecturer.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 956-964, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.07

Students' Acceptance of Using CIDOS 3.5 for Learning Communicative English During Covid-19 Pandemic

Yong Hua Ying
Department of General Studies, Politeknik Mukah, Sarawak, Malaysia

Maslawati Mohamad
Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

M. Khalid M. Nasir
Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Abstract—**In these times of globalization, it is impossible to avoid progressive educational development. The unanticipated Covid-19 pandemic has impacted negatively on Malaysia's education system, especially at the tertiary level. Thus, Malaysian Polytechnics were forced to turn to virtual teaching and learning methods. The study's featured Learning Management System (LMS) is CIDOS 3.5, which all lecturers and students are encouraged to use during the tough period. The research design is a quantitative approach. The respondents were chosen through purposive sampling based on the course they enrolled using LMS (CIDOS 3.5) they used during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The online cross-sectional survey from 100 tertiary Communicative English students at one of the Polytechnics in Sarawak, Malaysia was collected to evaluate their perceptions on CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings found a high level of Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use and Behavioral Intention. Pearson correlation coefficient indicates a statistically significant relationship between Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease on Behavioral Intention in using LMS CIDOS 3.5 among Communicative English students at this institution in Sarawak.**

Index Terms—**polytechnic, communicative English, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, behavioral intention**

I. Introduction

Language competency facilitates collaboration and communication among individuals of various cultural origins in all aspects of life, education, and business in the era of the 21st century. As a result, language learning must be a lifelong commitment that can be accomplished to fulfill social, professional, and educational goals, in addition, personal requirements and preferences (Kukulska-Hulme et al., 2017). According to Yen and Mohamad (2020), the English language is often considered the world's lingua franca and the utmost spoken language. English as a Second Language (ESL) students go all over the world to acquire the language because of its importance and demand in today's world. As a result, much effort has been invested into developing effective methods for learning English. It is difficult to learn English as a second language as it needs a concerted, huge, and remarkable effort on the part of both students and educators (Khasbani, 2018). As society has become more globalized, the English education in Malaysia higher education has steadily shifted from grammar-translation approach to communicative approaches (Zakaria & Shah, 2019). This current approach encourages students to participate actively in class in order to improve their English, particularly their communication skills. The 4Cs of 21st-century abilities include communication skills as one of the most important skills to be mastered (Rafiq et al., 2020). As a result, many governments have designed an ultimate goal that is to ensure the empowerment of communication abilities among students through education policies. Communication skills are important to be mastered in order to produce proficient English language speakers (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2012).

The global Covid-19 pandemic has altered human norms and Malaysia economic growth (Shahzad et al., 2020). The pandemic has an impact not just on businesses, but also on education (Othman et al., 2020). Approximately 91.3 percent of the world's students, or over 1.5 billion people, are unable to attend school due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Aryanti & Ardiansyah, 2020). The Covid-19 outbreak has enormous impact on all daily operations particularly attending physical classes. Due to the uncertainties around the Covid-19 pandemic, all academics need to rethink how they interact with, teach, and support students (Chung et al., 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has changed how lecturers and students attending classes in tertiary institutions, affecting the process of teaching and learning. Higher education institutions were forced to conduct all their students' activities via online.

Due to Covid-19 occurrence, the government imposed MCO (Movement Control Order) across the country, with all teaching and learning taking place entirely online (Yen & Mohamad, 2020; Naciri et al., 2020; Sintema, 2020). During the pandemic, CIDOS 3.5, a learning management system (LMS) is utilized by one of the polytechnics in Sarawak, Malaysia to tailor to the current needs. Learning with CIDOS 3.5 has clear benefits over traditional learning approaches and it is aligned with cognitive learning components. It is also user-friendly, and easy to use, especially in Communicative English learning. However, there are several drawbacks which demotivate Communicative English students to learn online via CIDOS 3.5. Learning and mastering a language is a challenging task especially during the outbreak. As the major driver, bandwidth becomes one of the major issues in the deployment of CIDOS 3.5. CIDOS 3.5 needs a high bandwidth to support the transmission of information. It requires high performance of internet data access to upload or download notes, answer the quiz and stream the video. Due to the insufficient loading speed it may cause students' lack of interest (Abd. Razak et al., 2018). Apart from CIDOS 3.5, polytechnic include a range of applications and computer operating systems that are merged and linked for different purposes to make it usable and provide central support within one e-learning environment. This includes the fusion and linking of various applications which increased network traffic to sustain the centralized system (Nasaruddin et al., 2021). Besides, the insufficient number of computers, the oldness or slowness of ICT systems and the lack of educational software were obstacles to effective virtual learning implementation (Nasaruddin et al., 2021). Students' low level of preparation, especially on technology expertise indicated the disappointment of CIDOS 3.5 during the pandemic since they are not fully prepared (Baczek et al., 2021). All the difficulties revealed contribute to students' lack of communication, confidence, and also no motivation in learning Communicative English. In order to improve students' Communicative English, this study aimed to identify the Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use and Behavioral Intention. Simultaneously to confirm the significant relationship between Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease on Behavioral Intention in using LMS CIDOS 3.5 among Communicative English students towards using CIDOS 3.5, a software application or Web-based technology that is used to organize and manage the activities of students during the Covid-19 Epidemic.

II. Literature Review

A. The Integration of Technology in Malaysia System During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The global proliferation of COVID-19 has a significant impact on every sector, including education, and Malaysia is no different. Due to the difficulty of keeping the disease from spreading further, severe regulations have been enforced to break the COVID-19 transmission cycle. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, many educational institutions in Malaysia has begun shifting to online teaching to deal with the situation. Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), a Malaysian public institution, started offering online courses on April 12, 2020. The Learning Management System (LMS) known as UFuture was developed at the same time as the earlier i-Learn framework (a one-stop-shop for students to access reading materials, ask questions, and participate in other online learning events) (Chung et al., 2020). Even though it is expected to prepare students for self-directed learning, its practical application is still low (Seman et al., 2019).

According to DeAlwis and David (2020), or the activation of online teaching and learning, SPeCTRUM (University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur in-house online-learning platform) and other Teaching and Learning online tools were employed. Other online education platform links provided by the Malaysian Ministry of Education include digital textbooks, videos for teaching and learning (EduwebTV/ CikgooTube), and connections to teaching and learning applications such as Edpuzzle (an interactive video type teaching application), Quizizz (quiz game), and Kahoot (question game) (game-based learning platform). Additionally, DELIMa (Digital Educational Learning Initiative Malaysia) is a renamed Ministry of Education Digital Learning platform developed by KPM following the Frog VLE. DELIMa is a single platform that provides students with learning resources as well as learning management system services, and it can be accessed at https://mypt3.com/portal-delima-kpm using an existing Google account) (Ministry of Education, 2021). Vice-chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) indicated that their university technological teams assist the academic staff in activating the online-Learning mode via online classrooms. Through KALAM, UMP's Knowledge & Learning Management System, all academic staff can successfully incorporate online learning methods during lecture sessions utilizing appropriate online apps.

The Curriculum Information Document Online System (CIDOS), an open-source learning management system (LMS), was introduced in 2011 and was utilized as an e-learning medium in polytechnics) (Ahmad & Mohamed, 2017). CIDOS 3.5 had played an important role during the Covid-19 Pandemic in assisting all the polytechnics' lecturers and students in their teaching and learning activities while the institutions were closed. This fully automated document management platform, which includes features like uploading, updating, and sharing digital content, allowing the lecturers and students in the polytechnics to connect with each other virtually (Adam et al., 2021; Md Yusop, 2018). With the use of CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 Pandemic, teaching and learning activities could be conducted fully online when the MCO (Movement Control Order) was enforced and all face-to-face activities were prohibited. Students used CIDOS 3.5 to submit their assignments and keep track of the progress. In addition, they receive feedback from their lecturers on the tasks given. Besides, the discussion board or forum enables them to have discussion; besides creating engagement among classmates and lecturers. The online quiz features also allowed them to complete their assessment online. A study by Arshad et al. (2021) have proven that Port Dickson Polytechnic's students' acceptance of e-learning platforms like MOOCs, CIDOS, and so on was based on the platforms' usefulness and ease of use. Generally, students accept the e-learning platforms which enable them in assessing the learning materials for certain courses during the Covid-19 pandemic (Zainuddin et al., 2021). Adam et al. (2020**)** indicated that teaching and learning can take place anywhere and at any time with CIDOS 3.5 since it is not bound by class time or physical presence by the students and teachers. During the pandemic, students could choose to learn at their own pace, regardless of any unforeseen circumstances, especially when they are under quarantine and cannot keep pace with the lesson) (Ashrafi et al., 2020). The features of CIDOS 3.5 also ease students in attaining their learning materials and completing their assessments) (Bangga et al., 2021). Facilitating conditions play an important role in facilitating both parties, lecturers and students (Al-Rahmi et al., 2021; Adam et al., 2021). Their study indicates that the facilitating condition is significantly positive with CIDOS 3.5 utilization in Mukah Polytechnic, Sarawak. CIDOS 3.5 facilitates the online teaching and learning among lecturers and students during MCO by promoting efficient and effective control over curriculum documents, teaching and learning materials as well as providing interactive communication between both parties (Mohamad et al., 2021; Razali & Shahbodin, 2014). It is safe to conclude that CIDOS 3.5 provides an array of benefits for polytechnic lecturers and students in their teaching and learning especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

B. Connectivism Theory

Connectivism, according to Siemens (2005), is a modern-day learning paradigm that incorporates principles like globalization, technology, lifelong learning, and digital information. Connectivism, he added, is the convergence of concepts discussed by chaos, network, complexity, and self-organizing theories. According to Duke et al. (2013), connectivism is the product of our constant evolving environment, in which our society is becoming more complex, globally interconnected, and mediated by technological advancements. Since cognition and learning are diffused not just among individuals but also among other aspects. According to Mattar (2018), we should outsource certain cognitive work to machines as they are more effective in completing certain jobs than humans. In online courses, the learners often have the option of interacting with the course materials at any time and place (Rusli et al., 2019).

The Learning Management System (CIDOS 3.5) was designed to help students in bridging the gap between their daily experiences and structured learning, as well as to introduce learning in a 21st-century context. CIDOS 3.5 is a safe and secure online learning management system for collaboration and learning, as well as managing an online classroom and providing professional development for educators. The user-friendly feature of CIDOS 3.5 encourages student involvement and meaningful learning. This Learning Management System's interface resembles that of 'Facebook,' allowing 21st-century learners and educators who are familiar with social networking sites to feel at ease (Balasubramanian et al., 2014; Hashim et al., 2019). Academic institutions in all nations have adopted mobile-learning (learning across online platforms via mobile mediated devices), according to Deljanin et al. (2017) in their study. This has improved tertiary teaching and learning. The CIDOS 3.5 platform can also be accessed via a mobile phone using the Moodle App. The Moodle app has a function that allows you to access course content even when you're not connected to the internet. It keeps students informed by sending quick notifications, allowing for interaction with classmates, assignment submission, progress tracking, and access flexibility

According to Balasubramanian et al. (2014), students showed a positive attitude toward using online learning management system using mobile devices because it allowed better communication in learning and save time. The components of successful communication and time-saving in CIDOS 3.5 are aligned with Connectivism, a theory that is relevant, and significant in today's digital learning environment. Siemens and Tittenberger (2009, p.11) stated that "knowledge and cognition are supplied via networks of human and technological networks, and the process of connecting, extending, and navigating such networks is learning," based on the Connectivism principles.

C. Socio-Constructivism Theory

According to Vygotsky's socio-constructivism (1978) individuals are dynamic participants in producing their own knowledge. Learning, he believes, involves societal and cultural surroundings rather than entirely within the individuals. Students learn primarily through collaboration with their teachers, classmates, and parents, while teachers use the natural flow of classroom conversation to inspire and drive discussion (Amineh & Davatgari Asl, 2015). Socio-constructivism proponents contend that instructional supervision is essentially reliant on interactive communication, with the main focus on the students' intellectual capacity for the discussion.

Through an online course or with proper technologies, Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development work promotes connectivism, whether in person or online; however, because of technology ability to assist learners, it may also subvert the results of Zone of Proximal Development in an online course or with proper technologies (Carlson, 2020). Mattar (2008) implied in his study, learner support through the ZPD can be properly practiced both by the resources (learning takes place outside of people) and through community cooperation) and this collaboration builds the team's knowledge, not just individual knowledge. Learning should initially take place outside humans, such as through the storing and processing data by technical instruments.

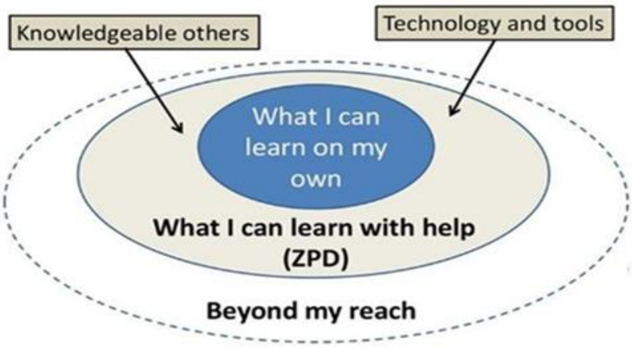


Figure 1: Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)
Adapted from Steve Wheeler (2015)

Figure 1 shows how ZPD makes learning easier. The inner-circle represents what a student will do based on his or her own ability. The outside circle represents what he or she might learn from peers. This circle will be strengthened by interaction with experienced others, as well as the use of technology and resources. Referring to Figure 1, students with the English Language background can perform well, but they are not able to achieve their best. Students' performance can be improved at the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) with the help of knowledgeable persons (teachers, parents, and peers) or technology and tools, (CIDOS 3.5). All types of instructional materials uploaded by the educators are available in CIDOS 3.5 are to aid Communicative English students' learning. They would gain a better understanding of the contents of Communicative English with the assistance of competent others. Students would be able to study by revising and practicing with the assistance of lecturers and classmates. Students could do well in a communicative English course once they have mastered all the skills.

D. TAM Model

In this study, the extended TAM model has been used as the basis for evaluating Polytechnic Communicative English students' acceptance of CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Davis (1989) first established the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain and predict the uptake of computer technology. According to Davis's paradigm, for technology to be accepted, the performance of a given activity must be better with it than without it, and the added value must be obvious. TAM has been thoroughly explored and validated in a few studies that looked into individual technology adoption behavior in a variety of information system constructs, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic (Kusumadewi et al., 2021; Lazim et al., 2021; Sukendro et al., 2020; Deraman & Jawawi, 2020).

In the TAM model, there are two elements that are important in human behaviors towards computer use: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is defined by Davis (1989) as a prospective user's subjective likelihood of utilizing a certain application system to improve his or her job or life performance. The degree to which a user forestalls the target system to be effort-free is described as perceived ease of use (Surendran, 2012). According to TAM, the most important determinants of actual system use are perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. There are a few past studies that indicate the suitability of TAM model in analyzing Communicative English students' perception towards CIDOS 3.5 (Arshad et al., 2021; Ashrafi et al., 2020; Deraman & Jawawi, 2020; Md Yusop, 2018; Romli, 2016).

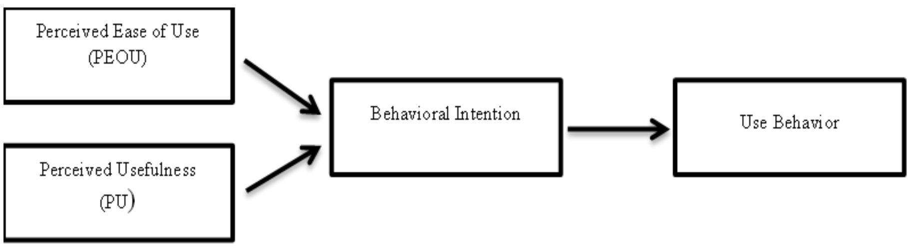


Figure 2: TAM Model

Figure 2 shows the TAM Model by Davis (1989). The Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), Perceived Usefulness (PU), and Behavioral Intention (BI) are the three key constructs in TAM. This indicates that if users consider technology to be easy to be used and beneficial, they are more inclined to use it. Then, the users' behavior is determined by behavioral intention. The users' inclination to use technology will develop if they have a positive perception towards the technology. The technology use will be influenced by the intention to use it. As a result, this model provides insight into users' acceptability of a new technological tool, which is critical in determining the users' usage.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study used the quantitative method. According to Cohen et al. (2018), quantitative data, such as instrument scores, provide specific figures that may be analyzed statistically to establish the frequency and size of trends. The information is valuable to characterize patterns for a large group of respondents (Cohen et al., 2018). A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect data for this empirical study.

B. Research Samples

In this study, the purposive sampling method is used. Purposive sampling or judgment sampling is the intentional selection of a participant based on their characteristics (Etikan et al., 2016). Purposive sampling, according to Creswell and Plano (2011), is locating and selecting people or groups of people who are knowledgeable and experienced about a specific issue. 100 Communicative English students who enrolled for the semester 4 English subject ‘Communicative English 3’ in one of the polytechnics in Sarawak, Malaysia were selected as the samples of this study by using the purposive sampling method. They were chosen because they used CIDOS 3.5 in their Communicative English learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. One of the researchers is a lecturer serving the institution and has been given the permission (the researchers filled in a form and it is signed by the institution director) to conduct our research there. The researchers have submitted the research proposal and questionnaire to be approved by the ethics committee of the institution involved in this study. This is a normal procedure in our country whereby permission should be given by the director of the targeted institution prior to the research. The approval date was on 9 September 2021.

C. Research Instruments

In this study, data was collected by using a 5-likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 11 items which were divided into three sections. Section A comprises 4 items pertaining to Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). Section B comprises 4 items pertaining to Perceived Usefulness (PU). The last section is Section C with 3 items based on Behavioral Intention (BI). All the items were adapted from Venkatesh and Bala (2008). Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were used to analyze the data.

D. Pilot Study

The online questionnaire (via Google Form) was distributed to 30 polytechnic students who were chosen for the pilot test (CIDOS 3.5 users). These students were not included in the actual study students list. It took a day in collecting all the responses. Only 24 out of 30 questionnaires were returned. According to Connelly (2008), the size of the sample for a pilot study should be 10% of the sample size projected for the larger parent study, based on available literature. Since there are 100 purposive samples in this study, a pilot test with 20 students is appropriate. A pilot study with 20 to 40 samples, according to Hertzog (2008) is sufficient for the pilot study.

E. Validity and Reliability

The items for the questionnaire used for this study had gone through the process of content and face validity. Three experts had been consulted on the feedback and suggestions. The term "reliability" refers to a measure of consistency throughout time, across similar samples, and across different uses of the instrument in question (Cohen et al., 2018). Using the Likert Scale score obtained during the pilot test, Cronbach Alpha was utilized to analyze the questionnaire's internal consistency. The reliability classification of Alias (1999) is used in this study. The Cronbach Alpha values for these three constructs are higher than 0.80 which is considered very strong.

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The summary of level of Communicative English students’ Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), and Behavioral Intention (BI) towards CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 Pandemic are displayed in Table 3 where min all of them is more than 4.00, Standard Deviation is more than .66. They are all normally distributed and high reliability.

TABLE 3
MIN, STANDARD DEVIATION, SKEWNESS AND RELIABILITY OF SCALE CONSTRUCTS

SStatements	N	MMin	SSD	SSkewness	CCronbach Alpha
PPerceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	1	4.20	..66	-.32	..93
PPerceived Usefulness (PU)	1	4.15	..70	-.37	..88
BBehavioral Intention (BI)		1.26	..70	-.38	..89

A correlation was computed to determine any evidence of statistically significant association between PEOU and BI, PU and BI. All the assumptions were met. Thus, the Pearson correlation statistic was calculated, $r(98) = .83$, $p < .01$ and $r(98) = .80$, $p < .01$ respectively. Both correlations were positively correlated, the result shows that students who have highly PEOU and PU tend to have higher BI and vice versa. However, the effect sizes are small for both correlations (.09 and .16). The r2 indicates that nearly 70% of the variance in PEOU and 64% in PU.

V. Discussion

The findings revealed that Communicative English students had a generally positive perception of using CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The ease of use of CIDOS 3.5 is the most important component that adds to the positivity (Md Yusop, 2018; Deraman & Jawawi, 2020). This is due to CIDOS 3.5's user-friendly interface, which also includes a set of instructions for first-time users (Adam et al., 2021). CIDOS 3.5 is simple to learn because it simply covers basic computer features, for example, downloading and uploading files (Nasaruddin et al., 2021). Regardless, it is critical to consider the target audience in order to ensure that CIDOS 3.5's interface is user-friendly for people who are not familiar with it (Amir et al., 2020; Romli, 2016). With the present trend, practically everyone owns digital devices, especially a mobile phone, which can be used to access CIDOS 3.5 via the available applications through their mobile phone, which is likewise convenient for everyone, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic). In socio constructivism theory, Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development work promotes connectivism in an online course or with appropriate technologies. This was supported by Carlson (2020) and Mattar (2018) that students learn primarily via interactions with their classmates, teachers, and parents (knowledgeable people) or technology and tools and this could enhance their performance in learning. During the Covid-19 pandemic, technological tools (CIDOS 3.5) played an important role in helping polytechnic students in obtaining their learning materials, completing the assessment, and also interacting with lecturers at their own pace (Zainuddin et al., 2021; Arshad et al., 2021).

Next, CIDOS 3.5 is useful as perceived by the Communicative English students. As can be seen, the majority of students in Communicative English believed CIDOS 3.5 was helpful in studying Communicative English during the Covid-19 epidemic. This is significant because students would not utilize a tool that they think to be ineffective. Furthermore, CIDOS 3.5 is undeniably beneficial because learners could learn at their own pace, which would indirectly increase learning input because learners would be able to focus on learning at their own pace rather than learning everything in a day, as mentioned in many studies (Nasaruddin et al., 2021; Adam et al., 2020; Deraman & Jawawi, 2020; Romli, 2016; Razali & Shahbodin, 2014). According to the Balasubramanian et al. (2014) connectivism theoretical perspective, social-media like interface of CIDOS 3.5 allows 21st-century students and educators who are comfortable using social networking sites to feel at ease in using the system. Bangga et al. (2021) implied that with the usage of CIDOS 3.5, students were able to promote effective learning due to the familiar interface. This was supported by Nasaruddin et al. (2021) that with user-friendly features, CIDOS 3.5 allows effortless access to learning materials which will lead to swift learning and encourage more students in utilizing it.

Ultimately, the use of CIDOS 3.5 sparked a positive attitude among polytechnic students who enrolled in Communicative English course in their English language classroom during the Covid-19 pandemic. Flexibility in teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic was one of the most common reasons for encouraging students to utilize technological tools like CIDOS 3.5 (Shahzad et al., 2020; Siemens, 2005). Students may access teaching and learning materials and monitor their classroom activities from anywhere with the use of CIDOS 3.5. Bangga et al. (2021) further suggested that course materials and activities should be distributed and completed virtually even if teachers and students were physically separated. Indirectly, this enabled students who purportedly experienced significant levels of anxiety as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak to find CIDOS 3.5 to be useful for their Communicative English learning, therefore, increasing learners' performance.

VI. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the perception of Communicative English towards CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 pandemic. The data revealed that students perceived CIDOS 3.5 as a useful and effective instrument for Communicative English learning. Moreover, users' friendly features ease students in gaining their English knowledge in a more creative and enjoyable way. In short, CIDOS 3.5 could be a beneficial educational learning management system for students to utilize especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study could help polytechnics think about how they can help students improve their technical abilities by encouraging them to enroll in CIDOS 3.5 or providing them with training on how to use CIODS 3.5 effectively in their study. Future research could examine the challenges that Communicative English students faced in using CIDOS 3.5 during the Covid-19 pandemic. This could alert the institution to the challenges that students face and help them to overcome the arising issues. As a result, online open learning could be a useful education tool that could serve as an alternate learning platform for everyone, particularly for those who prefer self-paced learning.

Acknowledgements

This research received funded by the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (GG-2020-021).

References

[1] Abd. Razak, I. S., Hamid, Z. & Abd Razak, N. (2018). Student's perception on Application Based Courseware for Digital Electronic: A Case Study. *Proceeding International Conference on Global Education VI (ICGE VI) "The Fourth Industrial Revolution: Redesigning Education" Volume 2*: 1862-1873.

[2] Adam, A. J., Rosli, S., Nasaruddin, M. S. M. & Sabli, H. M. (2020). Review on factors adoption of CIDOS 3.5 during covid-19 pandemic: A conceptual model. *Diges PMU 7*, 149-154.
[3] Adam, A. J., Rosli, S. & Sabli, H. M. (2021). The Facilitating Conditions with CIDOS 3.5 Utilisation. *Digest PMU 8*, 127-131.
[4] Ahmad, A. & Mohamed, A. H. (2017). The Effectiveness of Training: Equipping and Enhancing ICT knowledge and Skills among Polytechnic Lecturers in Producing Quality Highly Skilled Graduates. *Advanced Journal of Technical and Vocational Education 1*(3):01-05. Retrieved April 12, 2021 from https://www.ajtve.com/volume-1-issue-3-2017.html
[5] Al-Rahmi, A. M., Al-Rahmi, W. M, Alturki, U., Aldraiweesh, A., Sultan Almutairy & Al-Adwan, A. S. (2021). Exploring the Factors Affecting Mobile Learning for Sustainability in Higher Education. *Sustainability, 2021*, 13, 7893. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13147893
[6] Alias, B. (1999). Statistik Penyelididkan dalam Pendidikan dan Sains Sosial. *Bangi : Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia*
[7] Arshad, N. M., Hassan, Z. & Mohd Noh, S. H. (2021). Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi penerimaan E-pembelajaran Dalam Kalangan Pelajar di Politeknik Port Dickson: Kajian Kes Semester 4 Diploma Kejuruteraan Mekanikal Pembuatan. *International Journal of Humanities Technology and Civilization (IJHTC), 1*(10), 107-123.
[8] Amineh, R. J. & Davatgari Asl, H. (2015). Review of Constructivism and Social Constructivism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages, 1*(1): 9-16.
[9] Aryanti, N. & Ardiansyah, W. (2020). A Study of Student's Perceptions towards Online Distance Learning during Lockdown Period of Covid-19 Pandemic. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, 7*(2): 118-130.
[10] Ashrafi, A., Zareravasan, A., Savoji, S. R. & Amani, M. (2020). Exploring Factors Influencing Students' Continuance Intention to Use the Learning Management System (LMS): A Multi-perspective Framework. *Interactive Learning Environments*.
[11] Baczek, M., Zaganczyk-Baczek, M., Szpringer, M., Jaroszynski, A., Wozakowska-Kaplon, B. (2021). Students' Perception of Online Learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic: A survey study of Polish medical students. *Medicine, 100*(7): 1-6. https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-41178/v1
[12] Balasubramanian, K., Jaykumar, V. & Fukey, L.N. (2014). A Study on "Student Preference towards the Use of Edmodo as a Learning Platform to Create Responsible Learning Environment". *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 144*: 416-422.
[13] Carlson, K. (2020). *Connectivism.* Minnesota State University Moorhead. http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.25033.98402
[14] Chung, E., Subramaniam, G. & Dass, L. C. (2020). Online Learning Readiness among University Students in Malaysia amidst Covid-19. *Asian Journal of University Education, 16*(2): 46-58.
[15] Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research Methods in Education*. 8th Ed. New York, NY: Routledge
[16] Connelly, L. M. (2008). Pilot studies. *Medsurg Nursing, 17*(6), 411-2.
[17] Creswell, J. W. & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and Conducting mixed method research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
[18] Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *Management Information System Quarterly 13*(3): 319–340.
[19] DeAlwis, C. & David, M.K. (2020). Pennywise Rips Your Arms Off, You Still Won't Be Able to Wipe, So Keep Walking: Teaching During Covid-19 Lockdown. *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research 2(S)*: 145-158. Retrieved May 12, 2020 from https://doi.org/10.37534/bp.jhssr.2020.v2.nS.id1050.p145
[20] Deljanin, A., Colakovic, A. & Memic, B. (2017). An Overview of E-learning Platforms for Transport and Intermodality. *7th International Maritime Science Conference (IMSC)*:453-462.
[21] Deraman, M. S. & Jawawi, A. (2020). Penerimaan pelajar terhadap penggunaan CIDOS dalam kursus Sains Kejuruteraan. *E-proceeding of the 6th World Conference on integration of knowledge 2020*, 137-139, 27 August 2020.
[22] Duke, B., Harper, G., & Johnston, M. (2013). Connectivism as a digital age learning theory. *The International HETL Review 2013* (Special Issue), 4-13.
[23] Etikan, I., Musa, S. A. & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics 5*(1): 1-4.
[24] Hashim, H. U., Rusli, R., Yunus, M. Md., & Hashim, H. (2019). Are Malaysian University Students "MOOCs-Ready"? *Creative Education, 10*, 2540-2547. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.1012181
[25] Hertzog, M. (2008). Considerations in Determining Sample Size for Pilot Studies. *Research in Nursing & Health, 31*: 180-191. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/nur.20247
[26] Khasbani, I. (2018). Revealing Teachers' Motivational Strategy in Indonesia EFL Class- rooms. *European Journal of English Language Teaching, 3*, 1-14.
[27] Kukulska-Hulme, A., Lee, H. & Norris, L. (2017). Mobile Learning Revolution: Implications for Language Pedagogy. In: Chapelle, Carol A. and Sauro, Shannon eds. *The Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Oxford: Wiley & Sons, pp. 217–233.
[28] Kusumadewi, A. N., Lubis, N. A., Prastiyo, R.A. & Tamara, D. (2021). Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in the Use of Online Learning Applications during the Covid-19 Pandemic for Parents of Elementary School Students. *Edunesia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan, 2* (1): 272-292. https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v2i1.120
[29] Mattar, J. (2018). Constructivism and Connectivism in Education Technology: Active, Situated, Authentic, Experiential, and Anchored Learning. RIED. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación a Distancia, 21*(2): 201-217.
[30] Md Lazim, C. S. L., Ismail, N. D. & Khamar Tazilah, M. D. A. (2021). Application of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) towards Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic: Accounting Students Perspective. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law, 24*(1): 13-20.
[31] Md Yusop, M. F. (2018). *Penerimaan penggunaan e-pembelajaran CIDOS di Politeknik Malaysia berdasarkan Model Penerimaan Teknologi (TAM).* International Conference on Global Education VI, 7-8 May 2018, Seberang Perai Polytechnic, Penang.
[32] Minister of Eudcation. (2021). *Portal DELIMa KPM: Cara Login & Guna Pelbagai Fungsi Untuk PdPR.* Retrieved April 26, 2021 from https://ecentral.my/login-delima-kpm/

[33] Ministry of Higher Education. (2012). The National Graduate Employability Blueprint 2012-2017. *Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi*. Retrieved April 19, 2021 from https://masurimasooded770.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/national-graduate-employability-blueprint-2012-2017.pdf
[34] Mohamad, M., Kamal, N. N. M., Shamsuri, N. & Arif, F. K. M. (2021) The Implementation of Open Learning in Learning Writing Skill among TESL Teacher Trainees. *Turkish Journal of Computer and Mathematics Education 12*(6), 4932 – 4945.
[35] Naciri, A., Baba, M. A., Achbani, A. & Kharbach, A. (2020). Mobile learning in Higher education: Unavoidable alternative during COVID19. *Aquademia*, *4*(1), ep200.
[36] Nasaruddin, M. S. M., Anuar, M. W. K., Kadimin, A. S. & Sabli, H. M. (2021). The E-learning Centralised Systems Adoption during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Digest PMU 8*, 132-136.
[37] Othman, J., Kadar, R., Umar, N. & Ahmad, N. (2020). COVID-19 Pandemic Effects in Teaching and Learning Methods during Movement Control Order (MCO). *Creative and Innovative Teaching Practices during COVID-19 Movement Control Order (MCO)*, 1.
[38] Rafiq, K. M., Hashim, H., Yunus, M. M, & Norman, H. (2020). SPEAK: Using Mobile-Based Online Learning Course to Learn 'English for the Workplace'. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies* (iJIM), *14*(08), pp. 19–31. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v14i08.13185
[39] Razali, S. N. & Shahbodin, F. (2014). The usage of CIDOS and social network sites in teaching and learning processes at Malaysian polytechnics. *International Journal of Computers and Technology*, *13*(4), 4354-4359.
[40] Romli, R. (2016). Implementation of CIDOS (e-learning) among Diploma in Accountancy Students in Politeknik Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah, Jitra Kedah. *National Innovation and Invention Competition through Exhibition (iCompEx'16*,1-8.
[41] Rusli, R., Hashim, H. U., Hashim, H., & Yunus, M. Md. (2019). Learners' Awareness towards the Use of MOOCs in Teaching and Learning. *Creative Education, 10*, 3012-3019. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.1012225
[42] Seman, S. A. A., Hashim, M. J., Roslin, R. M. & Ishar, N. I. M. (2019). Millennial Learners' Acceptance and Satisfaction of Blended Learning Environment. *Asian Journal of University Education*, *15*(3), 129-141.
[43] Shahzad, S. K., 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,* 1-9. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n9p1
[44] Siemens, G. (2005). Connectivism: A learning theory for the digital age. *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*, *2*(1): 3–10.
[45] Siemens, G. & Tittenberger, P. (2009). *Handbook of Emerging Technologies for Learning.* University of Manitoba.
[46] Sintema, E. J. (2020). E-Learning and Smart Revision Portal for Zambian primary and secondary school learners: A digitalized virtual classroom in the COVID-19 era and beyond. *Aquademia*, *4*(2), ep20017.
[47] Sukendro, S., Habibi, A. Khaeruddin, K., Indrayana, B., Syahruddin, S., Makadada, F. A. & Hakim, H. (2020). Using an extended Technology Acceptance Model to understand students' use of e-learning during Covid-19: Indonesia spot science education context. *Heliyon 6*(11): e05410.
[48] Surendran, P. (2012). Technology Acceptance Model: A Survey of Literature. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*, *2*(4), 175-178.
[49] Venkatesh, V. & Bala, H. (2008). Technology Acceptance Model 3 and a Research Agenda on Interventions. *Decision Sciences*, *39*(2): 273-315.
[50] Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
[51] Yen, E. L. Y., & Mohamad, M. (2020). Utilising E-Learning to Assist Primary School ESL Pupils in Learning to Spell during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Literature Review. *Creative Education*, *11*, 1223-1230. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2020.118091
[52] Yusoff, W. A. W. (2020). Covid-19: UMP activates virtual classes. *New Straits Times* 16 March 2020. Retrieved May 12, 2021 from https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2020/03/575131/covid-19-ump-activates-virtual-classes
[53] Zainuddin, K., Raja Hussin, T. A. B. S. & Hussein, N. A. (2021). A Correlational Study on the Relationship between Students' Readiness and Attitudes towards Online English Language Learning. *Diges PMU 8*, 122-126.
[54] Zakaria, A. H. & Shah, P. M. (2019). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Its Implementation in Teaching English to Malaysian ESL Primary Learners. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, *10*, 785-799.

Yong Hua Ying was born in Bintulu, Sarawak in 1982. She obtained her Bachelor of Education (Hons) in the Teaching of English as a Second Language from Universiti Malaysia Sabah in 2007. She was posted to Mukah, Sarawak in 2007 where she embarked on her teaching profession. Currently, she is a senior lecturer in Politeknik Mukah, Sarawak. In the meantime, she is pursuing her Master's Degree in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. She has also published some journal articles online. Her areas of interest include language learning strategies and technology integration in the teaching of English.

Maslawati Mohamad (Ph.D.) was born in Johor, Malaysia. Currently, she is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Her main research interests are innovations in teaching and learning in ESL context, Teaching Reading in ESL context, and English for Specific Purposes. Currently, she has published 101 journal articles including 30 Scopus articles, 55 proceedings, six book chapters and a book. She is also a reviewer for a few international journals and editor for a local journal. She graduated from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and her area of specialization is Teaching English as a Second Language. She had also presented her research output locally and internationally in various seminars and conferences.

M. Khalid M. Nasir (Ph.D.) is currently a Senior Lecturer and a media coordinator at the Faculty of Education Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). He graduated from University Technology MARA (UiTM), for his Diploma in Land Surveying (Surveying Sciences & Geomatics Engineering) and Bachelor of Education in Information Technology (IT) with Honours at Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). He obtained his Master of Education in Instructional Technology at International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). He received his Doctor of Philosophy in Education and Human Resource Studies (Instructional Technology) from Colorado State University, USA. His area of specialization in Computer Education, Educational Technology, Instructional Technology & Community of Inquiry (CoI) in Online learning. He is also a Certified Professional Technologist as acknowledged by Malaysian Board of Technologists (MBOT) in the field of Information & Computing Technology (IT) and currently appointed as a Master Trainer by Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC).

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 965-973, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.08

The Linguistic Landscape and Prospects of a Seaside Destination in the East of Thailand

Piyada Low*
Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University, Thailand

***Abstract*—This study maps the linguistic landscape of the main 3-kilometer road to the Bang Saen Beach in East Thailand using images of roadside signs from Google Street View. In total, 7710 images of textual signs were taken over 7 years: 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021. Most of the signs were monolingual (5119=66.39%), and Thai was dominant in the monolingual signs (3982=77.79%). The Thai-English combination was mostly found in bilingual signs (2476=97.74%). 2941 examples of Thai transliteration from foreign languages were found, and Thai transliteration from English was the highest (2857=97.15%). Findings on the use of different foreign languages indicated the increasing diversity and prospects of the research site. Notably, English was the most used foreign language.**

***Index Terms*—Google street view, linguistic landscape, English-Thai, signs, tourist destination**

I. Introduction

A popular seaside destination in the East of Thailand is the Bang Saen Beach. This beach is a local seaside destination in Chonburi province and is popularly visited by Thai people every weekend. The beach stretches for 4.5 kilometers, with deck chairs (Tourism Authority of Thailand, n.d.) and as an example of the Thai beach scene (Lonely Planet, n.d.) is the cheapest beach to travel to for Thai people, along with a small number of foreigners (Wikitravel, n.d.). According to the Saensuk Municipal Office (n.d.), the image of the Bang Saen Beach is an array of coconut trees along the coast of the beach.

When tourists visit a destination, different languages are employed and learned by local residents. Landry and Bourhis (1997, p.25) first proposed the term 'linguistic landscape (LL)' and explained that LL is the language of the public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, and commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings found in a certain site. LL could be a marker of the relative power and status of linguistic communication in the area. Gorter (2006) pointed out that LL referred to the social context of the use of more than one language and multilingualism. Van Mensel et al. (2016, p.442) explained that potential contributions of LL research could serve as a descriptive tool providing a sociolinguistic diagnostic of a particular site and as an analytical tool for a diagnosis of social, cultural, and political structures. Therefore, LL research shows the mobility of both the people and the linguistic artifacts, which helps evaluate the changes over time in the construction of a linguistic space.

For Gorter (2006), a certain city or area should be selected to illustrate the linguistic diversity and not to indicate the linguistic composition and data could be analyzed into official or public or top-down signs and non-official or private or bottom-up signs.

Therefore, Bang Saen was selected to investigate LL by analyzing the languages on roadside signs along the main road to Bang Saen Beach and to answer the following three research questions:

1. What languages appear on the roadside signs along Thanon Long Had Bangsaen?
2. How are language patterns employed to create signs along Thanon Long Had Bangsaen?
3. How many types of signs are in the linguistic landscape of the study area? What are they?

II. Literature Review

Studies on linguistic landscapes are numerous. English is prominent in both native and non-native English-speaking countries.

In Coventry, which accommodates 33% of ethnic minorities, Faulk (2020) found that though English-only signs (63%) were more prominent, and the official signs were in English-only, non-official signs were English-only and in mixed languages. English signs mixed with other languages were found to be 32% bilingual and 5.4% multilingual signs. The use of community languages with English indicated the multilingualism trend in Coventry.

The significance of a linguistic landscape in providing information regarding immigrants and tourists was reinforced by a research study in a small Chinese community in Seoul, Garibong-dong. Hong (2020) investigated 3032 street-level images from Kakao Road View over 11 years (2008-2018). From 3032 images, only 217 advertising images with text and 72 signage were detected. Korean was found as the dominant language in the research site. However, findings

* Corresponding Author.

showed the declining usage of Korean from 84.3% in 2008 to 77.8% in 2018. On the contrary, Chinese signs increased from 4.6% in 2008 to 11.4% in 2017 and decreased to 9.6% in 2018. English was also found in the study area. Its usage was 4.1% in 2008, 6.8% in 2016, and 6.1% in 2018.

According to Backhaus (2006), in Japan, the official language of the country was dominant in Tokyo, 97% of the language used was Japanese, especially in official signs, whereas English appeared more in non-official signs. As for the use of a language for signs in Hongcun, a World Cultural Heritage site in China, standardized Chinese characters appeared most at 90.3%, and was the most used language in both official signs and non-official signs (Lu, S. et al., 2020). Of the 1978 textual signs in Hongcun, monolingual signs were found most at 64.4% (N=1273) while multilingual signs were at 35.6% (N=705). English was the second most used language at 19.5% and also the most used foreign language. Traditional Chinese characters had the third-highest usage at 16.0%. Other foreign languages were also found: Japanese (6.6%), Korean (6.6%), and Thai (0.05%). English was usually used in modernized shops or shops for foreign tourists such as catering stores, hotels, and souvenir shops but not for traditional store signboards. Among the 705 multilingual signs, most signs were Chinese-English (204).

In the case of Thailand, Thai, the official language in Thailand, is dominant in monolingual language signs, especially on official signs (Huebner, 2006; Seangyen, 2015; Vivas-Peraza, 2020; Wiroonpun & Panyamatheekul, 2019). In addition, English is the most used among foreign languages and is used on signs in all regions across the country: north (Rungrung, 2013), south (Vivas-Peraza, 2020), northeast (Seangyen, 2015), east (Prasert & Zilli, 2019), and Bangkok (Huebner, 2006; Pikulthong, 2011; Prapobratananku, 2016; Sutthinaraphan, 2016; and Wiroonpun & Panyamatheekul, 2019).

Thai-English is the most frequently used pair among the bilingual language signs (Pikulthong, 2011; Rungrung, 2013; Sutthinaraphan, 2016; Prapobratananku, 2016; Prasert & Zilli, 2019). For multilingual language signs, the most prevalent language combination is Thai-English-Chinese (Rungrung, 2013; Thongtong, 2016; Wu, H. et al., 2020). Other foreign languages found on multilingual signs depend on the nature and locations of the places. Lao was found on signs in Udon Thani, a province near the border of Laos (Seangyen, 2015). Russian, Arabic, and Chinese were found on signs along both Beach Road and Walking Street of Pattaya City, one of the most popular tourist destinations in Thailand (Prasert & Zilli, 2019). These foreign languages showed the common trends and population composition of the tourists in Pattaya City.

The types of signs differed in various areas. Spa and massage signs were used mostly (23%) on Nimmanhemin Road, a famous tourist destination at the center of Chiang Mai (Thongtong, 2016). Signs for food and beverage services were mostly found in Udon Thani, a popular province near the border of Laos (Seangyen, 2015), and on Walking Street in Pattaya City (Prasert & Zilli, 2019). However, signs for service-based stores were also found most on the Beach Road in Pattaya City (Prasert & Zilli, 2019). According to Pikulthong (2011), English was mostly used in three types of businesses: food and restaurants, hotel and accommodation, and travel and tourism.

As evidenced from the above data, the official language of a country is predominantly used in the signs, while English appears as the language of international communication, and is used even in non-native English-speaking countries. It is used in combination with other languages on textual signs, especially on non-official signs. Other foreign languages are found in big cities and tourist destinations.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data Collection

Thanon Long Had Bangsaen or Long Had Bangsaen Road (Thanon = road) is the local road no.3137 and the main road in the Bang Saen area. It is a 3-kilometer road running from Sukhumvit Road or Highway 3, a major road found in eastern Thailand, leading visitors to Bang Saen Beach as shown in Figure 1. This road was investigated in the research study.

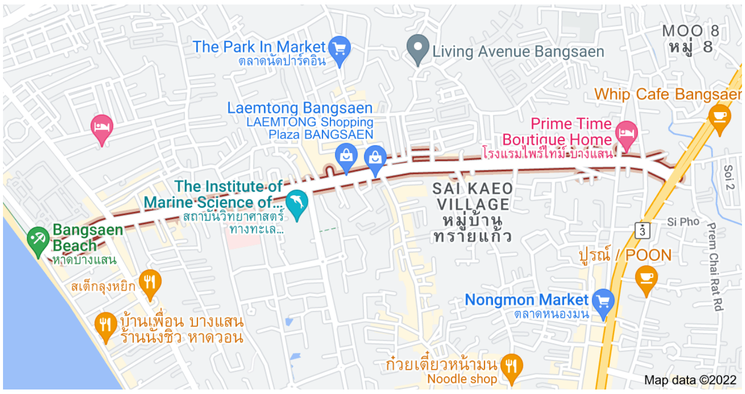


Figure 1 Map of Thanon Long Had Bangsaen (Source: Google Street View)

Initially, data collection was to be done by taking photos along both sides of the Long Had Bangsaen Road. However, images of roadside signs were taken via Google Street View due to the COVID-19 crisis. When the data collection began in June 2021, images of roadside signs along Long Had Bangsaen Road on Google Street View were available for the years 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. In late November 2021, Google Street View started to present images of 2021. Therefore, the data of roadside signs in the study area covered the following 7 years: 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021. The data consist of all kinds of signs with text along the road.

Images of roadside signs with text were collected starting from the T-junction of the Sukhumvit Road down the Long Had Bangsaen Road to the Bang Saen Beach and then back along the Long Had Bangsaen Road to the Sukhumvit Road. Only images of clear and readable signs containing text were collected to be analyzed, while images with blurred signs containing text were excluded.

B. Data Processing

The data were manually analyzed into language use and patterns as well as the types of signs. The language use was categorized as monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual. Language patterns included the size of the script and the use of transliteration. Types of signs were categorized according to the businesses they represented.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Findings are explained by categorizing the signs into three main parts according to the objectives and research questions.

A. Languages on Signs in the Linguistic Landscape of the Research Site

This part explains the languages found on the roadside signs along the Long Had Bangsaen Road and answers the first research question, 'What languages appeared on the roadside signs along Thanon Long Had Bangsaen?'.

In total, 7710 images of roadside signs with text were collected from Google Street View over 7 years of study as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF STREET VIEW IMAGES IN THE STUDY AREA BY YEAR

Year	2012	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
# images	1066	1095	1102	1085	1147	1158	1057	7710

The collected images of textual signs over the 7 years were categorized according to the types of language use: monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual.

TABLE 2
TYPE OF LANGUAGE USED ON SIGNS ALONG LONG HAD BANGSAEN ROAD OVER 7 YEARS

Type of language used	Distribution of signs	
	no.	%
Monolingual	5119	66.39
Bilingual	2528	32.79
Multilingual-three or more languages	63	0.82
Total	7710	100%

Table 2 shows the type of language used on signs along the Long Had Bangsaen Road. Monolingual signs were mostly used 66.39% of the time, followed by bilingual signs at 32.79%. Details on the type of language use are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
TYPE OF LANGUAGE USE AND LANGUAGE DESCRIPTION ON SIGNS

Type of language used	Language description	No.	%
Monolingual (66.39%)	Thai	3982	77.79%
	English	1133	22.13%
	German	2	0.04%
	Japanese	2	0.04%
Bilingual (32.79%)	Thai-English	2476	97.74%
	Thai-Chinese	27	1.07%
	Thai-Japanese	5	0.2%
	Thai-German	1	0.04%
	English-Chinese	1	0.04%
	English-Japanese	15	0.59%
	English-Korean	3	0.12%
Multilingual (0.82%)	Thai-English-Chinese	35	55.56%
	Thai-English-Japanese	23	36.51%
	Thai-English-German	2	3.17%
	Thai-English-Korean	2	3.17%
	Thai-English-Chinese-Japanese	1	1.59%
Total		7710	100%

Four different languages were found on monolingual language signs in the linguistic landscape of the Bangsaen area. Thai, the official language, appeared to be the predominant language (77.79%) in monolingual language signs. This finding was in line with previous research studies in Thailand (Huebner, 2006; Seangyen, 2015; Vivas-Peraza, 2020; Wiroonpun & Panyamatheekul, 2019). For bilingual signs, five different languages were found, along with the use of seven pairs of languages. The combination of Thai-English was used most frequently (97.94%), and this revealed that Thai-English signs represent the dominant bilingual language in use in the Bang Saen area, which is the same as in other places in Thailand (Pikulthong, 2011; Prapobratananku, 2016; Prasert & Zilli, 2019; Rungrung, 2013; Sutthinaraphan, 2016). For multilingual signs, the mix of Thai-English-Chinese was mostly used (55.56%), which was also found in previous studies (Rungrung, 2013; Thongtong, 2016; Wu et al., 2020).

Details of the sizes of monolingual language signs over the 7 years are presented in Table 4. Thai was the most dominant language in the research site. The consistency of the predominance of the Thai language is shown over the 7 years, and English was the non-official language of Thailand that was mostly used in the linguistic landscape of the study area.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF MONOLINGUAL LANGUAGE SIGNS OVER THE 7 YEARS

Year	Thai	English	German	Japanese	Total
2012	562 (79.61%)	142 (20.11%)	2 (0.28%)	-	706 (100%)
2016	578 (80.61%)	139 (19.39%)	-	-	717 (100%)
2017	581 (77.47%)	169 (22.53%)	-	-	750 (100%)
2018	564 (77.47%)	164 (22.53%)	-	-	728 (100%)
2019	578 (76.35%)	178 (23.52%)	-	1 (0.13%)	757 (100%)
2020	576 (75.89%)	182 (23.98%)	-	1(0.13%)	759 (100%)
2021	543 (77.35%)	159 (22.65%)	-	-	702 (100%)
Total					5119

Seven pairs of languages were found in bilingual language signs: Thai-English, Thai-Chinese, Thai-Japanese, Thai-German, English-Chinese, English-Japanese, and English-Korean. Only the combination of Thai-English was found in official signs. Details of the bilingual language signs used over 7 years are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
DISTRIBUTION OF BILINGUAL LANGUAGE SIGNS OVER THE 7 YEARS

Year	Th-En	Th-Ch	Th-Ja	Th-De	En-Ch	En-Ja	En-Ko	Total
2012	346(98.3%)	4(1.14%)	1(0.28%)	-	-	1(0.28%)	-	352(100%)
2016	362(97.84%)	4(1.08%)	1(0.27%)	-	1(0.27%)	2(0.54%)	-	370(100%)
2017	339(98.55%)	2(0.58%)	1(0.29%)	-	-	1(0.29%)	1(0.29%)	344(100%)
2018	344(98.56%)	2(0.57%)	1(0.29%)	-	-	1(0.29%)	1(0.29%)	349(100%)
2019	372(98.16%)	3(0.79%)	1(0.26%)	-	-	2(0.53%)	1(0.26%)	379(100%)
2020	380(97.19%)	6(1.53%)	-	1(0.26%)	-	4(1.02%)	-	391(100%)
2021	333(97.08%)	6(1.75%)	-	-	-	4(1.17%)	-	343(100%)
Total								2528

Th-Thai, En-English, Ch-Chinese, Ja-Japanese, De-German, Ko-Korean

Four sets of three languages and a set of four languages were found in multilingual language signs. The four sets of three languages were Thai-English-Chinese, Thai-English-Japanese, Thai-English-German, and Thai-English-Korean. The set of signs in Thai-English-Chinese was found most frequently, while the only set of four languages was found to be in Thai-English-Chinese-Japanese. Remarkably, Thai and English were found in all sets of multilingual language signs, and English appeared to be dominant among the foreign languages found in the linguistic landscape of the study area. Details of multilingual language signs over the 7 years are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6
DISTRIBUTION OF MULTILINGUAL LANGUAGE SIGNS OVER THE 7 YEARS

Year	Th-En-Ch	Th-En-Ja	Th-En-De	Th-En-Ko	Th-En-Ch-Ja	Total
2012	3(37.5%)	2(25%)	2(25%)	1(12.5%)	-	8(100%)
2016	5(62.5%)	2(25%)	-	-	1(12.5%)	8(100%)
2017	6(75%)	2(25%)	-	-	-	8(100%)
2018	5(62.5%)	3(37.5%)	-	-	-	8(100%)
2019	7(63.64%)	3(27.27%)	-	1(9.09%)	-	11(100%)
2020	3(37.5%)	5(62.5%)	-	-	-	8(100%)
2021	6(50%)	6(50%)	-	-	-	12(100%)
Total						63

Th-Thai, En-English, Ch-Chinese, Ja-Japanese, De-German, Ko-Korean

B. Language Patterns on Signs Along Long Had Bangsaen Road

This section explains how languages have been used to create signs on the Long Had Bangsaen Road and answers the question, ‘How are languages employed to create signs along the Long Had Bangsaen Road?’.

As the combination of Thai-English was found most frequently at 97.74%, among the use of bilingual language signs, patterns of this combination should be explained in further detail. The combination of Thai-English was the only pair found on the official signs in the research site. Both the size and placement of Thai scripts appeared bigger and in an upper position on all official signs, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Official Signs With Thai-English Combination on Long Had Bangsaen Road

The use of Thai-English on shop names showed that English was used for names and signature lines, and Thai was used for the description or details (Sutthinaraphan, 2016), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 The Use of Thai-English Bilingual Signs for Shop Names and Information

Findings on the language pattern of the Thai-English mix showed the bigger size of Thai scripts to be frequent at 47.86%, while English scripts were at 32.59%. Equally sized Thai-English scripts were found 19.55% of the time. Significantly, the use of a bigger English script, which was only 99 (28.61%) in 2012, increased to its highest figure at 129 (33.95%) in 2020. The percentage of the use of a bigger English script has been increasing over the 7 years. The distribution of size of Thai-English scripts on signs over the 7 years is presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7
SIZE OF THAI-ENGLISH SCRIPTS ON SIGNS

Year	Bigger Thai	Bigger English	Equal size	Total
2012	162(46.82%)	99(28.61%)	85(24.57%)	346(100%)
2016	176(48.62%)	118(32.6%)	68(18.78%)	362(100%)
2017	180(53.1%)	102(30.09%)	57(16.81%)	339(100%)
2018	166(48.26%)	118(34.3%)	60(17.44%)	344(100%)
2019	181(48.66%)	125(33.6%)	66(17.74%)	372(100%)
2020	169(44.47%)	129(33.95%)	82(21.58%)	380(100%)
2021	151(45.35%)	116(34.83%)	66(19.82%)	333(100%)
Total	1185(47.86%)	807(32.59%)	484(19.55%)	2476(100%)

Transliterations of foreign languages into the Thai script were found present in the linguistic landscape of the research site. English, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean were transliterated into the Thai script. Among foreign language transliterations to the Thai script, English into Thai script was mostly found at 97.15%. The findings confirmed the dominance of the English language in Thai context and Thai transliteration of English represented modernity (Huebner, 2006; Sutthinaraphan, 2016; Thongtong, 2016).

TABLE 8
TRANSLITERATION ON ROADSIDE SIGNS BY FREQUENCY

	En-Th	Ch-Th	Ja-Th	Ko-Th	Total
Frequency	2857(97.15%)	71(2.41%)	11(0.37%)	2(0.07%)	2941(100%)

Th-Thai, En-English, Ch-Chinese, Ja-Japanese, Ko-Korean

When distributed by year, the frequency of Thai transliteration of foreign languages on signs is shown in table 8. Thai transliterations from English and Chinese were found over the 7 years of the study. Thai transliteration of Chinese appears in the positive aspect with the increase in 2020 and 2021. Thai transliterations of Japanese and Korean also appear in 2021. The appearances of more different languages indicate the increasing diversity of Bang Saen.

TABLE 9
DISTRIBUTION OF THAI TRANSLITERATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES OVER THE 7 YEARS

Year	En-Th	Ch-Th	Ja-Th	Ko-Th	Total
2012	396(97.06%)	12(2.94%)	0	0	408(100%)
2016	434(97.75%)	8(1.8%)	2(0.45%)	0	444(100%)
2017	361(97.57%)	9(2.43%)	0	0	370(100%)
2018	400(98.52%)	6(1.48%)	0	0	406(100%)
2019	423(98.6%)	6(1.4%)	0	0	429(100%)
2020	453(96.59%)	14(2.98%)	2(0.43%)	0	469(100%)
2021	390(93.98%)	16(3.85%)	7(1.69%)	2(0.48%)	415(100%)
Total	2857	71	11	2	2941

For Thai transliteration from English, product names or shop names were transliterated the most over these 7 years with increasing tendency, reaching its highest figure at 44.87% in 2021. Thai transliterations of English words were counted according to their frequency of use and presented with the high-frequency words for each year, in Table 10.

TABLE 10
DISTRIBUTION OF THAI TRANSLITERATION OF ENGLISH WORDS BY FREQUENCY

Year	Frequency of Names	Thai transliteration of English Words with High frequency
2012 (396=100%)	159 (40.15%)	คลินิก 31, แอร์ 9, สเต็ก 7, ไอศกรีม 6, อพาร์ทเมนท์ 6 clinic 31, air 9, steak 7, ice cream 6, apartment 6
2016 (434=100%)	174 (40.09%)	คลินิก 29, แฮร์ 10, ฟาร์มาซี 9, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 8, แมนชั่น 8, สเต็ก 7, คอนโด 7 clinic 29, hair 10, pharmacy 9, furniture 8, mansion 8, steak 7, condo 7
2017 (361=100%)	160 (44.32%)	คลินิก 28, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 11, แมนชั่น 6, ฟาร์มาซี 6, คอนโด 5, สติกเกอร์ 5 clinic 28, furniture 11, mansion 6, pharmacy 6, condo 5, sticker 5
2018 (400=100%)	158 (39.5%)	คลินิก 26, คอนโด 12, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 9, แมนชั่น 7, สติกเกอร์ 7 clinic 26, condo 12, furniture 9, mansion 7, sticker 7
2019 (423=100%)	171 (40.43%)	คลินิก 29, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 12, คอนโด 12, สเต็ก 5, สติกเกอร์ 5, รีสอร์ท 5, แมนชั่น 5, บิวตี้ 5 clinic 29, furniture 12, condo 12, steak 5, sticker 5, resort 5, mansion 5, beauty 5
2020 (453=100%)	182 (40.18%)	คลินิก 40, คอนโด 14, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 7, คาเฟ่ 7, แมนชั่น 6, เพลส 6 clinic 40, condo 14, furniture 7, café 7, mansion 6, place 6
2021 (390=100%)	175 (44.87%)	คลินิก 43, คอนโด 11, ฟาร์มาซี 6, เฟอร์นิเจอร์ 6, สปา 5, อพาร์ทเมนท์ 5, แมนชั่น 5 clinic 43, condo 11, pharmacy 6, furniture 6, spa 5, apartment 5, mansion 5

Apart from the Thai transliteration of names (products and shops), the use of the word ‘clinic’ in the Thai script was presented in all 7 years and with the highest frequency. The high frequency of the word ‘clinic’ indicated the intensity of clinics found in the Bang Saen neighborhood. Located on Thanon Long Had Bangsaen is not only a university hospital but also several clinics which are found along the road. The finding shows the access to primary care with the intensity of healthcare services found in the neighborhood.

Other English words found with a high frequency and appearing in over 6 years were furniture, condo, and mansion. Interestingly, all three high-frequency words are related to accommodation. As the research site is a seaside destination, accommodation must be available as a basic aspect of tourist attractions.

C. Types of Signs in the Linguistic Landscape of Bang Saen Beach

This section explains the objective of exploring the types of signs found in the linguistic landscape of the Bang Saen Beach and attempts to answer the research question, ‘How many types of signs were found in the linguistic landscape of the study area? What are they?’.

For the first 5 years, signs were categorized into 13 types. Two more types of signs were added in the years 2020 and 2021; therefore, the total number of the types of signs was 15: food & drinks; accommodation; shops; branded products; spa & massage; nail salons, hair & beauty salons; clinics; banks & ATM; institutes; transportation service; gas station; government campaigns; official signs; information signs, and other signs.

Classification can also be according to the basic aspects of a tourist destination, or the 5A’s (Dickman, 1997): attractions, accessibility, accommodation, activities, and amenities. Attraction is Bangsaen Beach itself, accessibility refers to transportation services, accommodation is a place to stay, activities are what tourists can do to enjoy themselves, such as shopping, and amenities are services available for an enjoyable experience, which can be spa & massage stores, nail salons, hair & beauty salons.

Findings of more types of signs in 2020 and 2021 reveal the neighborhood improvement within the Bang Saen area, with the first gas station on the road as well as the government support to help Thai people and stimulate the Thai economy during the COVID-19 crisis with different campaigns. Restaurants and shops which participated in government campaigns had the signs of the campaigns shown clearly as shown in Figure 4. Thai people who had registered for the government campaigns would receive money transfers via Paotang application. The campaigns were:

1. 50:50 co-payment scheme wherein the government will pay half for the food, drink, and general goods purchases up to 150 baht per person per day. The campaign began its first phase on 16 October 2020, until the fourth phase ended on 30 April 2022.
2. Rao Chana (We Win) scheme for people registered in the social security system to receive money transfers.
3. Mor33 Rao Rak Kan scheme for private employees with Section 33 of the Social Security Act (SSA) and their savings must not exceed 500,000 baht.

Figure 4 Signs of Government Campaigns During the Covid 19 Crisis

TABLE 11
TYPES OF SIGNS OVER THE 7 YEARS

Types of Signs	2012	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1) Food & drinks	246 (23.08%)	290 (26.48%)	292 (26.5%)	285 (26.27%)	306 (26.68%)	317 (27.37%)	280 (26.49%)
2) Accommodation	43 (4.03%)	67 (6.12%)	65 (5.9%)	63 (5.81%)	65 (5.67%)	61 (5.27%)	49 (4.64%)
3) Shops	296 (27.77%)	265 (24.2%)	283 (25.68%)	274 (25.25%)	290 (25.28%)	284 (24.53%)	259 (24.5%)
4) Branded products	80 (7.51%)	57 (5.21%)	42 (3.81%)	42 (3.87%)	38 (3.31%)	58 (5.01%)	61 (5.77%)
5) Spa & massage	38 (3.56%)	35 (3.2%)	32 (2.9%)	43 (3.96%)	38 (3.31%)	41 (3.54%)	33 (3.12%)
6) Nail salons, hair & beauty salons	53 (4.97%)	47 (4.29%)	44 (4%)	44 (4.06%)	50 (4.36%)	43 (3.71%)	44 (4.16%)
7) Clinics	80 (7.51%)	94 (8.58%)	85 (7.71%)	75 (6.91%)	89 (7.76%)	90 (7.77%)	92 (8.7%)
8) Banks and ATM	22 (2.06%)	19 (1.74%)	22 (2%)	21 (1.93%)	14 (1.22%)	23 (1.99%)	21 (1.99%)
9) Institutes	26 (2.44%)	29 (2.65%)	18 (1.63%)	18 (1.66%)	16 (1.4%)	18 (1.55%)	18 (1.7%)
10) Transportation service	10 (0.93%)	7 (0.64%)	2 (0.18%)	3 (0.28%)	4 (0.35%)	4 (0.35%)	4 (0.38%)
11) Official signs	80 (7.51%)	96 (8.77%)	123 (11.16%)	118 (10.88%)	118 (10.29%)	108 (9.33%)	101 (9.56%)
12) Information signs	35 (3.28%)	40 (3.65%)	36 (3.27%)	46 (4.24%)	46 (4.01%)	43 (3.71%)	39 (3.69%)
13) Other signs	57 (5.35%)	49 (4.47%)	58 (5.26%)	53 (4.88%)	73 (6.36%)	63 (5.44%)	36 (3.41%)
14) Government campaigns	-	-	-	-	-	3 (0.26%)	18 (1.7%)
15) Gas station	-	-	-	-	-	2 (0.17%)	2 (0.19%)
Total = 7710 (100%)	1066 (100%)	1095 (100%)	1102 (100%)	1085 (100%)	1147 (100%)	1158 (100%)	1057 (100%)

Signs of food and drinks were mostly found across the 7 years of study. This finding is in line with the findings of Prasert and Zilli (2019). The type of signs which was least presented was for the transportation service (2012-2019). However, with two more types of signs having started in 2020, signs for a gas station were found the least frequently, as there was generally only one gas station to be found along the road. The frequency of appearance of each type of sign, ranging from the most to the least, over the 7 years is presented in Table 12.

TABLE 12
APPEARANCE FREQUENCY OF EACH TYPE OF SIGNS OVER THE 7 YEARS

2012	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Ranking
Shops 27.77%	F & drinks 26.48%	F & drinks 26.50%	F & drinks 26.27%	F & drinks 26.68%	F & drinks 27.37%	F & drinks 26.49%	F & drinks (6/7)
F & drinks 23.08%	Shops 24.20%	Shops 25.68%	Shops 25.25%	Shops 25.28%	Shops 24.53%	Shops 24.50%	Shops (6/7)
Official 7.51%	Official 8.77%	Official 11.16%	Official 10.88%	Official 10.29%	Official 9.33%	Official 9.56%	Official (7/7)
Clinics 7.51%	Clinics 8.58%	Clinics 7.71%	Clinics 6.91%	Clinics 7.76%	Clinics 7.77%	Clinics 8.70%	Clinics (7/7)
Products 7.51%	Accom. 6.12%	Accom. 5.90%	Accom. 5.81%	Other signs 6.36%	Other signs 5.44%	Products 5.77%	Accom. (3/7)
Other signs 5.35%	Products 5.21%	Other signs 5.26%	Other signs 4.88%	Accom. 5.67%	Accom. 5.27%	Accom. 4.64%	Other signs (3/7)
S & S 4.97%	Other signs 4.47%	S & S 4.00%	*Information* 4.24%	S & S 4.36%	Products 5.01%	S & S 4.16%	S&S (4/7)
Accom. 4.03%	S & S 4.29%	Products 3.81%	S & S 4.06%	*Information* 4.01%	S & S 3.71%	*Information* 3.69%	Products (4+1/7)
S. massage 3.56%	*Information* 3.65%	*Information* 3.27%	S. massage 3.96%	Products 3.31%	*Information* 3.71%	Other signs 3.41%	Information (3+3/7)
Information 3.28%	S. massage 3.20%	S. massage 2.90%	Products 3.87%	S. massage 3.31%	S. massage 3.54%	S. massage 3.12%	S. massage (5/7)
Institutes 2.44%	Institutes 2.65%	Banks 2.00%	Banks 1.93%	Institutes 1.4%	Banks 1.99%	Banks 1.99%	Banks (4/7)
Banks 2.06%	Banks 1.74%	Institutes 1.63%	Institutes 1.66%	Banks 1.22%	Institutes 1.55%	Institutes 1.70%	Institutes (4/7)
T. service 0.93%	T. service 0.64%	T. service 0.18%	T. service 0.28%	T. service 0.35%	T. service 0.35%	Gov. 1.70%	T. service (6/7)
-	-	-	-	-	Gov. 0.26%	T. service 0.38%	Gov. (1+1/2)
-	-	-	-	-	Gas station 0.17%	Gas station 0.19%	Gas station (2/2)

Types of signs ranked from the most appearance to the least appearance are shown in Table 13.

TABLE 13
RANK OF TYPE OF SIGNS ON LONG HAD BANGSAEN ROAD

Rank#	Type of signs	Rank#	Type of signs
1	Food & drinks	9	Information signs
2	Shops	10	Spa & massage
3	Official signs	11	Banks & ATM
4	Clinics	12	Institutes
5	Accommodation	13	Transportation service
6	Other signs	14	Government campaigns
7	Nail salons, hair & beauty salons	15	Gas station
8	Branded products		

Examples of other signs found in the area were signs for sale, job vacancy, and parking. Institute-based signs showed Burapha University, Bang Saen Aquarium, Burapha Hospital, and Language Institute. Information signs or private signs showed directions to private places, private roads, and fairs.

Transportation service was found least frequently in the first 5 years, among the 13 types of signs. This is because tourists and local people usually go to a bus station at Nongmon Market, which is not far from Bang Saen.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper explores the linguistic landscape of the roadside signs found on Bang Saen. Most of the signs are monolingual (66.39%) while 32.79% are bilingual. Thai is in a dominant position and appears in 77.79% of the monolingual signs. Seven pairs of languages were found in the bilingual language signs: Thai-English, Thai-Chinese, Thai-Japanese, Thai-German, English-Chinese, English-Japanese, and English-Korean. Only the combination of Thai-English appears on the official bilingual signs, and both the size and placement of Thai scripts appear bigger and are placed on top. The pair of Thai-English was used most frequently (97.94%) and was the dominant bilingual language in use in the Bang Saen area, which was the same as in other places in Thailand. However, the use of English in Thai-English mix signs increased from 99 (28.61%) in 2012 to the highest recorded figure of 129 (33.95%) in 2020.

English to Thai transliteration was found to be at a frequency of 97.15%. Most of the Thai transliteration of English is used for product names and shop names. Interestingly, apart from the names of the products and shops, the word ‘clinic’ was frequently found in the research site across the 7 years of study. This finding indicates the availability of health care services in the neighborhood. Although the road to the beach is only 3 kilometers long, a university hospital is located, along with several clinics. Other frequent words used in English to Thai transliteration are ‘furniture’, ‘condo’, and ‘mansion’ which are all related to accommodation, as the research study is based in a tourist destination. Moreover, the appearances of Thai transliteration of various other languages indicate the increasing diversity and prospects of Bang Saen.

Signs of foods and drinks were found most frequently, which was the same as seen on Walking Street in Pattaya City (Prasert & Zilli, 2019), another seaside destination in the east of Thailand. The later-added types of signs, such as the gas station, reveal the improvements taking place in the neighborhood. Signs of government campaigns represent the government's support to help people and stimulate the economy in Thailand during the COVID-19 crisis.

Notably, images from Google Street View were taken as data, so there are some limitations in the process. First, only visible images of signs were collected, while partly covered images were excluded. Then, only images of the signs with clear and readable text were selected for data analysis. Future studies can further explore the area with the residents who are the creators and readers of the linguistic landscape, to gain more insight into the research site.

REFERENCES

[1] Backhaus, P. (2006). Multilingualism in Tokyo: A look into the linguistic landscape. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 3*(1), 52-66.

[2] Dickman, S. (1997). *Tourism: An Introductory Text*. Holder Education, Rydalmere, New South Wales.

[3] Faulk, Z. (2020). Language ideologies at work: Examining the linguistic landscape in public spaces of Coventry, England. *Intercultural Communication Education, 3*(1), 4-21.

[4] Gorter, D. (2006). Introduction: The Study of the linguistic landscape as a new approach to Multilingualism. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 3*(1), 1-6.

[5] Hong S-Y. (2020). Linguistic landscapes on street-level images. *ISPRS International Journal of Geo-Information, 9*(1):57. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijgi9010057

[6] Huebner, T. (2006). Bangkok's linguistic landscapes: Environmental print, codemixing and language change. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 3*(1), 31-51.

[7] Landry, R. & Bourhis, R.Y. (1997). Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 16*(1), 23-49.

[8] Lonely Planet. (n.d.). *Bang Saen*. Retrieved April 21, 2021 from https://www.lonelyplanet.com/thailand/bang-saen

[9] Lu, S., Li, G., & Xu, M. (2020). The linguistic landscape in rural destinations: A case study of Hongcun Village in China. *Tourism Management, 77,* 104005. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.104005

[10] Pikulthong, S. (2011). Languages on Commercial Signs along Phra Athit Road, Bangkok. *Damrong Journal of the Faculty of Archaeology Silapakorn University, 10*(2), 65-85.

[11] Prapobratanakul, C. (2016). Inside the shop names: Hybridity, language awareness and globalization in the linguistic landscape of a local commercial neighborhood in Bangkok. *MANUSYAL: Journal of Humanities*, Special Issue *22*, 26-37.

[12] Prasert, K. & Zilli, P. J. (2019). A linguistic landscape analysis of Pattaya, Thailand’s sin city. *Discourse and Interaction* 75–95. https://doi.org/10.5817/DI2019-1-75

[13] Rungruang, A. (2013). Chaing Mai’s linguistics landscape in the tourist attraction areas: A Study on the English language use on signs. *The Golden Teak: Humanity and Social Science Journal, 19*(2), 59-70.

[14] Saensuk Municipal Office. (n.d.). Official website. Retrieved April 21, 2021 from https://www.saensukcity.go.th/en/component/content/category/8-about.html.

[15] Seangyen, C. (2015). Linguistic landscape on billboards in Mueang District, Udon Thani Province. *Mekong Chi Mun Art and Culture Journal, 1*(2), 13-36.

[16] Sutthinaraphan, K. (2016). A linguistic landscape study of advertising signage on Skytrain. *MANUSYA: Journal of Humanities,* Special Issue *22*, 53-71.

[17] Thongtong, T. (2016). A linguistic landscape study of signate on Nimmanhemin Road, a Lanna Ching Mai Chill-out Street. *MANUSYA: Journal of Humanities*, Special Issue *22*, 72-87. https://doi.org/10.1163/26659077-01903006

[18] Tourism Authority of Thailand. (n.d.). *Bang Saen Beach*. Retrieved April 21, 2021 from https://www.tourismthailand.org/Attraction/bang-saen-beach.

[19] Van Mensel, L., Vandenbroucke, M., & Blackwood, R. (2016). Linguistic landscapes. In: O. Garc ía, N. Flores and M. Spotti (Eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Language and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 423–449.

[20] Vivas-Peraza, A. C. (2020). English in the linguistic landscape of Thailand: A case study of public signs in Hat Yai. *Language Value.* 23-57. https://doi.org/10.6035/LanguageV.2020.13.2

[21] Wikitravel. (n.d). *Bang Saen.* Retrieved May 10, 2021 from https://wikitravel.org/en/Bang_Saen.

[22] Wiroonpun, P. & Panyamatheekul, S. (2019). Roadside restaurant signs in Yaowarat and Chatujak: Semiotic landscapes analysis. *VACANA Journal of Language and Linguistics, 7*(2), 1-25.

[23] Wu, H., Techasan, S., & Huebner, T. (2020). A new Chinatown? Authenticity and conflicting discourses on Pracha Rat Bamphen Road. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 41(*9), 794-812.

Piyada Low is an assistant professor of English language at the Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Her research interests include English for communication, translation, and ESP.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 974-980, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.09

Evaluating Lexical Complexity From EGP to ESP Textbooks

Xiaobin Ren
Hubei Business College, Wuhan, China;
National Institute of Development Administration, Bangkok, Thailand

***Abstract*—ESP classes are usually designed for college students after they finish EGP learning. Accordingly, ESP textbooks are used after they use the EGP ones. Logically, ESP textbooks should be lexically more sophisticated than EGP ones, because linguistic contents are also important concerns for ESP teaching, and ESP classes should also promote students' language development in addition to their professional advancement. This research aims to compare lexical complexity between EGP and ESP textbooks used among college students. With lexical sophistication as an index for lexical complexity, this study found some ESP textbooks were lexically easier than the EGP ones in this study, which contrasts with input hypothesis. This implicates that ESP textbook writers should consider the contents of EGP textbooks when writing textbooks.**

***Index Terms*—ESP, EGP, lexical complexity, lexical sophistication, textbooks**

I. Introduction

Classes of English for general purpose (EGP) cover a very vast domain (Zohrabi, 2015), during which grammar, vocabulary, cultures, geography, science, etc. can be acquired. However, EGP classes cannot effectively meet the special needs of many language learners (e.g., businessmen, doctors, scientists) in their professions (Davies, 2008; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Therefore, classes of English for specific purposes (ESP) should be provided for them to better their career development. But providing ESP classes does not mean all EGP classes should be abandoned because EGP classes can be the foundation for further ESP learning (Esmaeilpour & Shahrokhi, 2015; Guest, 2016; Li, 2012; Zohrabi, 2015). Hence, a comprehensive language teaching system that integrates EGP with ESP classes in an appropriate manner should be built to meet language learners' linguistic and professional needs.

An effective integration of EGP and ESP classes necessities compatible textbooks. For example, with the improvement of students' language competence, the complexity of textbooks used in higher grades should be more difficult than those used in lower ones (Chen, 2016). Therefore, the textbooks used in ESP courses should be more difficult than those in EGP courses, considering EGP courses are commonly believed as the foundation for ESP courses and practically precede ESP ones. But little research has been conducted to explore whether there exists difficulty development from EGP to ESP textbooks.

This study aims to investigate whether there exists lexical complexity improvement from EGP to ESP textbooks by comparing lexical sophistication among the two categories of textbooks.

II. Literature Review

A. Textbook Evaluation

The large and increasing number of textbooks in the book market enhances the difficulty of textbook selection and makes it necessary to evaluate the target textbooks before making decisions (Cunningsworth, 1995). This is true for textbooks used for English language teaching (ELT). Hence, numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate ESL/EFL textbooks. Because ELT textbook selection entails systematic criteria for textbook evaluation (Sheldon, 1988), various checklists/criteria/principles for English textbook evaluation have been proposed (e.g., Mukundan et al., 2011; Williams, 1983). Mukundan and Ahour (2010) reviewed the checklists for the evaluation of textbooks proposed from 1970 to 2007 and found 48 checklists in total. They found the most frequently cited words in the checklists during the four decades include "students", "teachers", "skills", "practice", and "contents". Williams (1983) and Litz (2005) listed the criteria for checking the linguistic contents like reading, listening, writing, and speaking parts. Ansary and Babaii (2002) even took the physical conditions (e.g., size, weight, layout, publishing quality) of textbooks into consideration. Those factors in the above checklists are closely related to the elements of textbooks themselves, while few researchers considered the context in which textbooks are used. For example, the factors beyond textbooks and classrooms themselves including gender, culture, national curriculum guidelines and other social issues were limitedly explored. However, in recent years those factors are gradually investigated in the evaluation of ELT textbooks (e.g., Ahmad & Shah, 2019; Dominguez, 2003; Mahmood, 2010; Thomson & Otsuji, 2003). This is a tremendous advancement because researchers began to consider whether the context is appropriate for the application of a particular textbook rather than paying their attention only to textbooks themselves. However, though the compatibility between textbooks and their outside factors like culture, gender was considered, few checklists paid attention to another outside factor: connections between or among the textbooks used in sequence, i.e., the relations between particular textbooks and their preceding or following ones. For example, only a limited number of researchers valued the significance of difficulty relations between textbooks used by students sequentially, though more research was conducted to evaluate the difficulty differences of language textbooks published by different institutions or companies (e.g., Rahimpour & Hashemi, 2011; Tang & Zheng, 2018). The research status quo on the connection between EGP and ESP textbooks is the same. Although ESP textbooks are adopted right after EGP ones in universities, it seems researchers have ignored the issue of difficulty advancement from EGP to ESP textbooks. In theory, ESP involves teaching and learning not only specific skills but also English language (Day & Krzanowski, 2011, p. 5). This means that ESP textbooks, on top of specific knowledge about students' major, should also emphasize learners' language development. In reality, some successful textbooks even include 70% of contents on language instruction and only 30% on subject contents (Cai, 2013, p. 10). Therefore, it is meaningful to evaluate language contents in ESP textbooks with comparison to their preceding EGP ones.

B. Lexical Complexity

Vocabulary learning is quite essential for language learners, entailing more attention paid to words in the writing and selecting textbooks. For instance, Zhou (2012) pointed out that vocabulary is an objective index for the evaluation of English textbooks. As one of the important issues related to vocabulary studies, lexical complexity in different textbooks should be measured and compared, because lexical complexity has a significant influence on students' comprehension of the target texts (Arya, Hiebert, & Pearson, 2017), thus impacting their language learning efficiency.

Measurements of lexical complexity have been explored by numerous researchers (Bulté & Housen, 2012; Zareva, 2019). Consequently, diversified measurements have been proposed and utilized to gauge lexical complexity in various texts (X. Wu, 2018). Some researchers paid attention to the particular features of words themselves (e.g., morphological features, semantic features) when they were investigating lexical complexity (e.g., Alfter & Volodina, 2018; Francis & Nusbaum, 1999; Paetzold & Specia, 2016; Rodgers, 1969; Szlachta et al., 2012). Those studies are beneficial for the identification of a single specific word's complexity. However, the large number of words in textbooks problematizes this approach to the evaluation of lexical complexity, because the overview of lexical complexity about a text with large number of words cannot be elicited only from word level. Instead, most researchers conceptualized lexical complexity with a broader view and index this term with three constructs, i.e., lexical density, lexical variation, and lexical sophistication (e.g., Lahmann et al., 2016; Zareva, 2019), among which lexical density means the relative frequency of lexical words to the total number of words (Flowerdew, 2012, p. 29; Révész & Brunfaut, 2013, p. 38), and lexical variation, also named as lexical diversity (Lu, 2012; Zareva, 2019), was conceptualized as the range of different words used in a particular text (McCarthy & Jarvis, 2010, p. 381; Zareva, 2019).

Because the texts in textbooks are receptive materials and the main learning resources for students, language learners will spend much or even unlimited time on them. For example, students may spend ten minutes analyzing only one sentence or a paragraph, grammatically, semantically, or pragmatically. In one class, teachers may also focus on only one part of the text, explaining the related contents like words, sentences, grammar, culture, etc. in detail. Therefore, the significance of calculating the ratio of content words to the total number of words and the range of different words used in a specific text is limited. Because textbooks are important sources for students' vocabulary learning, sufficient input of vocabulary in textbooks should be guaranteed. Therefore, only lexical sophistication will be applied in this study to test whether vocabulary is sufficient and appropriate in ESP textbooks.

C. Lexical Sophistication

Read (2000, p. 203), Bulté and Housen (2012, p. 31) conceptualized lexical sophistication as a measure of the ratio of advanced or infrequent words in the text. However, the ambiguity of "sophistication" caused a good number of diversified calculation methods. For instance, some researchers only paid attention to the rareness of words (e.g., Lu, 2012; Zareva, 2019), while Brunfaut and Révész (2015) related lexical sophistication to not only infrequent words but also formulaic expressions. Eguchi and Kyle (2020) explored lexical sophistication in a multidimensional way, considering word range, age of acquisition and exposure, semantic network, psycholinguistic word information.

Specifically, the range of "sophisticated" words was diversely defined. Lu (2012, p. 192) thought the words out of the 2,000 most frequently used words list from British National Corpus were sophisticated. However, some academic words that are excluded from West's most frequent 2,000 English word list (as cited in Coxhead, 2000) are indeed rather salient in academic texts including textbooks (Coxhead, 2000, p. 213). Because acquiring those academic words are essential for students to develop their reading and writing competence, textbooks have supplied favorable opportunities for students to learn these words (Yan & Gao, 2014, p. 14). The saliency of these academic words in textbooks problematizes the definition that words out of the 2,000 most frequently applied words are sophisticated, because some academic words, though not commonly used in other written materials (e.g., business letters), are prevalent in textbooks. Therefore, in the evaluation of lexical sophistication about English textbooks, not only general English words but also academic ones should be taken into consideration.

D. Theoretical Framework

Input hypothesis: i + 1

Krashen (1992, p. 409) claimed that comprehensible input is an essential environmental ingredient for language acquisition. It not only means that input should be comprehensible for the acquirers, but also needs to contain “i+1”. The concept of “i+1” is a metaphor, among which “i” means the aspects of language already acquired, while “1” represents the level of language beyond learners’ ability but they are ready to acquire. Therefore, comprehensive input indicates that the input complexity provided for language learners should be above learners’ current ability, but still within a certain complexity. Specifically, if the input contains “i+2” (i.e., the complexity of the input is far beyond learners’ current comprehensible level), or “i+0” (i.e., the complexity of the input is the same as learners’ current understanding level), the acquisition effectiveness will be rather limited (Cheng, 2011, p. 62).

Input hypothesis has been widely referred to by language teachers in the teaching practice. Chao (2013) thought Krashen’s input hypothesis has a great influence on the teaching of English listening, and the teaching effectiveness can be greatly improved by utilizing this theory. Wu (2010) stated that input hypothesis can inspire and benefit both teachers and students, improving the results of second language acquisition and language teaching. Ying (2019) found that many teaching strategies used by English teachers in junior high schools are closely related to input hypothesis, though they never learned this theory. Those studies demonstrate that input hypothesis is quite useful in foreign language teaching.

E. Research Questions

Based on corpus, this study aims to explore whether ESP textbooks are lexically more complex than EGP ones. In this study, only the ratio of sophisticated words in a specific text is considered, and hence lexical complexity will only be indexed by lexical sophistication. The research question is:

Is lexical sophistication in ESP textbooks higher than that in EGP textbooks?

III. METHOD

A. Research Data

This research will choose 5 textbooks as research materials, including 2 EGP textbooks and 3 ESP textbooks. Zhou (2012, p. 77) once conducted market research in China and found New College English published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (SFLEP, hereafter) and New Horizon College English published by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP, hereafter) are the top-2 most popular textbooks in Chinese universities, occupying 44.4% and 22.2% market share. Guo and Xu (2013, p. 104)’s research demonstrated that the two most welcomed textbooks are also New Horizon College English (49.3%) and New College English (38.9%), though the market shares of the two textbooks are a little different from those in Zhou’s (2012) study. The two studies showcased that the two textbooks including New College English and New Horizon College English are most widely chosen in China’s universities and indeed occupy most of the English textbook market in tertiary education. Given their wide application, this research chose the two most popular textbooks as the samples for EGP textbooks. Considering college students in China tend to have ESP classes in 5th semester after they finish the EGP classes in 4th semester, book-4s of the two textbooks series will be chosen as the data source, and the bibliographical information of the two books are listed in Table 1.

In the ranking of top ten most heated majors based on student number in China, three of them are related to economics and management, including accounting, financial management, and international economics and trade (Chen, 2017). The large number of students majoring in economics and management means that ESP textbooks about economics and management are greatly needed. Therefore, there should be a large number of textbooks of English for economics and management, and hence the quality of such textbooks should be ensured to meet the demands of the great number of students majoring in economics and management. To help to improve the quality of ESP textbooks in this field, this study will choose several textbooks of English for economics and management as examples. Through National Library Consultant Union[1], three ESP textbooks on Economics and management published after 2016 were found. They are published by Tianjin University Press (TUP), China Waterpower Press (CWP), and by East China University of Science and Technology Press (ECUSTP). Their information was listed in Table 1 in detail.

TABLE 1
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE 4 TEXTBOOKS

book name (Chinese+English)	code for this research	Publisher	ISBN	Published year
全新版大学英语教程 4(New College English 4)	Book A	SFLEP	9787544637152	2014
新视野大学英语 4(New Horizon College English 4)	Book B	FLTRP	9787513588164	2017
经管英语(English for Economics and Management)	Book 1	TUP	9787561857199	2017
经管类专门用途英语教程(English for Economics and Management[2])	Book 2	CWP	9787517076179	2019
经管专业英语教程(English for Economics and Management[3])	Book 3	ECUSTP	9787562845331	2016

Because reading is one of the most important approaches to lexical input, this study only compares lexical sophistication of reading materials in different textbooks. For Book A, Book B, Book 1 and Book 2, they all have 8 chapters or units in total. But for Book 3, it has 15 units, which is too much for only one semester. This study only adopts the first 8 units in this textbook to keep in line with the other three textbooks. In each chapter or unit of the 5 textbooks, there are two reading texts. Therefore, 16 different reading texts were selected in each textbook.

B. Instruments

Because some salient academic words that are excluded from the 2,000 most frequently used list, that list is not enough as the boundary dividing easy and sophisticated words. Given the saliency of those academic words used in textbooks, in this study, both the words which are excluded from the 2,000 frequently used word list and academic word list (AWL, covering 570 word families) are regarded as sophisticated. AntWordProfiler (Anthony, 2014) was used to calculate the percentage of sophisticated words in the 80 selected texts from both EGP and ESP textbooks. The program can provide the percentage of the word families with regard to 1,000- and 2,000-word levels in general English and that with regard to the 570 academic words. When the percentages of the words on the three levels have been achieved, the percentages of the words out of the three levels will be calculated and then be compared among the 80 texts.

PDF documents were firstly made based on the five paper textbooks. The software named Adobe Acrobat Pro DC was used to make the documents editable. Those editable contents will be copied into Microsoft Word text by text to check spelling because some mistakes may occur in the process of format transformation. In the proofreading process, apart from correcting spelling mistakes, the additional information which is not closely related to the research, including paragraph serial number, pictures, page numbers, notes, was deleted. Then the texts were saved as plain txt files for the lexical analyzer. The program AntWordProfiler was used to calculate lexical sophistication of each text. After the results were produced, the data was input into SPSS to analyze.

IV. RESULTS

Table 2 demonstrates the descriptive statistics of lexical sophistication of the 5 textbooks.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE LEXICAL SOPHISTICATION

	Mean (%)	Std. Deviation (%)	Minimum (%)	Maximum (%)
Book A (N=16)	20.37	4.91	11.91	31.00
Book B (N=16)	19.42	2.21	13.98	22.54
Book 1 (N=16)	10.66	3.85	2.54	17.50
Book 2 (N=16)	17.25	4.79	8.20	26.56
Book 3 (N=16)	14.20	6.01	7.27	25.80

Based on the descriptive statistics, it can be found that the two EGP textbooks have very similar percentages of sophisticated words in the whole texts, with the means at 20.37 and 19.42 respectively. However, the mean percentages of sophisticated words in ESP textbooks fluctuate much more greatly than those in EGP textbooks, from 10.66 to 17.25. In addition, the mean percentages of sophisticated words in ESP textbooks are lower than their EGP counterparts. In the three ESP textbooks, the highest lexical sophistication is 17.25 in Book 2. However, it is still lower than 19.42, which is the lowest lexical sophistication mean for the two EGP textbooks.

In order to explore whether there exist significant differences among ESP and EGP textbooks in terms of the percentage of sophisticated words, Kruskal-Wallis H test is used. The test showed that there are significant differences among the five textbooks ($H = 31.28$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$). Post hoc Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to explore whether there exists significant difference between each pair of EGP and ESP textbooks. Test results could be found in

TABLE 3
LEXICAL SOPHISTICATION DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EGP AND ESP TEXTBOOKS

EGP books	ESP books	Z	*p*	r
Book A	Book 1	-4.41	.000	-0.78
	Book 2	-1.70	.090	-0.30
	Book 3	-2.75	.006	-0.49
Book B	Book 1	-4.64	.000	-0.82
	Book 2	-1.77	.076	-0.31
	Book 3	-2.64	.007	-0.47

The tests showcased that the two ESP textbooks, including Book 1 and Book 3 are significantly different from Book A and Book B on lexical sophistication. Given the means of percentages of sophisticated words in the two ESP textbooks are lower than those in EGP textbooks, it can be concluded that the percentages of sophisticated words in the two ESP textbooks are significantly lower than those in the two EGP textbooks. However, there is no significant difference between ESP Book 2 and the two EGP textbooks.

V. Discussion

According to the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), students acquire language only when they understand the contents that contain structures that are slightly beyond the learners' current level. Therefore, the teaching materials provided for language learners should be slightly but not too much difficult for the targeted students. Considering vocabulary is essential for students' linguistic development, one of the most important objectives of the English textbooks should be to improve their lexical competence, and hence appropriate lexical resources slightly beyond students' existing knowledge of vocabulary should be provided in those textbooks. Therefore, lexical sophistication in textbooks chosen for students in the following stage should be higher than that for students in the preceding stage. In China's universities, students have ESP classes after they finish their EGP ones. Hence, ESP textbooks are usually used after the EGP ones. Students will learn certain number of English words in the EGP classes and improve their language proficiency to "i" level. Given this, ESP textbooks, those used after EGP stage, should provide linguistic knowledge which is on "i+1" level to better students' language development.

In the three chosen ESP textbook materials, lexical sophistication in two of them is significantly lower than that in the EGP ones. Although the third ESP textbook has the same lexical sophistication with the two EGP textbooks, the mean of lexical sophistication of the ESP textbook is still lower than the EGP ones. This means that all of the three ESP textbooks are, to certain extent, easier than the two most popular textbooks in China in terms of lexical sophistication. In terms of lexical sophistication, if the two EGP textbooks are on the "i" level, the three ESP textbooks may be on the "i-1" level rather than "i+1" level. This runs counter to the input hypothesis proposed by Krashen.

VI. Implications

In China's universities and colleges, the majority of the ESP classes are arranged after students finish their EGP ones. After the EGP stage, students will have learnt a certain number of words and adapt to the level of lexical sophistication in the general English textbooks. With the EGP classes as the foundation, on the ESP learning stage, students should read more difficult textbooks and meet more lexically sophisticated words than they do in the EGP level. Therefore, when the writers of ESP textbooks are designing textbooks for students in the ESP stage, they should take the vocabulary those students have learnt and the conditions of lexical sophistication in EGP stage into consideration, rather than only focusing on transmitting the specific knowledge. After all, ESP classes concern not only professional knowledge but also linguistic contents. The textbook writers should ensure more lexically sophisticated texts in the ESP books than in the materials used in EGP stage, because a gradual increasing of lexical sophistication from EGP textbooks to ESP ones is essential for language learners' lexical development.

Limitations

This study applied 5 textbooks, including 2 EGP textbooks and 3 ESP textbooks. The number of samples is limited compared with the large number of EGP and ESP textbooks in the market. In addition, the three ESP textbooks are all from the disciplines of management and economics. Since there are many different majors and disciplines and hence numerous ESP textbooks in different areas, the study only focusing on the discipline of management and economics may not be very representative.

Notes

1. National Library Consultant Union (http://www.ucdrs.net/) is a non-profit platform, on which the resources of its member libraries could be shared. For example, if one book can be found in one of the platform's member library, the information of this book will be listed on the website. This project makes it very easy for readers to find the targeted books. Currently, a good number of provincial and city libraries, as well as libraries in universities and institutes are its members. Because those member libraries usually have archived a large number of books, almost all the information of paper textbooks published in China can be searched on this platform.

2. There is only Chinese name on the cover of this book, with no English translation. The English name was translated by the author.

3. There seems an English name on the cover of this book under its Chinese name, that is "SELECTED ENGLISH READINGS OF BUSINESS". However, this is not the translation of its Chinese name. In fact, "SELECTED ENGLISH READINGS OF BUSINESS" may be used to explain the focus of the contents in this book. The direct translation of "经管专业英语教程" is "English for Economics and Management Majors". In order to keep uniformity among the three ESP textbooks, the author shortened it to "English for Economics and Management".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was supported by Hubei Business College's research fund "A study on students' demotivation to learn English in China's private universities" (item No.: KY202141).

REFERENCES

[1] Ahmad, M., & Shah, S. K. (2019). A critical discourse analysis of gender representations in the content of 5th grade English language textbook. *International and Multidisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, 8*(1), 1-24.
[2] Alfter, D., & Volodina, E. (2018). *Towards single word lexical complexity prediction.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the thirteenth workshop on innovative use of NLP for building educational applications.
[3] Ansary, H., & Babaii, E. (2002). Universal characteristics of EFL/ESL textbooks: A step towards systematic textbook evaluation. *The Internet TESL Journal, 8*(2), 1-9.
[4] Anthony, L. (2014). *AntWordProfiler (Version 1.4.1)*. Tokyo, Japan: Waseda University. Retrieved September 22, 2021, from https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software
[5] Arya, D. J., Hiebert, E. H., & Pearson, P. D. (2017). The effects of syntactic and lexical complexity on the comprehension of elementary science texts. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 4*(1), 107-125.
[6] Brunfaut, T., & Révész, A. (2015). The role of task and listener characteristics in second language listening. *Tesol Quarterly, 49*(1), 141-168.
[7] Bulté, B., & Housen, A. (2012). Defining and operationalising L2 complexity. In A. Housen, F. Kuiken, & I. Vedder (Eds.), *Dimensions of L2 performance and proficiency: Complexity, accuracy and fluency in SLA* (pp. 21-46). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
[8] Cai, J. (2013). The implication of the shift from EGP to ESP in National Cheng Kung University， Taiwan. *Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice, 3*, 7-11, 94.
[9] Chao, L. (2013). The influence of Krashen's input hypothesis on teaching college English listening in China. *Studies in Literature and Language, 6*(3), 49-52.
[10] Chen, A. C.-H. (2016). A critical evaluation of text difficulty development in ELT textbook series: A corpus-based approach using variability neighbor clustering. *System, 58*, 64-81. doi:10.1016/j.system.2016.03.011
[11] Chen, X. (2017). *Top ten majors with the largest number of students.* Retrieved October 13, 2021, from https://gaokao.chsi.com.cn/gkzt/rszdbkzy2017
[12] Cheng, X. (2011). Empirical study on language features and the selection of bilingual instruction models. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching(2)*, 62-65. doi:10.13458/j.cnki.flatt.000359
[13] Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *Tesol Quarterly, 34*(2), 213-238.
[14] Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. United Kingdom: Macmillan.
[15] Davies, P. (2008). ELT in Mexican higher education should be mainly ESP, not EGP. *Mextesol Journal, 32*(1), 80-89.
[16] Day, J., & Krzanowski, M. (2011). *Teaching English for specific purposes: An introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
[17] Dominguez, L. M. (2003). Gender textbook evaluation. *TESL Canada Journal, 8*(1), 32-46.
[18] Eguchi, M., & Kyle, K. (2020). Continuing to explore the multidimensional nature of lexical sophistication: The case of oral proficiency interviews. *The Modern Language Journal, 104*(2), 381-400. doi:10.1111/modl.12637
[19] Esmaeilpour, E., & Shahrokhi, M. (2015). Replacing EGP by ESP at Iranian universities: Student and faculty perceptions. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research, 2*(7), 45-59.
[20] Flowerdew, J. (2012). *Discourse in English language education*. UK: Routledge.
[21] Francis, A. L., & Nusbaum, H. C. (1999). The effect of lexical complexity on intelligibility. *International Journal of Speech Technology, 3*(1), 15-25. doi:10.1023/A:1009622725718
[22] Guest, M. (2016). Overcoming institutional barriers to establishing an ESP programme: A case report in Japan. *Asian ESP Journal, 12*(3), 7-23.
[23] Guo, Y., & Xu, J. (2013). A survey on the use and evaluations of college English teaching materials among non-English major college students. *Foreign Language Research, 175*(6), 102-108. doi:10.16263/j.cnki.23-1071/h.2013.06.025
[24] Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning centered approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[25] Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Retrieved Novermber 12, 2021, from https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.463.8762&rep=rep1&type=pdf.
[26] Krashen, S. (1992). The input hypothesis: An update. In James E. Alatis (Ed). *Linguistics and language pedagogy: The state of the art* (pp. 409-431). Washington: Georgetown university press.
[27] Lahmann, C., Steinkrauss, R., & Schmid, M. S. (2016). Factors affecting grammatical and lexical complexity of long-term L2 speakers' oral proficiency. *Language learning, 66*(2), 354-385.
[28] Li, W. (2012). Integration of ESP into EGP: The multidimensional and hybrid English training model in Liaoning Police Academy. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(9), 1877-1884.
[29] Litz, D. R. (2005). Textbook evaluation and ELT management: A South Korean case study. *Asian EFL journal, 48*(1), 1-53.
[30] Lu, X. (2012). The relationship of lexical richness to the quality of ESL learners' oral narratives. *The Modern Language Journal, 96*(2), 190-208.
[31] Mahmood, K. (2010). Textbook evaluation in Pakistan: Issue of conformity to the national curriculum guidelines. *Bulletin of Education and Research, 32*(1), 15-36.
[32] McCarthy, P. M., & Jarvis, S. (2010). MTLD, vocd-D, and HD-D: A validation study of sophisticated approaches to lexical diversity assessment. *Behavior Research Methods, 42*(2), 381-392. doi:10.3758/BRM.42.2.381
[33] Mukundan, J., & Ahour, T. (2010). A review of textbook evaluation checklists across four decades (1970–2008). In B.

Tomlinson & H. Masuhara (Eds.), *Research for Materials Development in Language Learning: Evidence for best parctice* (pp. 336-352). London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
[34] Mukundan, J., Hajimohammadi, R., & Nimehchisalem, V. (2011). Developing an English language textbook evaluation checklist. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER), 4*(6), 21-28.
[35] Paetzold, G., & Specia, L. (2016). *Semeval 2016 task 11: Complex word identification.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 10th International Workshop on Semantic Evaluation (SemEval-2016).
[36] Rahimpour, M., & Hashemi, R. (2011). Textbook selection and evaluation in EFL context. *World Journal of Education, 1*(2), 62-68.
[37] Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge university press.
[38] Révész, A., & Brunfaut, T. (2013). Text characteristics of task input and difficulty in second language listening comprehension. *Studies in second language acquisition, 35*(1), 31-65. doi:10.1017/S0272263112000678
[39] Rodgers, T. S. (1969). On measuring vocabulary difficulty. An analysis of Item Variables in learning Russian-English vocabulary pairs. *IRAL: International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching, 7*(4), 327-343.
[40] Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT journal, 42*(4), 237-246. doi:10.1093/elt/42.4.237
[41] Szlachta, Z., Bozic, M., Jelowicka, A., & Marslen-Wilson, W. D. (2012). Neurocognitive dimensions of lexical complexity in Polish. *Brain and Language, 121*(3), 219-225. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl.2012.02.007
[42] Tang, X., & Zheng, D. (2018). *A retrospective evaluation of college ELT textbooks in China.* Paper presented at the 2018 International Conference on Social Science and Education Reform (ICSSER 2018).
[43] Thomson, C. K., & Otsuji, E. (2003). Evaluation of business Japanese textbooks: Issues of gender. *Japanese Studies, 23*(2), 185-203.
[44] Williams, D. (1983). Developing criteria for textbook evaluation. *ELT journal, 37*(3), 251-255.
[45] Wu, W. (2010). The application of input hypothesis to the teaching of listening and speaking of college English. *Asian Social Science, 6*(9), 137-141.
[46] Wu, X. (2018). *A study on linguistic complexity of international journal publications by Chinese scholars*. Wuhan, China: Wuhan University Press.
[47] Yan, L., & Gao, X. (2014). Word saliency and frequency of academic words in textbooks: A case study in the "New Standard College English". *International Education Studies, 7*(4), 14-26.
[48] Ying, S. (2019). A study on the application of input hypothesis in English teaching of junior high school. *Linguistics, 7*(6), 364-367.
[49] Zareva, A. (2019). Lexical complexity of academic presentations: Similarities despite situational differences. *Journal of Second Language Studies, 2*(1), 71-92.
[50] Zhou, Q. (2012). *A corpus-based study on the vocabulary in China's Contemporary College English.* (PhD dissertation). Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.
[51] Zohrabi, M. (2015). Trends in ESP and EGP. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 6*(3). doi:10.17507/jltr.0603.27

Xiaobin Ren is currently a PhD candidate in National Institute of Development Administration, Bangkok, Thailand. He is also working as an English teacher in Hubei Business College, Wuhan, China. His research interests include EFL teaching and English teacher education.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 981-989, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.10

An Exploratory Study of Culturally Familiar or Unfamiliar Texts Contributing to Reading Comprehension in EFL Context

Usman Shah Toti
College of Education, Department of English, Majmaah University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Samsiah Abdul Hamid
Centre for Fundamental and Continuing Education, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

***Abstract*—The current study examines the impact of culturally relevant background knowledge on second-year Saudi EFL learners' reading comprehension. The purpose of this study is to contribute to a better understanding of culturally diverse texts and to enhance the teaching-learning process by utilizing the background knowledge of local learners. This qualitative study employed a think-aloud retrospective interview methodology to help readers express their in-depth thoughts, interpret, and reflect on familiar and unfamiliar cultural passages. Thematic analysis was used to classify think-aloud retrospective interview protocol on two passages, which were audio-recorded, transcribed, and coded for specified categories. The qualitative data were analyzed to examine if there was a link between EFL respondents' cultural background knowledge and the passages. A total of five English-major undergraduate respondents from Majmaah University took part in retrospective think-aloud interview protocols. The findings of this study revealed that EFL undergraduate respondents' cultural background knowledge had a favorable impact on a culturally relevant topic. The findings of this study revealed that culturally relevant topics differed significantly from culturally irrelevant topics.**

***Index Terms*—cultural schemata, background knowledge, contextualization, reading comprehension, visualization**

I. Introduction

English is a lingua franca that is essential for communication in this multicultural setting (Jenkins & Leung, 2014). EFL learners must gain English language skills to be self-sufficient and independent in their studies to meet the demands of the global workforce, job market economy, and academic competition (Mellahi & Wbod, 2001). Reading is therefore crucial for EFL students because it gives feedback on language comprehension, vocabulary, and cultural information. Reading is, without a doubt, one of the most essential, crucial, and central abilities for students to acquire new knowledge and information, and it may help them critically interpret, analyze, and synthesize texts (Yukselir, 2014; Rajab, 2013). Reading is a fundamental skill that can assist readers to enhance their vocabulary, fluency, speaking, and writing skills (Hung & Ngan, 2015). Similarly, reading promotes self-sufficiency and independence in learners, as well as resourceful communication at both the national and international levels. Reading English textbooks gives readers linguistic and cultural feedback on academic and educational accomplishments (Gulati, 2008) and as well as prioritizes and enhances learners' vocabulary, and linguistic knowledge.

EFL learners' English language skill, on the other hand, remains much below that of other Middle Eastern countries (Alhawsawi, 2014; Rajab, 2013; Al-Johani, 2009). The majority of EFL graduate students struggle due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge and cultural understanding, and as a result, they obtain low levels of English proficiency (Al-Qahtani, 2016). Their TOEFL scores corroborate their beliefs. According to statistics released in the third edition of the official TOEFL exam guide, Saudi Arabia's average TOEFL score is 57 out of 120, which is the second-lowest in the Middle East and among the world's lowest average TOEFL scores (Alrabai, 2016).

However, EFL students have demonstrated poor English language performance due to a lack of interest in reading books (Alrabai, 2014; Al-Khairy, 2013). The majority of EFL learners in the Saudi context find English textbooks difficult to read (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013; Elyas & Picard, 2010). Most EFL readers encounter a variety of sociocultural and linguistic challenges in reading comprehension (Alghamdi, 2018). In addition, he states that English courses are embedded with cultural components from American textbooks that may be at odds with target language learners' traditional values and cultural views (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). For example, Elaine Kirn's book Interactions-1, published by McGraw-Hill Higher Education in 2002, has been utilized with second-year EFL students and contains some unexpected cultural information. As a result, cultural context is regarded as an important construct in reading comprehension for a variety of reasons, including the following: a) cultural background knowledge may aid readers in distinguishing between what appears to be familiar and unfamiliar, and b) cultural knowledge aids readers in connecting old and new information (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). As a result, by offering culturally appropriate materials, readers may be able to find the texts more readily (Alghamdi, 2018).

Students in the EFL environment have shown poor reading comprehension due to certain cultural and religious factors, which may be directly linked to background knowledge of Western culture and cross-cultural discussion as a cultural component (Alghamdi, 2018). They use Arabic as their first language for writing and communication in religious organizations, where they inherit conservative rules from their native Arabic, which may contradict the target cultural values (Alqahtani & Atwell, 2016). While reviewing, analyzing, and interpreting textbooks from Western culture, cultural background knowledge affects reading comprehension (Zhang & Ciravegna, 2011; Aebersold & Field, 1997). Reading has always served religious purposes in Arab culture, and it has been taught in religious institutions, such as memorizing Quranic texts (Alfahadi, 2012), as a result of which students have adopted an oral memorizing culture, and memorizing religious Holy Scriptures. Several studies have found that culturally irrelevant material in English textbooks causes EFL students to perform poorly (Tabor et al., 2004). Similarly, this approach to repetition and memory focuses on information reproduction rather than cultural knowledge transformation (Cummins, 1994), where learners can appraise textual material and synthesize it into meaningful concepts while taking their cultural background into account. Most importantly, it is common in Arab EFL culture for individuals to rarely read books for pleasure, which may result in low reading comprehension performance (Al-mahrooqi, 2016). Most Arabic-speaking people read books only sometimes before going to bed or traveling due to a lack of interest (Al-Nafisah & Al-Shorman, 2011). It has been argued, for example, that European reading culture is dominant, with the average European reading 35 books per year, but Arab reading habits account for a small percentage of the population (Mahrooqi & Denman, 2016). According to a 2008 United Nations poll, the average Arab citizen in the Arab world reads only a few pages of literature per year. If the reader's underlying knowledge is insufficient and inadequate, the material will be difficult to comprehend (Liu et al., 2012).

According to Alghamdi (2018), textbooks written by western writers that are entrenched and over-loaded with western cultural schemas may hamper EFL learners' reading comprehension due to unfamiliar cultural standards. However, studies exploring the effects of having distinct cultural schemata in the text and material in the EFL Saudi cultural setting are still scarce. To overcome these challenges and cultural hurdles, EFL students must have a good command of the English language as well as a deeper comprehension of western alien cultural literature. They must have a specified level of previous knowledge as well as linguistic proficiency to compete with exceptional readers of the English language in terms of understanding.

The significance of this study lies in its attempt to comprehend Saudi undergraduate readers' reading of culturally diverse English texts and the challenges they face as EFL non-native learners, especially because it incorporates both preexisting linguistic and cultural information that supporting textual to form one's cultural schemata. Students from various cultural backgrounds have varying levels of background knowledge as a result of their religion, social conventions, social conduct, philosophy, and language. Hence, the purpose of this research is to see if there is a link between students' reading comprehension skills and the cultural content of a text.

The current study indicates that Saudi EFL learners find English textbooks hard to read due to overloaded irrelevant western cultural materials and ideologies which may lead to hampering textual understanding and interpretation. As result, research is needed to determine how EFL learners comprehend culturally overloaded literature in their second language when they have little or no cultural background knowledge. This research fills a gap in our understanding of how EFL students perceive familiar and unfamiliar texts in the light of their cultural backgrounds. The objective of this study is to answer the following question: Which culturally unique reading texts, such as "Taekwondo" or "Kabsa," can aid EFL respondents in improving their reading comprehension?

II. Literature Review

Cultural schemas are examples of schemes that form a system of meaning for a particular cultural group (An, 2013). According to the cultural schema hypothesis, humans can classify and understand cultural diversity in written texts and add new data to existing knowledge based on topic familiarity (Nishida, 2005). Cultural schemata, according to anthropologist Palmer (1996), are associated with cultural rituals such as weddings, national holidays, and funerals. Background knowledge is necessary to understand a text. If students are unfamiliar with the content of the text, they will lack the motivation to read it. Reading knowledge requires background knowledge; the more one knows about a topic, the easier it is to read the text, understand it, and obtain information (Neuman et al., 2014). Motivation is the key to engagement in reading and as a result, students comprehend better when they are engaged and achieve stronger reading outcomes (Wigfield et al., 2004).

Critical thinking abilities and patterns are vital in problem-solving circumstances, which is an important goal of learners in the educational program, technique, skill, decision-making, and meaning-making process (Brenner & Parks, 2001). Because every text read by learners, including many words and phrases, is packed with cultural references, culture is vividly conveyed in language. Most western-oriented content does not fit the cultural and social values of EFL learners in problem-solving and decision making, since effective perception requires the ability to relate the text's content to one's cultural understanding (Cheung & Halpern, 2010). Modern cognitive psychologists provide readers with a theoretical framework and models that allow them to define and grasp fundamental ideas and concepts in the text.

Cultural familiarity, similarly, affects the social motives of shared member groups, which helps learners organize their knowledge and improves their reading comprehension performance (Liu et al., 2012). The importance of schema as a cognitive process for language enhancement is emphasized by Piaget and Cook (1952). The interactive technique in text processing, such as schema theory, is reaffirmed.

Members of different cultures have different schematic knowledge due to different access to resources and knowledge systems (Sharifian, 2003). Because of their knowledge of schemata, members of the same cultures can communicate with one another without any problems (Yousefi & Mohammadi, 2016). According to Strauss and Quinn (1997), cultural schemes have the characteristics of stability, consistency, and modification that are embedded in socio-cultural festivals and rituals (Palmer, 1996). Sharifian (2003) explains that rituals, festivals, storytelling, art, and literature are dominated by cultural schemes. Yule (1996) argues that cultural schemes are closely related to life experience. Alptekin (2006) says that abstract schemes provide a conceptual cultural framework that requires cultural knowledge to make reading easier.

Sociocultural factors can influence learners' classroom perceptions, interactions, beliefs, and learning. Texts are integrated into learners' social, cultural, and historical experiences, which can help them in the meaning-making process (Aliva, 2000). In addition, readers can use learners' life experiences and prior information to better understand and shape the desired messages in the text.

Several researchers have explored the positive role of knowledge of the cultural context in their research and have argued that inappropriate background knowledge can lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretations (Yousef et al., 2014). Furthermore, they have argued that background knowledge helps learners predict the meaning of the text, and reduces anxiety and burden during the reading process. According to Erten and Razi (2009), prior knowledge is useful if the content of the text is up to date. This will allow readers to easily analyze and interpret the text. In short, this study shows that cultural patterns or basic knowledge play an important role in understanding culturally diverse texts (Li et al., 2007).

III. Methodology

A. Respondents and Materials of the Study

In this study, five second-year college-level students enrolled in a bachelor's degree program in English major participated. When the study was conducted they moved to the second level of the study and aged between 19-21 years old with limited users of English language proficiency. They found English texts hard to read due to the irrelevant materials written by western writers that contradicted the local culture of the EFL readers. To understand English texts, the respondents needed to possess background knowledge. In this study, two texts were used for semi-structured interviews: taekwondo and kabsa. The texts (Kabsa and Taekwondo) had a readability index on the Flesch Reading Ease Score (Flesch-Kincaid Index) of 46 and 68, indicating that the language and content of the college-level texts were considered difficult and standard. Two inter-raters assessed the main themes of the interviews: recontextualization and visualization and both of them agreed upon the thematic gradation.

B. Procedure

Think-aloud interview protocol techniques were utilized in this study. The purpose of using the think-aloud method was to reveal how verbalizing thought and exploring in-depth information on texts may lead to supporting textual understanding of the respondents in semi-structured interviews on the respondents’ cultural background knowledge. A qualitative approach based on a think-aloud protocol (TAP) was utilized to collect data from interviewees. Two weeks before the main study, two think-aloud sessions were held in a well-equipped lab in the College of Education at Majmaah University. According to the agreed schedule with the group, the researcher met with each respondent individually during the think-aloud session. During the training session, the researcher asked each individual to read the familiar text first followed by an unfamiliar one. Each individual practiced for 10 minutes while reading texts. During the session, the researcher asked them to read loudly. While reading loudly, the researcher would write the way they verbalized their thoughts. The data from the think-aloud protocol were recorded as well as heard. The research marked each text with a black-red spot after each sentence (Crain-Thoreson et al., 1997). The respondents’ thoughts, visualization, clarity of images, retelling stories, and recontextualizing of personal and social experiences were observed and recorded (Chi, 2012). Following think-aloud protocol, on an agreed schedule with the respondents, semi-structured interviews took place. The purpose of the individual face-to-face interview was to collect in-depth information about cultural topics and explore how the respondents’ background knowledge helped them in visualizing and contextualizing the content. To investigate the way to associate personal and cultural experiences with the text, respondents’ background knowledge is believed to be a significant variable in reading comprehension of two culturally different texts. Respondents’ think-aloud retrospective interview protocols were recorded using digital voice recorders. The interviews of the respondents were transcribed, graded, categorized, and assigned thematic coding according to Braun and Clark’s (2006) thematic model. Open and close-ended questions were asked during the interview session.

IV. Think-Aloud Session

A total of five people took part in the think-aloud session. Two texts were delivered in the following ways: taekwondo and kabsa. This session was focused on the respondents' ability to communicate and visualize their thoughts on familiar and unfamiliar themes, as well as their background knowledge.

A. Respondent#1:

This respondent read familiar text, and verified and confirmed his understanding by using prior cultural knowledge to supplement his inadequate and low language skills, as shown in the Think Aloud Protocol. He was able to summarize long sentences using code-switching, to translate familiar and unfamiliar terminologies into his mother tongue to facilitate understanding (Kern, 1994). The following excerpt describes this type of phenomenon.

Text A

Unfamiliar Text A
Taekwondo is an empty-handed form of martial arts in which athletes must use all parts of their bodies in competition. Code-switching to L1: Taekwondo (التايكوندو) is a sport played in our culture.

Text B

Familiar Text B
Kabsa originated in Yemen and is currently Saudi Arabia's most popular dish. Translation: (al-kabsa) --- is our most culturally famous food. (Translation)

B. Respondents#2

This respondent read, reread, and paused at a specific location to better understand the text. His think-aloud protocol through two different texts showed that he was using active words, asking questions, translating information, and looking at pictures fluently. He reflected and memorized familiar textual information and associated them with background knowledge. He could handle his comprehension while reading, solved problems, made explanations, drew conclusions, and made predictions. During the previous process of thinking aloud, he took notes and maps of the mind. In the familiar text, he used fewer language skills than in unfamiliar text because of good proficiency and background knowledge. He wrote down the main points and stated them on paper, as shown in the following passage.

Text A

Unfamiliar Text A
Taekwondo is a self-defense discipline; The name is derived from the Korean words "tae", meaning kick, "Kwon", fist or another fist with hand or fist, and "do", which is a kind of operation. Translation: *difae ean alnafs-- aindibad/ sound: tee , kwan*

Text B

Familiar Text B
Next, add the chicken pieces to the boiling water and mix with the rice. When the rice is boiling you can start to cook the chicken Rereading: Now in the boiling water put the chicken cubes and mix them with rice…cooking chicken *Visual images & verbally summarizing: baed dhalik , 'udifi mukaeibat aldajaj 'iilaa alma' almaghlii wakhulitiha mae al'arza. qad targhab fi albad' fi tahy aldajaj 'athna' ghalayan al'arz*

C. Respondent#3

This respondent had a good command of the English language. He translated difficult terms into L1 and associated experiences with personal life. By guessing and contextual clues, he would deduce the meaning based on his prior knowledge.

Text B

Familiar Text B
We serve lemon juice and sometimes put black lemon in the corner. Majboos is best enjoyed with soft drinks such as Pepsi. Usually, we eat this dish almost every day. Contextualization: *After kabsa is cooked, it is served to the people with lemons, and drinks. The people like and enjoy it very much.*

D. Respondent#4

Think-aloud demonstrated that this respondent had kept track of familiar text than unfamiliar ones. Found the unfamiliar text difficult to read due to its complex linguistic structure. He tried hard to visualize and translate difficult words from unfamiliar text B into his Arabic mother tongue by reading and rereading them. However, he linked his social and cultural experiences with the familiar text.

Text A

Unfamiliar Text A
Like judo, taekwondo was developed as a sport that represents moral norms. There, the principles of loyalty, loyalty, respect, and indomitable spirit maintenance are important parts of taekwondo training. Less visualizing ablity: jado—moral – part -- taekwondo

Text B

Familiar Text B
Although you can buy this dish in Erie at places like Habibis or Casablanca, my mom makes it better. Contextualization: I can make kabsa with my friends outside--- I use chickens, meat…..use salad also…

E. Respondent#5

The respondent used his first language to verbalize his thoughts deeply. However, in Text A, his performance was slow in reading because the subject matter and contents of the text were unfamiliar. He could read the unfamiliar content but found difficulties in understanding it. It took him time to understand the text and summarize it. He would look at every individual word and sentence where he could pause to think over and solve the problem. He used prediction and guessing from the context to reach over meaning. During his reading process, he found text B easy although it included long sentences and difficult structures to comprehend. He acknowledged that translation helped him a lot in recalling information in memory for a long time. Also, translation contributed to his visualization.

Text A

Unfamiliar Text A
The principles of maintaining loyalty, loyalty, respect, and invincibility are an important part of Taekwondo training. Translation: *tushakil mabadi alwala' wal'iikhlas walaihtiram walhifaz ealaa alruwh alati la taqhar jz'an mhman min tadrib altaaykundu*.

Text B

Familiar Text A
Kabsa tastes excellent with a soft drink like Pepsi. This is a dish that we eat virtually every day. Visualization: R*eminded me of the story of my mom how she cooked kabsa and presented it to us*

V. Interview Protocol

In this study, following the think-aloud protocol, semi-structured interviews were utilized. The qualitative data was collected from the respondents' perceptions and comments on two texts: *taekwondo* and *kabsa* using Braun and Clark's (2006) six steps model. This qualitative data analysis summarizes the respondents' interview's main themes regarding their background knowledge of how to contextualise and visualize English texts. Using background knowledge, respondents may be able to assimilate and recreate text information (Fisher & Frey, 2009). The following two major themes emerged from the respondents' qualitative interviews.

A. Visualization

According to the results of the interviews, visualization as a mental visual image played an important part in reading comprehension. Respondents did well on a familiar topic because of their prior knowledge, which helped them create visuals of the text, as evidenced in the theme excerpts below.

Excerpt 1: ''Taekwondo' *'a man and a woman fighting, hands up, feet up, very dangerous.*''

This passage suggested that the responder struggled to comprehend the content. He found the unfamiliar text's structure difficult and demanding. There was a contradiction between his culture and the culture of the other. This demonstrated that he was unable to visualize the text due to a lack of necessary background knowledge. The respondent's position on taekwondo demonstrated that he clashed his cultural values with unfamiliar cultural norms. As a result, the image he conjured up in his mind was not vivid, clear, or intelligible.

Excerpt 2: ''guns, sticks used to save ourselves''

In this excerpt, the respondent mixed the concept of relevant culture with irrelevant culture in the second excerpt. The respondent struggled to construct distinct and vivid imagery, as evidenced by the dictions in the above extract. This means that the respondent lacked confidence and struggled hard to visualize the text's imagery.

B. Contextualization

Contextualization is closely related to personal and social experiences which may indicate a better understanding of the text. The development of EFL respondents' comprehension of an English text is linked to their prior knowledge. It's crucial to investigate the role of background information in reading comprehension. The excerpt below shows how respondents assimilate personal experiences with the text.

Excerpt3: ''my mom cooks rice every day. Last night, ah, I watched a movie. People come to the restaurant. the waiter brings a big kabsa, ahhh''.

The theme of this excerpt showed that the respondent performed better on the familiar topic ‘‘kabsa’’ because it was close to her culture. She contextualised the story of her mother and indicated that the text was easy and that she was confident in it.

Excerpt 4: ‘‘TAKUNDO-taekwondo, is fighting-ahhh, people use short clothes- open -. kicking and hitting’’.

The language of the respondent showed that she is less confident and possesses less information about taekwondo. She spoke broken English using the wrong pronunciation of the word taekwondo. The excerpt showed that she struggled hard to understand the topic. However, due to a lack of background knowledge, she hardly associated her personal experiences with the topic.

VI. Findings

The findings of the study reveal that respondents found unfamiliar text hard to read. The respondents encountered two major problems while reading two texts; a) visualization, and b) contextualization. The data analysis collected from the interviews indicated that respondents comprehended familiar content more easily than unfamiliar ones. The analysis showed that background knowledge supported respondents in visualizing and contextualizing their personal and social experiences. Respondents recontextualised and visualized the familiar text with fewer efforts than the unfamiliar one. The familiar linguistic structures and phrases in the text helped the respondents visualize clear images to understand the text. Both tools: think-aloud and interviews supported respondents in recontextualizing and visualizing familiar contexts using cultural background knowledge. This could lead the respondents to create images, pictures, and associate experiences.

VII. Discussions and Conclusions

The main objective of this study was to determine the role of background knowledge in reading texts generally familiar and unfamiliar to EFL Saudi respondents. Based on the findings, cultural schemata are crucial to promoting students' reading comprehension (Alptekin, 2006). To some extent, this statement supports Brock (1990) who emphasizes that prior knowledge helps students contextualize texts according to their own experiences. The majority of the respondents expressed their point of view more freely on familiar text than an unfamiliar one. They shared their experiences with the familiar text due to the relevant cultural materials. The main obstacles in reading unfamiliar text were complex linguistic structures, difficult vocabulary, unfamiliar cultural context, and lack of background knowledge of the respondents. On the other hand, the complex linguistic structure and difficult vocabulary of familiar text were not so challenging to the respondents. Because each word in the familiar text had a connotative meaning associated with cultural context facilitated them in understanding the text. The finding of this study is consistent with the study in that culturally specific prior knowledge plays a pivotal role in enabling EFL students to make a comprehensive understanding of a text. A sentence seems difficult to process due to a complex socio-cultural context. Because the way a reader looks at reality may be different from the way other readers look at it. This contradictory view creates misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the text. Hence, to overcome these challenges, background knowledge of the text as well as the structures may help the readers to understand the text. However, familiar words and phrases helped the majority of the respondents in creating images in their minds. Similarly, this study indicated that respondents' think-aloud interview protocol resembled their interview findings showing that prior knowledge may lead to facilitating learners in associating, translating, visualizing, and contextualizing experiences (Lin, 2004). EFL readers should be conscious of employing knowledge to grasp culturally complex texts packed with culturally irrelevant contents and complicated linguistic patterns, according to the findings of this study. The findings indicated that the respondent visualized, contextualized, and had clear images of the familiar contents (Chi, 2006). Also, relevant materials facilitated the respondent to retell and reflect on the stories easily (Alghamdi, 2018). Furthermore, it should be emphasized that culturally familiar content contributes to enhancing EFL learners’ reading performance. In terms of pedagogical implications, it is suggested that instructors and curriculum designers should focus on selecting appropriate teaching materials related to the students’ cultural experiences and improving their reading comprehension.

In conclusion, the current study supports the schema theory, according to which a person's background knowledge influences the comprehension and interpretation of a text. In addition to schema, due to culturally embedded irrelevant materials, the type of text also plays an important role in reading comprehension.

VIII. Limitations

An obvious limitation of this study was the students’ academic schedule and long protocol hours which could interfere with the survey. Many of the students usually refused to participate in the study due to their full class busy schedules. However, to ease respondents’ mental fatigue, the study was conducted during their free time. They were provided snacks and juice for refreshment to strengthen data collection. Another limitation of the study was presenting two texts such as familiar and unfamiliar topics and the limited sampling size.

IX. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this qualitative study showed that cultural background knowledge had the advantage on texts which were familiar to the readers over unfamiliar topics to enhance their reading comprehension. In the pursuit of higher academic studies, reading is the most important skill (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). The results of this study support a reading comprehensive pedagogical strategy that may concentrate on textual materials to be taught to EFL college-level students. This strategy is strongly recommended on certain grounds. First, according to Alghamdi (2018), EFL English textbooks are overloaded with odd cultural contents and irrelevant materials. These textbooks do not reflect the local cultural norms and values of Saudi EFL learners due to the distinct English cultural ideologies of western authors. Alghamdi further says that EFL learners belong to a diverse EFL culture which seems to be difficult to link with western ideologies. Therefore, it is necessary to concentrate on promoting teaching practices in the classrooms to adapt and nativize teaching materials that may represent the local cultural values. This strategy would be beneficial in helping students to assess their strengths and weaknesses (Carrell, 1998). Second, this strategy would develop cultural awareness in the students to become self-regulated and independent in their learning too.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the Deanship of Scientific Research at Majmaah University for supporting this work under Project Number No. R-2022-150.

REFERENCES

[1] Abdullah, F., Alani, F., Yaqoub, Y., Hamdan, M., Brady, M. K., Cronin, J. J. J., Cardona, M. M., Bravo, J. J., Caruana, A., Cassidy, R., Chopra, A., Arora, U., Chowdhury, A. H., Miah, K., Dlačić, J., Arslanagić, M., Kadić-Maglajlić, S., Marković, S., Raspor, S., … Parasuraman, A. (2010). Research Proposal Example. *International Education Studies*, *6*(4), 86–95. https://doi.org/10.2307/1251929 Accessed on: 20, January 2022.

[2] Aebersold, J. A., & Field, M. L. (1997). *From reader to reading teacher: Issues and strategies for second language classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.

[3] Al-Johani, H. M. (2009). *Finding a way forward: the impact of teachers' strategies, beliefs, and knowledge on teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia*. The University of Strathclyde.

[4] Al-mahrooqi, R. I. (2016). *Establishing a Reading Culture in Arabic and English in Oman*. *1*, 5–17.

[5] Al-Nafisah, K., & Al-Shorman, R. A. (2011). Saudi EFL students' reading interests. *Journal of King Saud University - Languages and Translation*, *23*(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksult.2009.07.001 Accessed on: 10, January 2022.

[6] Al-Qahtani, A. A. (2016). Why Do Saudi EFL Readers Exhibit Poor Reading Abilities? *English Language and Literature Studies*, *6*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v6n1p1 (Accessed on: 21, January 2022)

[7] Alfahadi, A. (2012). *Saudi teachers' views on appropriate cultural models for EFL textbooks: insights into TESOL teachers' management of global cultural flows and local realities in their teaching worlds*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Exeter, UK). http://hdl.handle.net/10036/3875 Accessed on: 18, May 2022.

[8] Alghamdi, A. K. H. (2018). The gulf between text and context: Critical discourse analysis of English textbooks used in Saudi Arabia's preparatory-year programs. *Curriculum Perspectives*, *38*(1), 27–39.

[9] Alhawsawi, S. (2014). *Investigating student experiences of learning English as a foreign language in a preparatory program in a Saudi university*. The University of Sussex.

[10] Alqahtani, M., & Atwell, E. (2016). Arabic quranic search tool based on ontology. *International Conference on Applications of Natural Language to Information Systems*, 478–485.

[11] Alrabai, F. (2014). Motivational practices in English as a foreign language class in Saudi Arabia: teachers beliefs and learners perceptions. *Arab World English Journal*, *5*(1), 224–246.

[12] Alrabai, F. (2016). Factors Underlying Low Achievement of Saudi EFL Learners. In *International Journal of English Linguistics 6*(3) 22-56. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v6n3p21 Accessed on: 16, January 2022.

[13] Alrahaili, M. (2013). *Predictors of L2 attitudes and motivational intensity: A cross-sectional study in the Saudi EFL context.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). The University of Newcastle, Australia.

[14] Alrashidi, O., & Phan, H. (2015). Education Context and English Teaching and Learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An Overview. *English Language Teaching*, *8*(5), 33–44.

[15] An, S. (2013). Schema Theory in Reading. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, *3*(1) 130-134.

[16] Anderson, R. C., Osborn, J., & Tierney, R. J. (1984). *Learning to read in American schools: Basal readers and content texts*. Psychology Press.

[17] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, *3*(2), 77–101.

[18] Brenner, D. F., & Parks, S. (2001). Cultural influences on critical thinking and problem-solving. *Developing Minds: A Resource Book for Teaching Thinking*, 216–221.

[19] Brock, M. N. (1990). The case for localized literature in the ESL classroom. *English Teaching Forum, 28*(3), 22–25.

[20] Cheung, F. M., & Halpern, D. F. (2010). Women at the top: Powerful leaders define success as work+ family in a culture of gender. *American Psychologist*, *65*(3), 182-193.

[21] Chi, F. (2012). Constructing gender identities through responses to female-centered texts. *Language and Education*, *26*(5), 423–434.

[22] Crain-Thoreson, C., Lippman, M. Z., & McClendon-Magnuson, D. (1997). Windows on comprehension: Reading comprehension processes as revealed by two think-aloud procedures. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*(4), 579-85.

[23] Cummins, J. (1994). Knowledge, power, and identity in teaching English as a second language. *Educating Second Language Children: The Whole Child, the Whole Curriculum, the Whole Community*, 33–58.

[24] Elyas, T., & Picard, M. (2010). Saudi Arabian educational history: Impacts on English language teaching. *Education, Business*

and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues. Emerald.
[25] Erten, İ. H., & Razi, S. (2009). The effects of cultural familiarity on reading comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 21*(1), 60–77.
[26] Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2009). *Background knowledge*. The Missing Piece of the Comprehension Puzzle.
[27] Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2019). *Teaching and researching reading*. Routledge.
[28] Gulati, S. (2008). Technology-enhanced learning in developing nations: A review. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning, 9*(1) 110-123.
[29] Hung, D. M., & Ngan, V. P. T. (2015). Investigating reading strategies used by EFL students at Dong Thap University. *Asian Journal of Educational Research, 3*(4), 10–20.
[30] Jalilifar, A. (2010). The effect of cooperative learning techniques on college students' reading comprehension. *The system, 38*(1), 96–108.
[31] Jenkins, J., & Leung, C. (2014). English as a lingua franca. *The Companion to Language Assessment*, *4*, 1607–1616.
[32] Li, X., Wu, J., & Wang, W. (2007). Analysis of schema theory and its influence on reading. *US-China Foreign Language, 5*(11), 18–21.
[33] Lin, L. (2004). *Effects of culturally specific prior knowledge on Taiwanese EFL students' English reading comprehension*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Victoria
[34] Liu, L. A., Friedman, R., Barry, B., Gelfand, M. J., & Zhang, Z. X. (2012). The dynamics of consensus building in intracultural and intercultural negotiations. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 57*(2), 269–304. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839212453456 Accessed on: 10, January 2022.
[35] Mahboob, A., & Elyas, T. (2014). English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *World Englishes, 33*(1), 128–142. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12073 Accessed on: 11, February 2022.
[36] Mahrooqi, R., & Denman, C. (2016). Establishing a reading culture in Arabic and English in Oman. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) 7*(1) 5-17.
[37] Mellahi, K., & Wbod, G. T. (2001). management in Saudi Arabia. *Human Resource Management in Developing Countries*, *5*, 135-140.
[38] Neubert, A. (2000). Competence in language, in languages, and translation. *Benjamins Translation Library, 38*, 3–18.
[39] Neuman, S. B., Kaefer, T., & Pinkham, A. (2014). Building background knowledge. *The Reading Teacher*, *68*(2), 145–148.
[40] Nishida, H. (2005). Cultural schema theory. *Theorizing about Intercultural Communication*, Sage Publishers.
[41] Palmer, G. B. (1996). *Toward a theory of cultural linguistics*. University of Texas Press.
[42] Peacock, M., & Flowerdew, J. (2001). *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes.* Cambridge University Press.
[43] Piaget, J., & Cook, M. T. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children.* (M. Cook, Trans.). W W Norton & Co. https://doi.org/10.1037/11494-000 Accessed on 12 March 2022.
[44] Qiong, O. U. (2017). A brief introduction to perception. *Studies in Literature and Language*, *15*(4), 18–28.
[45] Rahman, M. M., & Alhaisoni, E. (2013). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: prospects and challenges. *Academic Research International*, *4*(1), 112-120.
[46] Rajab, H. (2013). Developing speaking and writing skills of L1 Arabic EFL learners through the teaching of IPA phonetic codes. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *3*(4), 653-65.
[47] Sharifian, F. (2003). On cultural conceptualisations. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, *3*(3), 187–207. https://doi.org/10.1163/156853703322336625 Accessed on: 10, January 2022.
[48] Strauss, C., & Quinn, N. (1997). *A cognitive theory of cultural meaning* (Issue 9). Cambridge University Press.
[49] Tabor, D. (2004). Young writers at transition. Routledge.
[50] Wigfield, A., Guthrie, J. T., Tonks, S., & Perencevich, K. C. (2004). Children's motivation for reading: Domain specificity and instructional influences. *The Journal of Educational Research*, *97*(6), 299–310.
[51] Yang, Y. (2008). The Effect of Cultural Schemata on Reading Processing. *Proceedings of the Seventh Annual College of Education Research Conference Urban and International Education Section*, 184–188.
[52] Yousef, H., Karimi, L., & Janfeshan, K. (2014). The relationship between cultural background and reading comprehension. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 4*(4), 707-722.
[53] Yousefi, S., & Mohammadi, M. (2016). Critical Thinking and Reading Comprehension among Postgraduate Students: The Case of Gender and Language Proficiency Level. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *7*(4), 802-7. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0704.23 Accessed on: 18, January 2022.Yukselir, C. (2014). An investigation into the reading strategy use of EFL prep-class students. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 158, 65–72.
[54] Zhang, Z., & Ciravegna, F. (2011). Named entity recognition for ontology population using background knowledge from Wikipedia. In *Ontology Learning and Knowledge Discovery Using the Web: Challenges and Recent Advances* (pp. 79–104). IGI Global. https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1138&context=sferc Accessed on: 15, January 2022.

Usman Shah is currently a lecturer at Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia. He is a Ph.D. candidate specializing in Applied Linguistics in the English language at Fundamental and Continuing Education, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia. He holds a bachelor's and master's degree in English literature from Peshawar University in 1988 and 1993 respectively. He also holds a Mphil degree in Applied linguistics from Lahore Leads University in 2020 and TEFL (PGD) from Allama Iqbal Open University Islamabad in 2000. He is interested in EFL reading and is the author of several articles written on the role of reading in the EFL context.

Samsiah Abdul-Hamid is a senior lecturer in the Centre for Fundamental and Continuing Education, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia. She is also the Deputy Dean (Academic and Student Affairs). She holds a bachelor's and master's degrees in Applied Linguistics (Teaching English as a Second Language) and Education from the University of North Texas, the USA in 1986

and 1988 respectively, and a Ph.D. degree from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2011. She is interested in second language (English) reading, reading strategies and metacognition, and attitude and motivation in language learning.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 990-996, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.11

Cross-Linguistic Influences in Writing: A Case Study of a Chinese International Student

Wenli Zhang
Department of Foreign Languages, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China

***Abstract*—There has been a longstanding debate on the use of native language (L1) in second language acquisition (SLA). One important topic in language education to investigate is the use of language in the second language (L2) writing process. The majority of studies have focused on L2 writers in English as a foreign language (EFL) settings. Quantitative research approaches have been dominant. Nevertheless, the complexity of this issue cannot be comprehensively explored without qualitative analysis. This case study investigates the language use of a Chinese international college student in the United States throughout the L2 writing process. It adopts a qualitative research approach. The findings show that language learners draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire while writing; even those with a high proficiency level still rely upon their L1 in the L2 writing process. The findings also reveal the multiple functions of the L1 in facilitating L2 writing. Although this study primarily focuses on the linguistic influences of the L1, its implications can be generalized to a broader context. Teachers working with English learners (ELs) or bilingual students are highly recommended to acknowledge and gain a comprehensive understanding of the value of students' linguistic knowledge, as well as embrace and strategically utilize students' linguistic repertoires**.

***Index Terms*—cross-linguistic influences, L2 writing, ELs, international college student**

I. Introduction

There has been a longstanding controversy over the use of the native language (L1) in the process of second language acquisition (SLA). One common belief in SLA is that using L1 can significantly hinder the development of second language (L2) learners. In their book, Krashen and Terrell (1983) proposed an approach to L2 teaching known as the natural approach: they claimed that people learn their L2 much in the same way they learn their L1. Due to this well-known approach, many people believe that the L2 is best learned through extensive exposure to the target language with limited L1 usage. However, this belief has been challenged. Nation (1997) has put forward the idea that using the L1 systematically can be beneficial in L2 learning. Meanwhile, the pedagogical value and functions of the L1 have also been recognized. Cook (2001) maintains that the L1 is a useful resource in L2 classrooms in several ways, including conveying meaning, explaining grammar, organizing class tasks, and maintaining discipline.

In addition to the growing number of theoretical works advocating the use of the L1 to facilitate L2 learning, more empirical studies have also been involved in this field. Many studies have explored teachers' attitudes toward using the L1 when teaching L2 (e.g., Copland & Neokleous, 2010; Flores & García, 2013; Kayaoğlu, 2012), and some have focused on students' perspectives (e.g., Bartlett, 2007; Carson & Kashihara, 2012; DiCamilla & Antón, 2012; Nazary, 2008; Scott & De la Fuente, 2008; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). There are also studies considering both teachers' and students' perspectives (e.g., Afzal, 2013; Edstrom, 2006). Among these studies, most show strong support for the idea that using the L1 can bolster L2 development. However, different views of the issue exist, and the debate on whether the L1 should be welcomed in SLA remains active. L2 writing is one particular domain that has drawn scholars' attention.

As one dominant field of exploration in L2 studies, the development of L2 writing has attracted increasing attention from scholars. In the last three decades, many studies have been dedicated to addressing various aspects of the issue of L1 usage in L2 writing. Some studies have explored the multiple purposes for which L2 writers use their L1 (e.g., van Weijien et al., 2009; Wang & Wen, 2002), revealing that it can be used to evaluate the proceeding texts, backtrack, and solve linguistic problems. Other scholars have studied how writers transfer L1 writing strategies to L2 writing (e.g., Beare & Bourages, 2007; Wolfersberger, 2003), indicating an L2 threshold for L2 writers to apply L1 writing strategies to writing in their L2. Still other scholars, however, have chosen to focus on one particular function of the L1 in L2 writing, such as using it to identify lexical items in Murphy and Roca de Larios's (2010) study. These studies in the field of L2 writing have encompassed participants with various levels of L2 proficiency. They have found that L2 proficiency plays a vital role in affecting the extent of L1 usage in L2 writing; learners with lower L2 proficiency levels tend to rely more heavily on the L1 when composing in their L2.

The review of relevant studies has revealed some gaps in the research on the use of the L1 in L2 writing. First, the dominant methodological approach is the quantitative research approach. Researchers can provide clear comparisons and contrasts—either within-subject/task or cross-subjects/tasks—by adopting a quantitative research approach. Meanwhile, the amount of L1 used in L2 writing can be explicitly expressed using numbers. However, this complicated phenomenon cannot be explained profoundly enough without qualitative analysis, and many factors related to the issue are neglected, such as writing strategies. When investigating the strategies utilized by L2 writers, it is difficult to characterize them comprehensively by using numbers. Further descriptions and interpretations are needed in order to thoroughly discuss the results. Therefore, qualitative data sources, such as interviews and observations, can offer insights into the L2 writing process.

The second issue concerns the participants. Studies have focused on L2 learners with various proficiency levels, from beginners to those who are highly proficient. However, most have studied L2 writers in an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, whereas international students have not yet attracted much attention from scholars, especially EFL learners who have just moved to an English as a second language (ESL) setting. These students have learned English as a foreign language in their home countries for years and have passed proficiency tests, such as TOEFL, before moving to an English-speaking country to study at a university. Usually, they have already obtained a high proficiency in English, but due to their EFL backgrounds, their L1 cannot be overlooked and may play an essential role in their L2 development. Considering their unique backgrounds, researchers can attain a more robust understanding of the challenges they face and their unique needs by thoroughly studying their English writing process and how they use their L1 when composing in English. This will provide implications for teachers, allowing them to serve this population more effectively and responsibly.

The third gap in the literature is that most studies have been experimental, and researchers have given participants designated topics to write about. Many researchers have also limited how much time participants had to write. Both limitations may have influenced the writing process to some extent. As a consequence, the findings and implications presented in these studies might only be applied to a time-constrained writing process.

In order to collect more authentic data and holistically explore L1 use in L2 writing, a qualitative case study approach has been adopted to explore the participant’s L1 use when completing a course assignment in English. This study has focused on an intermediate-to-advanced level female Chinese international student attending an American university. Drawing upon qualitative data sources, it investigates the ways in which this L2 writer used her L1. Rather than being assigned a topic to write about, the participant’s writing process was observed as she wrote a course paper. This study aims to unravel the various purposes that an L1 serves during L2 writing. It also provides implications for teachers working with English learners (ELs) with diverse backgrounds and proficiency levels so that they can provide contingent support in response to students’ needs.

II. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative case study approach to explore how Dai, the participant, used her L1 when writing a course paper in her L2. This strategy of inquiry allowed the exploration of Dai’s language use as she wrote more profoundly and comprehensively. This approach also supported the examination of the oppression of individual participants (Creswell, 2009). Due to the purpose of this study, a qualitative case study approach is appropriate to apply.

A. Participant

The participant in this study is Dai (pseudonym), an international student from China. When this study was conducted, Dai was an eighteen-year-old freshman majoring in math at an American university. Originally from China with Chinese as her L1, Dai came to the United States for college after finishing high school in China.

Dai’s English scores in high school were 110–120/150 on average. She also received a 97 out of 120 on the TOEFL iBT test, with 28 out of 30 points on the writing section. According to the Test and Score Data Summary for TOEFL iBT Tests for 2013 (ETS, 2013), the year Dai took the test, the average score was 78, and the average writing score was 20.2. Accordingly, Dai’s score is comparatively high. Her average English scores in high school and her TOEFL writing score made Dai stand out from her peers as an English learner with intermediate to advanced proficiency.

Dai started learning English in the first grade of elementary school when the main purpose was to help students develop an interest in the language. Dai did not learn how to write in English until third grade, and she stated that English writing was informal and casual in elementary school. English teachers would provide information, and students needed to integrate the information in a short passage of 100-200 words. From Dai’s perspective, casual writing cannot be regarded as actual writing; rather, actual writing should be formal with logical thinking involved. Thus, Dai proclaimed that she learned to write in English when she took courses to prepare for the writing portion of the TOEFL test. Compared to her experience in English writing, Dai has more experience writing in Chinese. In elementary school, she started writing casually in Chinese and learned to write more formally in middle school. This suggests that Dai possesses a higher writing proficiency in her L1 than her L2.

B. Data Collection

This case study mainly draws upon interview and observational data. Throughout the course of the study, the researcher conducted two semi-structured interviews with Dai: one was held at the beginning of the study and the other one at the end of the data collection stage. The first interview aimed to help the researcher understand Dai’s language learning and academic background, particularly her writing experience in both her L1 and L2. The second interview was conducted toward the end of the study. It mainly focused on the researcher’s observations of Dai’s writing and a stimulated recall. A mix of Chinese and English was used in the interviews. The interview data were audio-recorded.

Another significant data source in this study was observations. During the study, Dai was working on a synthesis paper for a course about how the dissolution of a romantic relationship affects men and women differently. Instead of assigning her a new task, it was decided to use this writing assignment to obtain more authentic data. Dai's writing process was observed and video-recorded. To comprehensively understand Dai's language use throughout the writing process, the researcher adopted think-aloud protocols during observations and asked Dai to verbalize her thoughts while writing. Considering the time Dai needed to complete the paper, the researcher divided the think-aloud protocol collection process into two sessions. In the first session, Dai was observed writing a body paragraph in which she synthesized and paraphrased the original reading materials. In the second session, she was writing the concluding paragraph. Each session lasted approximately one hour. Although the use of think-aloud protocols has caused controversy in the past, Krapels (1990) has asserted that they provide useful data for L2 writing research. In line with Krapels, van Weijen et al. (2009) have also stated that using think-aloud protocols allows researchers to observe the "occurrence of conceptual activities" (p. 239) during the writing process. In this study, think-aloud protocols were used to access Dai's thought process as she wrote, which provided insights into her language use. Dai chose the language she wanted to use when thinking aloud. All think-aloud protocols were video-recorded. In this paper, the protocols are displayed separately, and protocols in Chinese are translated into English. The content that Dai wrote in the paper is in italics.

A stimulated recall was conducted a few days after Dai had completed the think-aloud protocols. Mackey and Gass (2005) have stated that stimulated recalls promote participants to recall and report thoughts they have had when performing a task, allowing researchers to obtain participants' interpretations of an event. At the same time, stimulated recalls also serve as a medium through which participants can explain what appear to be divergent results. When conducting the stimulated recall in this study, Dai and the researcher watched the think-aloud protocols together. While doing so, the researcher paused the video at salient points and asked Dai questions about her thinking and writing, through which a better grasp and more accurate comprehension of Dai's interpretation and conceptualization of her writing and language use were obtained.

All interview and observational data were transcribed.

C. Data Analysis

In this study, thematic analysis was adopted to analyze the data. To identify thematic elements related to Dai's language use when writing in English, the researcher adopted Riessman's (2008) thematic analysis. The steps included familiarizing the data, identifying thematic elements at the coding stage, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up the final report. After becoming familiar with the data that had been gathered, the researcher reviewed all of the think-aloud protocols and the transcript of the stimulated recall session, highlighting salient moments and focusing on Dai's language use throughout the writing process, including choices she made at the syntax, lexical, and content levels. Then, the researcher reviewed the codes to identify patterns among them. For example, at the sentence level, Dai often used Chinese to organize and construct sentences. When selecting specific words, Dai stopped and first articulated the meaning she was attempting to express in Chinese. According to recurring patterns in the codes, the researcher generated and defined the major themes, including Dai's use of Chinese for content development, sentence structure, word selection, and maintaining the writing process. Throughout the study, the themes and codes were reviewed multiple times. Data analysis was conducted manually.

III. Findings

Drawing upon data gathered from the previously mentioned sources, this section will present a comprehensive picture of Dai's language use, especially how she used Chinese to assist her during the English writing process, showing its functions and merits. Dai reported that she often relies on Chinese when writing in English for various reasons and to accomplish different tasks, including organizing her thoughts, writing long sentences, and selecting words. In this study, the observations of Dai's writing process also show that she used Chinese as a valuable resource. When conducting the think-aloud protocols, the researcher let Dai choose the language in which she wanted to use to think aloud. She used Chinese predominantly throughout the protocol collection process. Drawing on a total of 30 protocols, it has been found that Dai primarily used Chinese for content development and the construction and confirmation of sentence structures. At the word level, the observations revealed that Dai used Chinese to maintain the writing process and make and confirm her word choices. In addition to the critical moments that Chinese played a pivotal role in assisting Dai's English writing, there were cases where the researcher noticed that English was the dominant language.

A. Content Development

One way that Dai used Chinese when writing in English was to help her develop the content of her essay. When observing Dai's writing process, the researcher noticed that she often paused and verbalized what she wanted to express in a sentence in Chinese, especially when writing long sentences. Once she had formulated and developed the idea in Chinese, Dai then completed the sentence. For example, when writing a summary of the first main point of the essay, Dai thought aloud:

> 然后准备写几句话，首先浮现的是中文，就是说在一个relationship break-up以后的男人和女人都会有一

些共同的情绪，但是我们可以看见对于不同感情观也好，不同性别的人也好，有很多，很大的，一些区别。

(I'm going to write down a couple of sentences, and what occurred [in my mind] first is in Chinese. [I want to] say that after a break-up, men and women share some common emotions, but we can see that for [people with] different values and personalities, there are a lot of big differences.)

After this exposition, Dai started constructing the sentences based on the Chinese meaning she expressed. As shown in this protocol, in the beginning, Dai had a general idea that she wanted to write a couple of sentences to summarize the aforementioned point. However, she had a vague idea of the specific content she would include. In this protocol, Dai articulated her thoughts in Chinese, through which she developed her idea and formed a clearer sense of the content of the sentence.

Another illustrative example is when Dai was writing the concluding paragraph. After finishing the conclusion of the previous part of her essay, Dai stopped and verbally expressed her thoughts:

我现在差不多就是觉得总结了一下两个大点。现在准备延伸到了一个general的范围，就是往外拓展一下，或者就是说可能还有其他的因素也导致了，就是不同的gender可能还有其他不同的反应。可以直接说还有其他的因素导致了不同gender在emotion还有在处理方式上得不同，就是往外拓展一下。

(I'm done summarizing the two major points [of my essay]. Now [I'm] going to expand [my essay] to a more general scope, just expand it, or [I should say that] maybe there are other elements that cause… like different genders may have other different reactions. Or [I could directly write] there are other elements causing different genders to deal with emotion and others differently. Just to expand a little bit.)

After reflecting on her thoughts, Dai started her sentence, *There might be other factors*. As presented in this think-aloud protocol, Dai initially only had an overall idea that she wanted to end her essay by expanding the content to a more general scope, whereas it was not clear to her what to include or how to develop the idea. When verbalizing her thoughts, Dai mentioned some alternative ideas for the following sentences. Some of her thoughts were not fully developed and were uttered in incomplete sentences, but Dai's writing indicates that she became certain regarding what she should write in the following sentences. By negotiating with herself and verbalizing the different thoughts in her mind, she turned them into a complete and well-organized sentence. Although she thought aloud in Chinese, she expressed her idea effectively when writing in English. In the stimulated recall session, Dai reflected on those protocols, demonstrating that Chinese guided the organization of her thoughts, and verbalizing them in Chinese helped her develop the content of her English writing.

B. *Sentence Structure*

Another common scenario in which Dai used Chinese was to consider sentence structure. Throughout the study, the researcher observed that Dai sometimes paused in the middle of writing a sentence. Corresponding think-aloud protocols show that this happened when Dai noticed that she had used an inappropriate sentence structure and revised it.

It is evidenced in the observation of Dai's writing of the first major point of her essay. By the beginning of the study, Dai had created an outline for the paper she was working on. When writing the first paragraph about the first major point, Dai began it with *The secure, skittish, and uninterested schemas were.* She then deleted *the* and thought aloud:

这个是原来它是用这个（在"schemas"下划横线）是主语，但是我觉得主语应该是人， 因为是情绪，应该是人去感受。所以我把主语换成"people"， 然后去感受一种情绪。

(This is the subject of the original text [underlining "schemas"]. But I think the subject should be human beings because the emotion [is felt] by human beings. So I will change the subject to *people*, [who can] feel the emotion.)

Dai stated in this protocol that when she was initially writing the sentence, she wrote down the information she had retrieved from the reading materials; *schemas* was the subject of the original text. However, afterward, she became aware that the sentence was about emotions. After this protocol, Dai went back to the beginning of the sentence and added *people who have.* In this protocol, Dai rationalized in Chinese that it is people who feel emotions, which led her to change the subject of the sentence from *schemas* to *people*. Therefore, justification and validation in Chinese allowed her to revise the sentence structure accordingly.

Another example can be found toward the end of the first major point of the paper, when Dai decided to provide a summary of her first major point before moving on to the second. She started the summary with a transition and stopped as she was writing the second sentence:

现在要写的是要引出原因，脑子里第一反应是if we consider these reasons blahblahblah，但是要替换一下。所以现在要说原因，就把原因变成主语， there are some reasons.

(Now I'm going to talk about causes. What occurred [to me] in the first place was *if we consider these reasons blahblahblah*, but it needs to be changed. Since [I'm going to] talk about reasons, [I should] change the subject to *reasons*. [The sentence should be like] *there are some reasons*.)

Then, Dai started the second sentence, *There are some reasons*. In this protocol, Dai expressed that she wanted to write about why women and men have different reactions after a break-up and had intuitively started the sentence with *If we consider these reasons* based on her thoughts, which were immensely dependent on her comprehension of the reading materials through Chinese. While deliberating and articulating her ideas, Dai realized that she needed to reconstruct the sentence to better express her thoughts and conform to the rules of English grammar. Thus, in the protocol, she explained in Chinese how she would change the sentence structure to use appropriate grammar. To this end, Dai used *reasons* as the subject of the sentence, which resulted in a change in the sentence structure. Similar to the previous protocol, rationalizing in Chinese scaffolded Dai's thinking in regard to the grammatically appropriate sentence structure. Dai's use of Chinese to analyze sentence structure was restated in the stimulated recall session. Dai explicitly claimed that Chinese was a valuable resource that she used to outline the structure of a sentence before filling the blanks with concrete content in English. This, again, pinpoints one major function that Chinese served in Dai's English writing process.

C. *Process Maintenance and Word Selection*

Aside from relying on Chinese for content development and sentence structure, Dai also depended on her L1 to maintain the writing process when writing in English. For example, in the concluding paragraph, Dai wanted to describe how men handle a romantic relationship and stopped in the middle of a sentence, saying: "分散，忘了怎么拼 (*decentralization*, [I] forgot how to spell it)." She then wrote *分散*, the Chinese word for *decentralization*, on the paper. Dai provided further exposition about this scenario in the stimulated recall session. When writing the initial draft, Dai often did not have high expectations, especially for wording. The main purpose of an initial draft, according to Dai, was to express meaning. For words that she did not know how to spell, she often wrote the word in Chinese and waited until she completed the draft to look up the spelling. She stated that looking words up while writing would interrupt the writing process, impeding her idea development and information delivery. In other words, Dai used Chinese to remind herself of the words she did not know how to spell so she could continue writing.

Another major way that Dai used Chinese was to select words for her writing. For example, when moving on to the second major point, Dai stopped for approximately 20 seconds while externalizing her thoughts:

> 我现在要引出discussion的分论点，我在想是用however还是用actually. 我用actually，感觉however转折太大了。[我想写]*可能会出乎我们的意料*，但是中文上来说是*事实上*比较合理。如果用*但是*… 感觉还是actually好一点，事实上。
>
> (I'm going to start writing another major point of the discussion part. I'm thinking about starting with either *however* or *actually*. I want to use *actually*. [I feel] the transitional relation expressed by *however* is a little bit too much. [I want to write] *it might be beyond our expectations*. [If I say that] in Chinese, *actually* sounds relatively proper. If I use *however*… [I still] feel *actually* is better.)

Subsequently, she chose to start the sentence with *actually*. Dai said in this protocol that she wanted to use a transition word to shift to the second major point and identified two candidates: *however* and *actually*. When selecting the most appropriate word, Dai pondered the Chinese and English meanings of both words. She believed that the degree of transition carried by *however* was too strong. Based on the Chinese meaning of the content that she wanted to express in the sentence, she rationalized that *actually* could deliver the information more precisely, which made it a better choice than *however*. Although the English meanings of both words expressed her initial thoughts, Dai situated *actually* in a Chinese context to validate its appropriateness. In this case, Chinese helped Dai confirm the accuracy of her decision, indicating that Chinese was the dominant language that Dai used for word selection.

D. *Cases Where English was the Dominant Language*

Dai's strong reliance on Chinese when writing in English manifested frequently during the study. She showed awareness of her dependence on Chinese in the second interview. Nevertheless, the researcher also noticed cases where Dai used English to make writing decisions. In other words, sometimes, English was the dominant language that Dai used to guide her writing.

One illustrative example is when Dai was describing something interesting. Dai started the sentence with, *There is something interesting we can find*. Then, she stopped and thought aloud: "我觉得后面应该加点儿什么，[比如] interesting blah blah blah (I think I need to write something after *interesting*… [like] interesting blah blah blah)." At first, she did not struggle to start this sentence, and she adopted Chinese to develop the content of the rest of the sentence. However, when reflecting on the situation, Dai claimed that initially, she thought in English to write this sentence. *There's something interesting* was a familiar expression that Dai used frequently to describe interesting phenomena; accordingly, she used it to start the sentence based on her English knowledge and usage habits. During the debriefing about her use of English to write sentences, Dai claimed that she can write sentences without difficulties or problems when she uses familiar expressions. Nevertheless, she needed the assistance of Chinese to determine the sentence structure and content.

The observational data also showed that Dai used her English language knowledge and usage habits for wording purposes in some cases. For example, Dai decided to use *however* as the conjunction when choosing between *however* and *but* for a transition. After writing the sentence, she paused and reread it. When discussing the rationale behind this decision in the stimulated recall session, Dai explained that she chose *however* because it was more appropriate according to her knowledge of the English language. Although she often used Chinese to choose the words, as previously discussed, Dai noted that she relied on English to confirm her decisions. Once she had chosen an English word, she read the entire sentence in English to verify its appropriateness. Otherwise indicated, Dai depended on Chinese to choose a word from several candidates with similar meanings but counted on her English language knowledge to confirm her decisions.

IV. Discussion and Implications

In this study, rather than asking Dai to complete a designated writing task, the researcher observed her writing a course paper in English, suggesting that the data collected are authentic. Also, the time that Dai had to write the paper was not constrained. Therefore, the study's findings genuinely reflect Dai's actual language use in English writing. This study indicates that Chinese, Dai's L1, served multiple functions during the L2 writing process. For example, it helped with sentence structure and content development. As she struggled to figure out what she wanted her sentences to express and how to construct them, Dai verbalized her thoughts in Chinese. This helped her organize content and construct sentences. At the same time, she used Chinese to select appropriate words throughout the L2 writing process, as well as maintain the writing process. The findings of this study are in accordance with others (e.g., Murphy & de Larios, 2010; Wang & Wen, 2002), indicating that the purposes of using the L1 vary according to tasks and contexts.

Many studies have suggested that the tendency to rely on the L1 decreases when students' L2 proficiency level increases; students with lower L2 proficiency levels rely heavily on their L1, whereas higher-level L2 learners do not (e.g., Beare & Bourdages, 2007; Carson & Kashinara, 2012; Wolfersberger, 2003). Nonetheless, this study shows conflictual findings. As an intermediate-to-advanced L2 learner, Dai showed a strong dependence on her L1 during L2 writing, demonstrating that highly proficient L2 learners still face difficulties and struggles when composing in their L2 and rely on their L1 to overcome those challenges. The L1 of an L2 learner, regardless of their proficiency level, remains a pivotal resource and aid in L2 writing (Beeman & Urow, 2013; Gort, 2006; Shin, 2013).

In this study, Dai predominantly used Chinese for think-aloud protocols, as well as various other purposes throughout the L2 writing process. At the same time, she sometimes used English as her dominant language for sentence writing and confirming word choices. This observational finding aligns with Schrauf and Rubin's (1998) finding that English–Spanish bilinguals might internally think in Spanish while writing in English, or vice versa. It is also in line with Orellana and Garcia's (2014) statement that, among bilinguals, both languages are active when one language is being used, indicating that they think bilingually. Accordingly, bilinguals' L1 should not be overlooked when exploring their L2 development.

The findings yielded by this study offer some practical implications for teachers working with ELs, especially in an ESL context. Teachers are suggested to develop a better understanding of students' language use. Knowing that ELs' L1 is a valuable resource that can facilitate their academic development, teachers can embrace students' L1 and strategically encourage their use for academic purposes. Furthermore, the findings also reveal that many international college students with intermediate-to-advanced English proficiency levels who have moved from an EFL setting to an ESL context, like Dai, still need additional support and extra time to become proficient with academic language and succeed in school (Garcia, 2009). College instructors working with these international students are recommended to provide explicit instruction for students to help them acquire the academic language required for a specific field of study, as "every teacher is a language teacher" (Echevarria & Graves, 2015, p. 73).

References

[1] Afzal, S. (2013). Using of the first language in English classroom as a way of scaffolding for both the students and teachers to learn and teach English. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, *4*(7), 1846–1854.

[2] Bartlett, L. (2007). Bilingual literacies, social identification, and educational trajectories. *Linguistics and Education, 18,* 215–231.

[3] Beare, S., & Bourdages, J. (2007). Skilled writers' generating strategies in L1 and L2: An exploratory study. In M. Torrance, L. Waes, & D. Galbraith (Eds.), *Writing and cognition: Research and application* (pp. 151–161). Elsevier.

[4] Beeman, K., & Urow, C. (2013). *Teaching for biliteracy: Strengthening bridges between languages*. Caslon Publishing.

[5] Carson, E., & Kashinara, H. (2012). Using the L1 in the L2 classroom: The students speak. *The Language Teacher*, *36*(4), 41–48.

[6] Cook, V. (2001). Using the first language in the classroom. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *57*(3), 402–423.

[7] Copland, F., & Neokleous, G. (2010). L1 to teach L2: Complexities and contradictions. *ELT Journal*. doi: 10.1093/elt/ccq047.

[8] Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

[9] DiCamilla, F. J., & Antón, M. (2012). Functions of L1 in the collaborative interaction of beginning and advanced second language learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *22*(2), 160–188.

[10] Edstrom, A. (2006). L1 use in the L2 classroom: One teacher's self-evaluation. *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La Revue Canadienne Des Langues Vivantes*, *63*(2), 275–292.

[11] Echivarria, J. J., & Gaves, A. W. (2015). *Sheltered content instruction: Teaching English learners with diverse abilities*. Pearson.

[12] ETS. (2013). *Test and score data summary for TOEFL iBT tests*. Retrieved February 14, 2022, from http://www.ets.org/toefl.

[13] Flores, N., & García, O. (2013). Linguistic third spaces in education: Teachers' translanguaging across the bilingual continuum. In D. Little, C. Leung, & P. Van Avermaet (eds.). *Managing diversity in education: Key issues and some responses* (pp. 245–258).

[14] Garcia, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective* (1st ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

[15] Gort, M. (2006). Strategic codeswitching, interliteracy, and other phenomena of emergent bilingual writing: Lessons from first grade dual language classrooms. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *6*(3), 323–354.
[16] Kayaoğlu, M. N. (2012). Use of mother tongue in foreign language teaching from teachers' practice and perspective. *Pamukkale University Journal of Education*, *32*, 25–35.
[17] Krapels, A. R. (1990). An overview of second language writing process research. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 37–56). Cambridge University Press.
[18] Krashen, S. D., & Terrell, T. D. (1983). *The natural approach: Language acquisition in the classroom*. Prentice Hall Europe.
[19] Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). *Second language research: Methodology and design*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
[20] Murphy, L., & Roca de Larios, J. (2010). Searching for word: One strategic use of the mother tongue by advanced Spanish EFL writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *19*(1), 61 – 81.
[21] Nation, P. (1997). L1 and L2 use in the classroom: A systematic approach. *TESL Reporter*, 30 (2). 19-27
[22] Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-Royal*, *2*(2), 138–153.
[23] Orellana, M. F., & García, O. (2014). Language brokering and translanguaging in school. *Language Arts*, *91*(5), 386–392.
[24] Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.
[25] Schrauf, R. W., & Rubin, D. C. (1998). Bilingual autobiographical memory in older adult immigrants: A test of cognitive explanations of the reminiscence bump and the linguistic encoding of memories. *Journal of Memory and Language*, *39*(3), 437–457.
[26] Scott, V. M., & De la Fuente, M. J. (2008). What's the problem? L2 learners' use of the L1 during consciousness-raising, form-focused tasks. *The Modern Language Journal*, *92*(1), 100–113.
[27] Shin, S. (2013). *Bilingualism in schools and society*. Routledge.
[28] Stoch, N., & Wigglesworth, G. (2003). Is there a role for the use of the L1 in an L2 setting? *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*(4), 760–770.
[29] van Weijen, D., Bergh, H., Rijlaarsdam, G., & Sanders, T. (2009). L1 use during L2 writing: An empirical study of complex phenomenon. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *18*(4), 235–250.
[30] Wang, W., & Wen, Q. (2002). L1 use in the L2 composing process: An exploratory study of 16 Chinese EFL writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *11*(3), 225–246.
[31] Wolfersberger, M. (2003). L1 to L2 writing process and strategy transfer: A low at lower proficiency writers. *TESL-EJ*, *7*(2), 1–15. Retrieved March 7, 2022, from http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume7/ej26/ej26a6.

Wenli Zhang was born on December 24th, 1988, in China. After receiving her BA in English from Shandong Jianzhu University in China in 2011, Wenli majored in TESL at Pennsylvania State University and received an MA degree in 2013. She continued pursuing a doctoral degree and received her PhD in Foreign, Second, and Multilingual Language Education from the Ohio State University in 2020.

She has working experiences in K-12 and university educational settings in China and the United States. Before studying abroad, she worked as an English teacher in a cram school in China. She worked as an ESL lecturer at Pennsylvania State University for a year after receiving her MA degree. While doing her PhD at the Ohio State University, she worked as a writing consultant at the Writing Center. She is now a faculty member in the Department of Foreign Languages at University of Chinese Academy of Sciences in China. Her research interests include English language teaching, language teacher education, bilingualism, and English academic writing.

Dr. Wenli Zhang was a member of TESOL and AAAL. She has shared her work at various international conferences, including TESOL and AAAL. She has also published her works in multiple international journals, such as *Teacher Education and Research* and *US-China Education Review A*. Dr. Wenli Zhang served as a conference proposal reviewer for AERA, TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo, and Ohio TESOL. She works as a manuscript reviewer for the *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* since 2019.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 997-1006, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.12

Students' Attitudes Towards Applying Cooperative Learning Strategy at Amman Arab University

Areej J. Khalifeh
Faculty of Arts and Science, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan

Nusaiba A. Almousa
Faculty of Education and Psychology, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan

Raeda M. Ammari
Faculty of Arts and Science, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan

Lina A. Jarrah
Faculty of Arts and Science, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan

***Abstract*—The current research aimed at discussing the use of the Cooperative Learning strategy and its applications in AAU English courses. The researchers collected the data from several online resources and books. A questionnaire was developed as another assessment tool and was distributed to Amman Arab University students. The sample was 600 students from all faculties. In addition to conducting interviews with English Doctors at Amman Arab University to inquire about their teaching strategies and methods and the extent to which they apply them. The findings of the interviews were very positive. In consensus, they preferred face-to-face instruction as well as various cooperative strategies. Moreover, the results of the questionnaires showed that students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning were high, as the means reached (3.810) with a standard deviation of (0.507). Furthermore, students aged twenty years and over displayed more interest and involvement concerning the Cooperative Learning strategies than others. Regarding the gender variable, it was in favor of the females. Some recommendations were suggested to be implemented in teaching English.**

***Index Terms*—teaching strategy, cooperative learning, students, University**

I. Introduction

One factor affecting second language learners' ability to learn a new language is appropriate teaching strategy. It is the role of the teacher to be able to adapt, design and employ an effective teaching strategy. By applying various strategies, learners of a second language are encouraged to learn it easily and faster. In later stages, these learners can be responsible for developing their language autonomously (Herrera & Murry, 2011).

The Cooperative Learning (henceforth CL) strategy is considered a tool that simplifies students' perspectives of learning a new language. Hence, English is an essential language in Jordan. This shows the importance of using the CL strategy effectively. Luckily, the CL strategy is applied at Amman Arab University to teach English language students. In this light, the researchers focused on providing a background for the Learning strategies and discussing the Cooperative Learning strategy (Cooperative Learning; teaching students a lesson while separating them into groups) and how to apply it in various courses.

II. Background of Learning Strategies

Saadeh (2018) highlighted the works and how Donald Phillips, a professor at American Michigan State, was the first to use the Cooperative Learning strategy. He divided students into groups to find solutions for a specific case. This strategy is nowadays employed in different types of courses worldwide. One of the benefits is that students feel more confident and relaxed while talking about any problem they face and learning about a topic quickly. They don't have to practice these things in front of their teacher; instead, they do it within their groups of students.

Another point to consider is that Cooperative Learning could be more beneficial when students explain the lesson to their peers. Students obtain a complete explanation for the language they attempt to learn. The more the learners comprehend the language's grammar, the better they start using it in writing and speaking. In addition, they explicated the essential role of teachers where they should simplify their lessons to make it easier for the student to acquire the task quickly (Yunus et al., 2021).

Numerous scholars focused on the student's role in enhancing language acquisition by encouraging learners to read various exciting topics to learn new vocabulary. Moreover, there are four methods to apply the Cooperative Learning strategy; student teams Achievement, Jigsaw, group searching, and structural method. Focusing on the Jigsaw method, the teacher teaches students by dividing them into groups. Each group consists of 5 to 6 students studying one part of the material (Maswani, 2015).

According to Bousbai and Hamdini (2019), there are three types of Cooperative Learning Groups as follows:

1. Formal: a group of students meets to finish homework or a course's task.
2. Informal: a group of students sits together to discuss the course material or give their opinions.
3. Cooperative base group: a group of students who stay as a group for one semester or more, and everyone helps the rest with the material and course summaries.

There are several advantages to using CL in teaching. First, students can learn with other peers quickly. Second, they participate in the learning process through teamwork. Third, students can build their self-confidence through the interdependent learning method and realize that while working with a team, everyone should do his role perfectly to achieve the total goals. Forth, CL helps students learn any skill easily since they can learn from interacting with their colleagues. Finally, the CL strategy decreases the stress of learning a new skill, and teachers can discuss many topics with students to raise their level of conversation (Cornelius et al., 2016).

Nonetheless, for any method, there might be some withdrawal. The tricky thing about the CL strategy is that teachers should be well planned before dividing students into groups and that some students may participate more than others if their level is more developed (Cornelius-Ukpepi et al., 2016).

Turning to the teacher's role in applying CL, excellent teachers are the ones who vary in their teaching methods, using different ways to send information depending on the student's level, dealing with students in a simple form, and not putting borders between the teachers and their students. Eventually, students are allowed to practice the information they learn in real life, provide a student with a revision at the beginning of the lecture, and increase their ability to learn by challenging them Cheng et al. (2018). In teaching and learning environments, several strategies and methods are required to be implemented, such as Cooperative Learning. It is considered working in the soul of a students' group where they help, encourage, and depend on each other (Bengü & Sühendan, 2018).

III. Review of Literature

Numerous studies were concerned with teaching languages and applying effective strategies that enhance students' learning. The following studies are ordered chronologically; the most recent to the oldest.

Abuhamda et al. (2021) conducted a study in Palestine to find the result of applying the Jigsaw Cooperative Learning technique (JCLT) to EFL secondary students. The research was applied using a questionnaire distributed to 1094 randomly Palestinian EFL teachers (2019-2020), then they analyzed the questionnaires. The results showed that students have positive effects on using JCLT.

Singh et al. (2020) conducted a study to find the effect of applying the "Think Pair Share" TPS method in improving ESL students' level of speaking skills. The sample included 24 forms of four students. The results showed that students who participated in the TPS learning method increased their speaking ability and their confidence improved.

Baena-Morales et al. (2020) completed a study on a sample of 177 university students (98 females-79 males) by giving out a questionnaire to them to find the effect of using the Jigsaw technique on higher education students in Spain related to gender difference. They found that females are affected positively in learning with this cooperative teaching method more than males. In addition to that, females prefer being within the same category group.

In the same vein, Bousbai and Hamdini (2019) conducted a study to find the difficulties related to "think pair share" in second-year LMD students. He found that students got a high level of interacting with others in speaking.

The primary purpose of Khamis and Shahadeh's (2020) study was to encourage peer learning. They tested the method of peers' correcting in teaching the English Language to high school students in Saudi Arabia. The researcher tested (30) students and let them check each other's exams to find the results. They found that this teaching method has improved their level of writing and allowed them to acquire English writing skills easily.

Ghufron and Ermawati (2018) conducted a study in Indonesia. The study focused on the strengths and weaknesses of CL in writing classes. The sample included 2 EFL teachers and 60 students. The data was collected using a questionnaire, interviews, and observation. The analyzed data found that raising students' self-confidence increases their participation, responsibilities, and writing ability. On the other hand, it needs more preparation and management.

A study by Jenny Montano-González (2017) discussed BDI (Biography Driven Instruction) in teaching students a second language. The study was performed by dividing students into groups. Some pictures are hung on the board for students to talk about and describe. Another activity for students is the specific videos given to them to report what they see as newspaper reporters. The best strategy to teach a student a second language is to focus on each student's background and information and to give them a chance to practice the topic within groups. Flashcards and similar methods can be helpful just for low-level students.

Maswani's (2015) study aimed to find the effect of teaching grammar by Cooperative Learning Strategy on high school students. The research was conducted based on three ways of data collecting; conducting interviews with the head of the institute and some students, grammar teachers, method of teaching grammar, and interviews with their supervisor. The researcher implemented the Cooperative Learning strategy in one group and not in the other. In the next step, he gave students some post-tests. The post-tests after using the Cooperative Learning strategy. The results showed that students taught grammar in the cooperative group strategy (Jigsaw method) achieved higher grades.

Farzaneh et al. (2014) executed a study by sending the study questionnaire to (52) EFL students at Gouyash language school to find the result of teaching them a language using the Cooperative Learning strategy. The study found that the CL strategy positively affected students learning of the language since they started feeling more confident in studying within groups.

A review on the English language level of education was performed by Alhabahbeh et al. (2016) in Jordan. They discussed some recent trends and challenges concerning ESL in the Arab world, specifically Jordan. The study results highlighted a need to train teachers for new methods of teaching that are more desirable and understandable for students while staying up to date.

Ali and Mansour (2011) examined the effect of using a Cooperative Learning strategy in teaching high school students in Damascus' schools. The study was randomly applied to (596) teachers in (28) high schools. The results indicated statistically significant differences in the results depending on the experience of the teachers. In addition, the results showed that high school teachers, especially female ones, prefer this strategy of teaching.

Similarly, Al-Ghubari (2009) conducted a study in Yemen to find the result of using a Cooperative Learning strategy in high school teaching. The researcher chose (30) students as a sample and found that using CLS improved their level of writing.

Learning the language from different aspects was the concern of Nair et al.'s (2019) study about applying the Student Team Achievement Division (learning in groups) method in teaching students in an international school in Malaysia. The research sample was (20) students aged between 11 and 12 years. The researchers found the results using descriptive and qualitative data based on observations, interviews, and teachers' reflections. The findings showed that this method helped increase the students' level of writing and that they learned from each other and increased their communication skills.

Bengü and Sühendan (2018) investigated the ELT students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning at the university prep school in their study. They used a questionnaire to obtain the required data. It was distributed to (166) university students (F=100, M=66) among (18-20) from various faculties. The descriptive analysis method was used to analyze the data. The outcomes revealed that (66.9%) of the students agree with using Cooperative Learning in ELT classes. However, around (33.1%) of them preferred working alone as they believed that their achievement could have been better and more enjoyable. Students indicated some positive and negative sides of the cooperative method. Gender played a significant role in the attitudes toward Cooperative Learning, in favor of females.

IV. Statement of the Problem

Teaching the English language is difficult since it needs various strategies and tools to simplify giving information to students some teachers. Hence, one of the prominent reasons that affect learning a language for students is encountering the new vocabulary they have no idea about. Learners face another problem in constructing complete sentences correctly. In this study, the researchers focused on the Cooperative Learning Strategy used in teaching to attract University students and implement this tool successfully in AAU Courses.

A. Objectives and Questions of the Study

Teaching languages is a challenging task for many teachers. Teachers must find different methods to teach the English Language to keep students motivated. Therefore, this study highlights the significance of the Cooperative Learning Strategy as it affects teaching English and helps students acquire language without the feeling of being under pressure when taking an English course during their study at Amman Arab University.

Hence, the study aimed to determine the attitude of undergraduate students toward the Cooperative Learning method, and the study tried to find the answer to the following questions:

B. Questions of the Study

1. *To what extent do students benefit from the Cooperative Learning strategy?*
2. *Are there statistically differences at the significance level in students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy based on gender, age, the field of study, and level of study?*

C. Limitations of the Study

This study was restricted to Amman Arab University students for the academic year (2021/2022) - The study results depend on the validity and reliability of the study tool.

D. Terminology of the Study

1. Teaching Strategy: Ortega (2009, p.208) defined learning strategies as "conscious mental and behavioral procedures that individuals engage in intending to gain control over their learning process."

2. Cooperative Learning strategy: "Dividing large numbers of students into small groups, not less than two people and not more than eight, to discuss the particular problem" (Saadeh, 2018, p.201)

V. Methodology

A. Study Methodology

The researchers used the descriptive-analytical approach and did interviews with prominent professors at the Amman Arab University to discover the relationships between the study variables and reveal their impact to reach appropriate solutions.

B. Study Population

The study sample was the undergraduate students at Amman Arab University for 2021-2022. The questionnaires were electronically distributed through the University faculty members' WhatsApp application. Out of the (546) questionnaires returned, (57) were excluded for incomplete answers. Thus, (489) questionnaires were valid for analysis, rating (81.5%) a statistically accepted rate. Table 1 presents the distribution of the study sample individuals according to the demographic variables, as follows:

Table 1
Distribution Of The Study Sample Individuals According To Demographic Variables

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	270	55.2
	Female	219	44.8
	Total	**489**	**100%**
Age Group	Less than 20 years	184	37.6
	20 years and over	305	62.4
	Total	**489**	**100%**
Field of Study	Business/Management	175	35.8
	Languages	37	7.6
	Educational Sciences	44	9.0
	Other	233	47.6
	Total	**489**	**100%**
Academic Year	First	316	64.6
	Second	61	12.5
	Third	72	14.7
	Fourth	40	8.2
	Total	**489**	**100%**

C. Instrument of the Study

The researchers developed a questionnaire consisting of (25) items distributed to the undergraduate students at Amman Arab University. The questionnaire was developed by the researchers and reviewed. It had (20) items in its final version with a five-pointer Likert scale for evaluation.

D. Data Collection Sources

Two types of sources were used to obtain the required data:

(a). First: Primary Data

The questionnaire was prepared and developed to obtain data from the study population through reviewing the related literature and previous studies. It consisted of two-part multiple-choice questions and items:

First part: demographic variables: consisted of (4) questions represented in the gender, age group, the field of study, and academic year.

Second part: Questionnaire items, consisting of (20) items, reflect students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning and individual learning.

The cognitive measuring method, based on the 5-point Likert scale, was used in answering the questionnaire items. Weights of answers to the items specified to measure each dimension were identified as follows:

Table 2
5-Point Likert Scale

Approval degree	**Strongly agree**	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**
Weight	5	4	3	2	1

The relative importance of Cooperative Learning and individual learning was identified according to the following formula:

$$\text{Relative importance} \quad \frac{\text{Upper limit of the alternative – lower limit of the alternative}}{\text{Number of levels}} = \frac{5\text{-}1}{3} \quad 1.33 =$$

The level of relative importance was identified depending on the mean value of the weights of responses to the research instrument and the variables of its model according to three levels: low, medium and high, as in Table 3:

TABLE 3
LEVEL OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT ITEMS AND THE CORRESPONDING MEANS

Level of Relative Importance	**Low**	**Medium**	**High**
Mean	1 - less than 2.34	2.34 - less than 3.67	3.67 -5.00

(b). Second Source of Data

The researchers interviewed six English Language professors working at the Amman Arab University.

(c). Verifying the Validity of the Scale

The questionnaire consisted of (20) items measuring students' attitudes towards cooperative and individual learning. Verifying the validity of the scale ensures the questionnaire's suitability, clarity, and consistency for collecting the required data. The study tool was presented to (4) experienced and competent arbitrators from Jordanian public and private universities. The study tool was modified and corrected according to their opinions to arrive at its final form.

(d). Validity of Structure Indicators

The validity of the structure and correlation of the questionnaire items were verified through the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results were as follows:

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF THE INDICATORS OF THE VALIDITY OF THE STRUCTURE

Item No.	**Correlation Coefficient**	**Item No.**	**Correlation Coefficient**	**Item No.**	**Correlation Coefficient**	**Item No.**	**Correlation Coefficient**
1	0.643**	6	0.512**	11	0.695**	16	0.695**
2	0.654**	7	0.696**	12	0.728**	17	0.647**
3	0.695**	8	0.582**	13	0.620**	18	0.619**
4	0.414**	9	0.458**	14	0.659**	19	0.590**
5	0.701**	10	0.687**	15	0.664**	20	0.544**

**** statistically significant at the level (0.01)**

Table 4 indicates that all values of correlation coefficients of the items were satisfactory and statistically significant at the level (0.01), the values ranged between (0.414 – 0.728), which is greater than (0.30). Thus, the scale structure is valid.

E. Testing Reliability of the Study Instrument

Cronbach Alpha is used as the statistical method to investigate the consistency and reliability of its items to ensure the accuracy and objectiveness of the instrument. According to this method, judging the reliability of the research instrument is based on the value of the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. If the coefficient value exceeds (0.70), it then indicates the reliability of the research instrument. If the value approaches (%100), it means higher reliability degrees of the tool (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Table 5 shows the research tool reliability test results as follows:

TABLE 5
RESEARCH INSTRUMENT RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS

Variable	**Alpha Value**
students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning	0.881

Table 5 shows that the research instrument is reliable and consistent, as the value of the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient reached (0.881), which is greater than the standard deviation value (0.70).

F. Statistical Treatment Used

The researchers applied the Statistical Package for Social Sciences to treat the data and find the statistical results. The following statistical methods were used:

1. Descriptive statistic measures to describe the characteristics of the study sample and analyze their responses to the search instrument items. They included the frequencies, arithmetic means, and standard deviation.
2. Internal consistency coefficient, Cronbach Alpha to verify the reliability of the research instrument.
3. Independent Sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test differences.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study aim to identify the students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning and individual learning in AAU will be presented, according to the following questions:

First question: The results related to the first question: *1. To what extent do students benefit from the Cooperative Learning strategy?*

The results of the study sample individuals' responses to the study instrument items using descriptive statistics measures represented in the arithmetic means, standard deviation, rank and rating score. The results were as follows:

TABLE 6
DESCRIBING STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING

No.	Items	Arithmetic Means	Standard deviation	Rank	Rating score
1	Develops positive relationships	4.092	0.855	5	High
2	Provides respect to each other's ideas	4.153	0.757	2	High
3	Students guide each other while studying in cooperation, which increases teaching effectiveness	4.092	0.876	5	High
4	Develops individual responsibility	4.104	0.807	4	High
5	Develops individual learning	3.953	0.849	10	High
6	Motivates group members	4.004	0.889	9	High
7	Helps practicing conversation better	4.074	0.875	7	High
8	Improves vocabulary acquisition	4.131	0.802	3	High
9	Increases teaching effectiveness in lecture halls where the number of students is greater	3.853	0.947	12	High
10	Learns to write better in English when working in groups	3.787	0.947	14	High
11	Can answer questions related to listening to English when hearing texts within groups	3.832	0.890	13	High
12	Can learn better from someone else's mistakes	4.186	0.800	1	High
13	Makes the use of words in conversation easier than in individual learning	4.012	0.835	8	High
14	Learning English is faster when applied	4.088	0.875	6	High
15	it reduces tension related to practicing conversation in English when performed in groups	3.914	0.924	11	High
16	It would be preferable that English language is taught as a second language individually and not in groups	3.325	1.150	17	Medium
17	Individual studying is more enjoyable than working in groups.	2.957	1.177	18	Medium
18	Cooperative Learning does not embarrass me in front of my classmates	2.483	1.034	19	Medium
19	It is applied to learn languages in the lecture halls.	3.652	0.888	15	Medium
20	Gives better results for individual learning	3.501	1.027	16	Medium
Students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning and individual learning		**3.810**	**0.507**		High

Table 6 indicates that students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning were high, as the arithmetic means reached (3.810) with a standard deviation of (0.507). The item states that "Can learn better from someone else's mistakes" ranked first with a mean of (4.186) and a standard deviation of (0,800). The item states that "Cooperative Learning embarrasses me in front of my classmates" ranked last with arithmetic means of (2.483) and a standard deviation of (1.034).

The results are with the hypothesis that CL increases students' abilities to learn a second language. The students' attitude is high because students enjoy learning new skills in an interactive, cooperative way. Students sometimes may feel uncomfortable or a bit scared in class. Doing a specific task with the help of others eases things for these students. These outcomes came compatible with the Ghufron and Ermawati study (2018) and Bengü and Sühendan (2018), where Cooperative Learning reduces stress for the students and makes them trust one another.

Question Two:

To answer the second question, which states: Are there statistically significant differences at the level of (α=0.05) in students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy due to (gender, age, field of study, and level of study) variables from the students' perspective?

Are there statistically differences at the significance level in students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy based on gender, age, the field of study, and level of study?

To answer this question, an independent sample t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used as follows:

1- Gender

TABLE 7
TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY ACCORDING TO GENDER

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation	Difference Value	t-value	Sig
Male	3.8065	0.5023	-0.0072	-0.156	0.876
Female	3.8137	0.5142			

* The impact is statistically significant at the level (α≤0.05)

Table 7 shows that the difference between males' and females' arithmetic means responses concerning the students' attitudes towards the Cooperative Learning strategy reached (-0.0072) in favor of females, which is statistically not significant, as the value of t-calculated was (t=-0.156) with a significance level (Sig=0.876), greater than 0.05. Hence, there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance in the students' attitudes towards the Cooperative Learning strategy due to gender. This result is similar to Baena-Morales et al.'s (2020) study and Bengü & Sühendan's (2018) study. Both studies have shown that females are affected more than males by applying Cooperative Learning strategies to them.

Generally, females are very social and love interaction; thus, studying and working in groups suit their nature. On the other hand, some females may feel abashed or nervous about speaking in front of others due to how they were raised. Another point that could be considered is that males tend to be more courageous and independent. They would prefer to work alone to show their powers or abilities.

2- Age

TABLE 8
TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY ACCORDING TO AGE

Age	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Difference Value	t-value	Sig
Less than 20 years	3.7522	0.4606	-0.0922	-2.024	0.044
20 years and more	3.8444	0.53100			

* The impact is statistically significant at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

The results of Table 8 demonstrate that the difference between the students' arithmetic means responses about their attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy according to age group reached (-0.0922), in favor of the age group (20 years and more), which is a statistically significant difference, as the value of t-calculated (t=-2.024) with a significance level (Sig=0.044), less than 0.05. Thus, there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance in the students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy according to age and in favor of the age group (20 years and more).

Bousbai and Hamdini's (2019) study and Khamis and Shahadeh's (2020) study had similar findings in that the older students were affected positively by using the cooperative teaching method. Also, Madhawa and Mogana's (2019) study focused on students between 11 and 12 years and found almost the same result. Still, the difference is how the teachers implement teaching methods in groups according to their ages.

After spending two years at the university, students tend to adapt to the environment where they are 20 years and above. They have spent some time with their classmates and having friends, which increased their communication skills. It may have a positive impact on their learning.

3- Field of Study

TABLE 9
TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY ACCORDING TO FIELD OF STUDY

Field of Study	Source of Variation	SOS	DF	MS	F-cal value	Sig
Students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy	Between groups	0.504	3	0.168	0.652	0.582
	Within groups	125.012	485	0.258		
	Total	125.516	488			

Table 9 indicates the lack of statistically significant differences in the Students' attitudes towards the Cooperative Learning strategy attributed to the field of study variable, where the value of (F) calculated was not statistically significant at the level of (α=0.05) at (3) degrees of freedom, reaching (0.652) with a significance level of (Sig=0.582), greater than (0.05), thus, it is clear that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance in the students' attitudes towards Cooperative Learning strategy attributed to the field of study. All the studies in this research focused on teaching languages and found that students are affected highly by this teaching method.

Learners tend to fear new languages or might feel bored with many spoken words that they can't comprehend. Thus, using several interesting strategies help these students to learn languages easily and effortlessly.

4- Academic Year

TABLE 10
TEST OF DIFFERENCE IN THE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGY
ACCORDING TO ACADEMIC YEAR

Academic year	Source of Variation	SOS	DF	MS	F-cal value	Sig
Students' attitudes toward Cooperative Learning strategy	Between groups	0.064	3	0.021	0.083	0.970
	Within groups	125.452	485	0.259		
	Total	125.516	488			

Table 10 indicates the lack of statistically significant differences in the students' attitudes towards the Cooperative Learning strategy attributed to the Academic year variable, where the value of (F) calculated was not statistically significant at the level of (α=0.05) at (3) degrees of freedom, reaching (0.083) with a significance level of (Sig=0.970), greater than (0.05). There are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance in the students' attitudes towards the Cooperative Learning strategy attributed to the academic year.

The results reflect the students' positive attitudes towards working in groups since it might simplify the required tasks. Regardless of their academic year, students still prefer this strategy.

VII. Interview Questions

The researchers used the interview as another tool to measure the faculty members' attitudes towards various teaching methods in their courses.

1. *What tools and methods do you use as an English lecturer to teach the language?*
2. *What is the best method you get better results from?*
3. *Do you think using technology is positive or negative in teaching English?*
4. *Which type of courses do you use, distance teaching, blended teaching, or face-to-face? Do you prefer applying a cooperative strategy in teaching?*

The interviews were conducted with English lecturers at AAU. The participants were asked about their teaching strategies, revealing that they prefer teaching students using the cooperative method and face-to-face teaching. It could be inferred from the professors' responses that the Cooperative Learning strategy is preferably used and applied to obtain the English Language at AAU due to its effectiveness and importance.

VIII. Conclusion

This study was conducted to discuss the use of the CL strategy in teaching English courses at Amman Arab University. The researchers developed a questionnaire and then distributed it to AAU students to obtain the required data. Furthermore, they conducted six interviews with English lecturers of AAU to answer questions related to the topic of the study.

The questionnaire results showed that many students learn the English language effortlessly when a lecturer uses the CL strategy in teaching them. In addition, the questionnaire results revealed that female students and students aged 20 years and over were affected more positively by this strategy. Moreover, the interviews showed that English lecturers prefer face-to-face teaching, and they concentrate on teaching students in groups since they learn better in this manner. Besides, the previous studies that the researchers mentioned found similar results as the current study.

IX. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the outcomes of the current study, the researchers suggest the following recommendations:

1. Researchers should conduct more studies in other Jordanian universities to identify the effectiveness of Cooperative Learning in English courses to generalize the results.
2. Conducting a similar study while applying various teaching methodologies in teaching English in different universities.

Appendix. The Doctors' Answers of The Interview

Dr. Yazan Al-Mahameed, 2021

"There are two strategies, the first one is inductive strategy in which I start by the rule then providing students with examples, and the deductive strategy which is the type that I prefer and I apply it by giving examples to find the rule. I prefer the deductive strategy for senior students and the inductive strategy for the beginners. In addition, I believe that teaching technology is positive since I can upload and find resources easier but the negative side of it is the lack of real interaction with the students."

Dr. Raeda Ammari, 2021

"I prefer using various methods in teaching such as PowerPoint, electronic books, activities, group working and homework. I prefer Cooperative Learning strategy and discussion because I can see the feedback immediately. Moreover, technology is a positive thing in my opinion where I can provide students with extra curriculum activities. Regarding the type of courses. I prefer face-to-face teaching".

Dr. Imad Ababneh, 2021

"I prefer the traditional way to teach and using two books for each course starting with examples to find the rule, the deductive method. I give students homework and we answer them during the next class. I think technology has a negative impact on learning. I prefer face-to-face teaching".

Dr. Khaleel Bataineh, 2021

"I like Cooperative Learning strategy and flip classes based on Blended lectures and I think that technology has a positive side but I prefers face-to-face teaching".

Dr. Abdul Aziz AlFawaareh, 2021

"The first thing about writing courses is that I urge students to stop thinking in Arabic in order to translate perfectly. I like to use PowerPoint presentations and videos. I think that technology simplifies using language especially for the first-year student. E-Learning helps in teaching listening courses, but I prefer face to face teaching".

Dr. May Alshaikhaly, 2021

"I use textbooks and homework, presentation, assignments and classroom participation. Also, I prefer face-to-face interaction and I think that technology has a positive side".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, praises and thanks to God, the Almighty, for His abundance of blessings throughout my research work to complete it successfully.

I want to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my father; may his soul rest in peace since he was my model in writing research, sincerity and motivation have deeply inspired me to achieve the best. I am very much thankful to my family for their love, understanding, prayers, and continuous support to me. Also, many thanks to Professor Odeh Abu Sunineh for being the teacher and advisor. Finally, many thanks to the doctors who did their best to finish this study with me.

REFERENCES

[1] Abuhamda, E et al. (2020). The effect of Jigsaw Cooperative Learning Strategy on Fourth Graders' Achievement in Teaching EFL at Qalqilya City. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*. *4*. 1-8.

[2] Aksu Atac et al. (2018). Cooperative Learning in ELT classes: The attitudes of students towards Cooperative Learning in ELT classes. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*.*1*.

[3] Al-Ghubari, Abdel Nasser. (2009). *The impact of the Cooperative Learning strategy on developing written expression skills for high school students in Yemen*. Sana'a University, Master's thesis. Yemen

[4] Alhabahbeh, M et al (2016). English language educating in Jordan: Some recent trends and challenges. *Cognate Education*, *3*(1) https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1156809

[5] Ali, L. and Mansour, A. (2011). "*The attitudes of secondary education teachers towards Cooperative Learning in Damascus public schools*", Damascus University, thesis.

[6] Baena-Morales et al. (2020). The Use of a Cooperative-Learning Activity with University Students: A Gender Experience. *Sustainability*, *12*, 9292. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12219292

[7] Bousbai, A. & Hamdini, N. (2019). Cooperative Learning Strategies to Reinforce the EFL Learners' Speaking Skill: A Review of Literature. *Dirasat Nafsiyat Wa Tarbawiyat*, *12*(03), 374–384. Retrieved from https://dirasat-nafsiyat-wa-tarbawiyat.com/index.php/DNWT/article/view/230 (18-3-2022).

[8] Cornelius-Ukpepi et al. (2016, December). Cooperative Learning Strategy: Tool for Classroom Management at the Basic Level of Education in Cross River State, Nigeria. In *Proceedings of the iSTEAMS multidisciplinary Cross Border-Conference*.

[9] Farzaneh N. and Nejad Ansari D. (2014). *Students' Attitude towards Using Cooperative Learning for Teaching Reading Comprehension. 4*, (2), 287-292, Finland

[10] Ghufron, M et al. (2018). The Strengths and Weaknesses of Cooperative Learning and Problem-based Learning in EFL Writing Class: Teachers and Students' Perspectives. *International Journal of Instruction*. *11*. 657-672. 10.12973/iji.2018.11441a.

[11] Herrera, S. G., & Murry, K. G. (2011). Mastering ESL and Bilingual Methods: Differentiated Instruction for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) Students. Education Review. *TESOL Quarterly, 41* (4), 835-838 https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1545-7249.2007.tb00113.x

[12] Khamis, N. and Shahadeh, F. (2020). *The impact of Cooperative Learning strategy using educational tasks in acquiring written expression skills among fifth-grade students*. Middle East University, Master's thesis.

[13] Madhawa, N. & Mogana.S. (2019). Effects of Utilizing the STAD Method (Cooperative Learning Approach) in Enhancing Students' Descriptive Writing Skills. *International Journal of Education and Practice*,*6*(4), 239-252 2018

[14] Maswani, R. (2015). The effect of following the Cooperative Learning approach in teaching grammar. *Arabiyat Journal. 2(*1)130-143.

[15] Montano-Gonz ález, J. X. (2017). Learning strategies in second language acquisition. *US-China Foreign Language*, *15*(8), 479-492. doi:10.17265/1539-8080/2017.08.001

[16] Ortega, L (2009). Sequences and Processes in a Language Learning. *Handbook of Language Teaching*. 81-105

[17] Saadeh, J. (2018). *Contemporary Teaching Strategies*. First Edition, Al Mawhebah Dar for publishing.

[18] Sekaran, U. and Bougie, R. (2016). *Research Methods for Business: A Skill-Building Approach.* 7th Edition, Wiley & Sons, West Sussex.

[19] Singh C et al. (2020). P: 4008-4023. The Use of Think Pair Share of Cooperative Learning to Improve Weak Students' Speaking Ability. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, 24* (05), 1475-7192

[20] Steiner, D. M. (2018). *Effective Teaching Techniques and Study Strategies for English Language Learners in ESL Community College Classes*.(10-2-2022)

[21] Yunus, M et al. (2021). Designing a Module as a Strategic Solution to Enhance Creativity in the Teaching of Writing. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies, 10*(2), 94–104. https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.23.2021.102.94.104

Areej J. Khalifeh is a lecturer at the Amman Arab University. I taught English for 6 years in various institutes. She received her Master degree in American Studies from the University of Jordan (2014). Particular research interests center on linguistics, teaching strategies, and sociolinguistics. She finished her masters' thesis about Media's role in affecting US foreign Policy. She published one paper concerning teachers’ perspectives on distance learning during COVID-19

Nusaiba A. Almousa is an Assistant professor at Amman Arab University, specializing in Curriculum & instructions. She holds her Ph.D from University of Jordan in Curriculum & instruction. Her teaching, practical and educational expertise include more than 7 years as a faculty member in World Islamic University, and Amman Arab University. Dr.Nusaiba is a reviewer in many international and local Journals, She has conducted and published plenty of researches in the fields of Curriculum, instructions, education, Islamic Studies, educational technology, Educational psychology and training needs for teachers beside her participation in variety of trainings. Moreover, she participated in international conferences in Jordan, United Arab Emirates, & Malaysia. Dr.Nusaiba is Member of the Association of Jordanian Scholars.

Raeda M. Ammari is an Assistant Professor of English and Linguistics at the Amman Arab University. She taught English for 23 years in various institutes. She received her Ph.D. degree in Linguistics from the University of Jordan (2018). Particular research interests center on corpus linguistics, teaching strategies, and sociolinguistics. She finished my Ph.D. thesis about English Catenative verbs usage. She compared the native corpora: American (COCA) and British (BNC), and non-native the International Corpus Network of Asian Learners of English (ICNALE) users to seek the similarities and differences in learning these verbs. She published several papers concerning teachers’ perspectives on distance learning during COVID-19, the psychometric properties of the attitudes scale towards electronic tests among Graduate Students, and much other research.

Lina A. Al-Jarrah, Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Grammar, has been working at Amman Arab University in the Department of Basic Humanities and Scientific Sciences from 2016 until now and has many linguistic types of research in refereed scientific journals.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1007-1013, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.13

Critical Thinking Development Through Project-Based Learning

Sue Wang
School of Foreign Studies, Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing, P. R. China

***Abstract*—Project-based learning has drawn increasing attention from educators and researchers because of the multiple benefits it provides. Successful project-based learning engages students in deeper learning by using language as a tool to empower discoveries about the language itself, content, and various skills in authentic contexts. Using the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy as its analytical framework, this study examined whether project-based learning promoted EFL college students' critical thinking and how students demonstrated their thinking skills through a book report project in a reading course.**

***Index Terms*—project-based learning, reading, critical thinking**

I. Introduction

Project-based learning (PBL) was introduced into the field of education by Kilpatrick (1918) more than 100 years ago. As an experiential learning method, it is consistent with the "learning-by-doing" concept of American philosopher and educator John Dewey (Dewey, 1926). As a learner-centered approach, it engages students in deeper learning by using language as a tool, not only enabling students to learn more about the language itself, but also empowering them to learn more related content and various skills in authentic contexts.

Research on project-based language learning began in the 1970s (Eslava & Lawson, 1979). In the 1980s and 1990s, the research on PBL gradually expanded from practice to theoretical research (Beckett, 1999; Eyring, 1989; Stoller, 1997). The influence of PBL on the theory and practice of second language and foreign language teaching also gradually increased. In the 21st century, PBL research has been furthered by scholars such as Fried-Booth (2002), Beckett and Miller (2006), and Beckett and Slater (2005, 2018, and 2020). Research by these scholars greatly promoted project-based learning and teaching. The application of PBL in the foreign language field in China started relatively late (Wang, 2020). Gu and Zhu (2002) appears to be the first article on PBL research published in China. Since then, scholars have been practicing and researching PBL, including investigations of the impact of PBL on language learning (Deng & Wang, 2009; Wang, 2013).

Additional research has considered the role of technology in PBL (Gu, 2007; Zhu & Zhang, 2011), the application and effect of PBL in higher education (Gao, 2010; Yu, 2017), professional courses (Zhang, 2012), and the use of PBL in language skills such as writing (Yang & Han, 2012). Zhang (2015) provided a localized PBL foreign language teaching model on the basis of long-term PBL practice. These studies confirm the positive role of PBL in foreign language learning. The approach not only pays attention to the process of learning, but also stresses the output results. Through PBL, learners' knowledge and skills, cooperation, and learning ability are fully integrated. Because PBL emphasizes putting students at the center and highlighting students' independent experience, teachers' roles also shift from more dominating to more facilitating roles. These studies show that PBL not only promotes students' learning of language-related knowledge, but also leads to other benefits such as supporting students acquiring content knowledge as well as cultivating students' cooperation and team spirit.

This study intends to explore the role of PBL in improving students' language and knowledge, critical thinking skills, independent exploration, and innovation ability so as to explore a new effective teaching model for foreign language teaching under the background of new liberal arts (Hu, 2020). More specifically, this paper examines whether PBL could effectively promote critical thinking at various levels through analysis of data from an academic project. The research questions guiding the present study include: 1) What kind of thinking skills did the participants demonstrate in the project-based learning involving oral and written activities? 2) Did the participants demonstrate critical thinking through the project?

II. Research Methodology

A. *Participants and Data Collection*

The participants of this study were second-year undergraduate students at a university in northern China. In the spring semester of 2020, 14 students were enrolled in this required reading course with texts loosely related to philosophy and civilization. The course met three times per week and lasted 16 weeks. Due to Covid-19 outbreak, the course was switched online.

In addition to the regular reading materials from the textbook, participants were required to make book reports. Three books roughly related to the topics discussed in the required textbook were chosen by participants and included: *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* by Gustave Le Pon; *Would you Kill the Fat Man?* by David Edmund; and *Educated* by Tara Westover. The participants formed groups of four or five students each at their own choice. Students were assigned to read all three books and pick one about which to make a presentation as part of the project. They were also invited to join asynchronous online discussions of these books.

There were several goals for the project. The first was to engage students in reading. Since this was a reading course, it would be helpful for students to keep reading both during and outside of class. When the books were recommended by the students themselves, it offered them more motivation to read. The second goal was to improve the students' ability to reproduce what they had read through a book report, practicing their language skills such as summary and their oral abilities to deliver what they had learned. The third goal was to develop students' critical thinking through reading, reporting, and discussion.

As part of a bigger research project, the data analyzed here focused on the book reports of *Would you Kill the Fat Man?* by David Edmund. This book discusses ethical dilemmas people may face and it is related to the topics of the textbook such as sympathy, justice, etc. Five participants chose this book to make their presentations. This study analyzed the oral and written productions related to this book to examine whether the participants expanded their knowledge through the project and whether it effectively promoted critical thinking at specific levels. Data sources include the PowerPoint slides for the presentations and book reports videos as well as related asynchronous online discussions. By using such data, the analysis draws conclusions based on the more objectively-produced data.

B. *Analytical Framework: Bloom's Taxonomy*

Bloom's Taxonomy was put forward in 1956 to outline levels of critical thinking. It helps educators to design lesson plans, curricula, courses, and classroom activities. It can also be used as a tool for formative and summative assessments of students learning. There are six major categories in the original taxonomy, ordered as follows: *Knowledge*, *Comprehension*, *Application*, *Analysis*, *Synthesis*, and *Evaluation* (Bloom et al., 1956). These stages imply an increase in terms of complexity from the more fundamental to higher levels of critical thought. It is often presented in the diagram of a pyramid, with knowledge as the foundation supporting subsequent levels of thinking.

Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) proposed a revised version of the taxonomy. In place of nouns describing the six levels of thinking, the revised version uses verbs and gerunds to describe the cognitive processes that learners are expected to master during the learning process. The revised six categories include: *Remembering*, *Understanding*, *Applying*, *Analyzing*, *Evaluating*, and *Creating*. We can see the parallels between these categories, particularly the first four since they are the verb forms of the corresponding nouns from the original taxonomy. Only the last two categories are somewhat different. *Synthesis* is the fifth level in the original and *Evaluation* is the highest level. In the revised version, *Evaluating* becomes the fifth level and *Creating* becomes the highest. According to the definition, *Creating* would combine elements into a pattern not clearly there before. This could be considered as the creative use of what one has learned from the other sources and thus is considered as the highest level. In this study, the revised version is used as the analytical framework to examine whether the reading report project could promote participants' critical thinking development.

III. Findings and Discussion

A. *Remembering and Understanding*

According to the revised version of Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001), *Remembering* is the first level of thinking in which students are able to recall relevant knowledge from long-term memory. This level connotes a fact-oriented skill. For this project, the participants were not required to remember the facts discussed in the book. Actually, the book itself requires thinking from higher levels. In the online discussion, Student F was having an online discussion with two other participants; it is clear Student F may not have read the text very carefully or may have forgotten portions of what she had read:

> Student F: This book reminds me of a real event in history. In the late World War II, US President Truman also suffered from the problem-whether to project an atomic bomb on Japan. If he does not project, the Allied forces will cost a lot to win the war, but projection will hurt many innocent Japanese civilians. In the end, as everyone knows, Truman chose to project an atomic bomb. Although Kant emphasizes that people are not means but ends, it is really not easy to achieve this goal in a real situation.
>
> Student C: This case is also mentioned in the book. And later he was given BA (Hons) of Oxford University, which had also raised heated discussion in Britain and one of the philosophers (I remembered is Anscombe) was very against it. The case is also related to the trolley problem.
>
> Student F in reply to Student C: They have lots of similarities and they are both painful. In situations like these, people cannot make decisions easily.
>
> Student L: Yes, I remember that President Truman's degree got heat discussion. (Online discussion)

Here, Student F used the example of Truman, who ordered the atomic bombing of Japan, to illustrate its relevance to the trolley problem. Some people were against the proposal of Oxford offering him an honorary degree. The other two participants here answered Student F's post by pointing out that this example is mentioned in the book. Using the word "remember," Student L confirmed that this honorary degree caused heated discussion. This is an example of *Remembering.*

According to the Taxonomy, *Understanding* is making sense of the material one has learned. For this reading report, the participants were required to introduce the book they had read, although there were no specific directions for how to make summaries. The participants had the freedom themselves to decide what to include to show their understanding of the book. Edmund's book discusses issues that are quite complicated because the author not only shows the ethical dilemmas that we might face, but he also presents the supporting evidence from different fields including philosophy, psychology, neuro sciences etc.

Each of the presenters introduced the book but with some variations. Some presenters showed a more detailed summary of what they read, while others highlighted key parts. For instance, Student A divided her presentation into four parts. In the general introduction, she made a summary of the whole book followed by a screenshot of the table of contents. She then introduced three classic cases from the book. After that, she discussed the main theories and their application. Finally, she concluded her presentation with her own thoughts. Her presentation summarized the book as follows:

> The trolley problem was first used by a virtue ethicist to refute a hypothesis proposed by utilitarians and deontologists.
>
> Utilitarians are based on the interests of the so-called majority, and presuppose that everyone has such a moral tendency that they naturally think that five people should be saved.
>
> Deontologists presuppose that everyone has absolute moral orders in their hearts (such as absolutely not killing), and killing people for saving people cannot cover up the fact of killing. (Student A, PowerPoint slides)

Student A used three sentences here to summarize the main idea of the book. The first sentence introduced this famous thought experiment and the reason for its origin. It was put forward to refute the hypotheses by two other philosophical thoughts, one being Utilitarian and the other being Deontologist. She then used two other sentences to briefly introduce the meanings of these two philosophical branches, comparing and contrasting them. This is an example of understanding of the whole text.

Next, we will examine a more specific example from Student N who offered his understanding of an important concept in the book: Doctrine of Double Effect (DDE). After introducing the four premises of DDE, he said:

> "…so these four premises may seem to be a little bit abstract, but think about another example, the United States military strikes terrorists bases but hurts civilians. So the act itself is not wrong and actually intends to good… to strike the terrorists bases you know, for peace and security but inevitably it would cause harm by hurting some of the civilians. But eventually, if you compare the good effects.. ur…after the terrorists bases were destroyed, we would have peace and security. Compare to the harmful effects, hurting some of the civilians, then the good brought is much larger than the harmful effects. So the DDE actually provides a solution to the ethical dilemma." (Student N, presentation transcript)

When Student N was introducing the concept of DDE, he used an example to illustrate the point after a brief paraphrase of the four premises of DDE. This provides evidence that he not only understood the meaning of the concept, but also was able to use his own example to further illustrate its meaning. Student N also used other resources to facilitate his understanding of the book. At the beginning of his presentation, he said: "This book …in the field of what we call "ethics". Ethics is a sub-branch of philosophy, also known as the science of morality. …and the first book on ethics is actually written by Aristotle, and the book name is this …" (Presentation transcript). After giving a definition of ethics, he pointed to the front cover picture of a book and told the audience the book was written by Aristotle. It is a Chinese version of the book *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Several other participants also searched additional resources to better understand the reading materials. For example, several participants mentioned an open course by Michael J. Sandel, a professor at Harvard University, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do*, which used a number of cases related to the trolley problem for discussion. Student C and Student E offered the link in their presentations for their classmates. Student C also offered information of another book, *The Case of the Speluncean Explorers: Nine New Opinions*. From the link she provided, it was clear that she found a Chinese version of that book. Likewise, the English version of the book was offered to the participants by the instructor. However, some participants apparently found and read the Chinese version. In Student L's book report presentation, both Chinese and English versions were presented for some key parts. The participants demonstrated their efforts of using a variety of resources in both languages to facilitate the understanding of the text and it showed these efforts worked well.

B. Applying and Analyzing

According to the Taxonomy, *Applying* is using the knowledge gained in new ways and *Analyzing* is breaking the concept into parts and understanding how each part is related to another. In the following example, Student L made the following comments in her presentation when reflecting on the reading:

> While reading this book, I related to what I read to what is happening in the world now. That is COVID-19. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19, some western countries have fallen into the dilemma like the trolley problem.

> Some governments chose to sacrifice the elderly because of insufficient medical resources. There is no difference between sacrificing the fat man. Actually it is the contradiction of majority and interests. As to the interests, sacrificing the old men because when the people become old, they can't make more contributions to the society, and governments need to pay a lot money to look after them. If using medical resources on younger people, the possibility for them to be cured is bigger, and in other aspects, ur, this way… can solve the problem of resources tension to some extent. But in moral aspect, this action hurts…infringe people's rights of life. That was the most basic right.

The presenter related what she read in the book to the real world. She read some news during the early COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 which reported dilemmas about how to allocate the limited medical resources in a coronavirus epicenter of northern Italy. Under such circumstances, some younger patients, with a higher possibility of survival, might be given priority. Doctors there had to make hard decisions of who could get medical care first when faced with limited health resources. She applied the ethical dilemmas discussed from her reading to the real world around her and analyzed the similarities of these scenarios with what discussed in the book. Beyond the oral presentation, she continued her analysis in the online discussion:

> Student L: I think we are facing the same situation as the war. The epidemic is war without gunfire. Every country, every organization, every province, and every community is facing the trolley problem. Every decision is actually a choice between the interests of different people. For example, our country chooses to blockade Hu Bei province to protect the whole China and even the whole world. Some western countries have not yet to issue bans for going out. The problem is too complicated and the cultural traditions make it even more complicated. The trolley problem has been discussed for a long time from many perspectives. This shows that the ultimate choice still depends on one's own thinking.

Here in the online discussion, Student L shared her thoughts about the pandemic and compared it with a war. And she argued that decisions made by different countries were just like the trolley problem in that the interests of different people might be considered. She then furthered her analysis by pointing out that different cultural traditions might make it even more complicated. Here she did not just confine her analysis to the disparate interests of various groups but also take broader issues such as cultural factors into consideration. She not only understood the message in the original reading but she was able to apply it to new situations and continued her analysis to a higher and more complex thinking level. Besides the presenters, the other participants also shared their opinions or thoughts and offered some analysis based on their reading. For instance,

> Student G: This book focuses on several philosophical problems, each of which seems so far from our daily lives that I would initially question why I need to be required to make such a choice. But in fact, these problems reflect the opposition between rationality and morality. Usually it seems reasonable to sacrifice the interests and even the lives of a few people for the interests of the majority, but this role like executioner will make people feel the torture of morality. After all, many things are a double-edged sword. This brings me to the thought of issue of cloning technology, which is obviously beneficial to the people who are alive now, but how to determine the legitimate rights of human cloning?
>
> Student C: Yes. I think the trolleyology from one point of view is to think about the morality and rationality and offer suggestions on moral decisions. It is valuable to think and try to choose. I think with the development of technology there will be more and more moral debates and the trolleyology will not be out of date.

In this dialogue, Student G shared her first impression of the book, which she thought was initially not so relevant to reality. After reading the book, she gave her analysis and argued that the main issues of these ethical dilemmas were the conflicts of rationality and morality, or the interests of the majority and the minority. She then continued her argument with a new topic—the issue of cloning technology; this conversation was furthered by another student, Student C, who rightly pointed out that the development of technology might also bring more trolley problems and the discussion of this topic therefore is necessary and relevant in our lives. Here Student G was giving her analysis in relation to what she had read.

C. Evaluating and Creating

Evaluating means making judgement based on a set of principles while *Creating* means putting information together in an innovative way. These two are the highest on the thinking levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. We could say that the participants are also demonstrating thinking on these levels, particularly with *Evaluating*. For example, the online discussion of Student C:

> Student C: In addition to my book report, I want to add more details about my thinking on the reactions of countries to the covid-19 which is similar to the trolley problem.
>
> Earlier most of our Chinese praises highly on our government which actually is very excellent. And for a long time, I hold the belief that locking down is the only right choice we must to choose and all of other countries' choices are wrong.
>
> But after reading the book and other's views, I find that we should not be so assertive. Take the British herd immunity for example. At first this solution was so unbelievable and puzzled for me and many people. But if we think from different views, with the unique characteristics of Britain, it will alarm them and make them not ignorant and then they will take actions to save themselves and it may be a good choice.

> In conclusion, there is no absolute right or wrong. We should view things comprehensively and calmly and not comment one thing so assertively.

Besides her presentation, Student C also shared her thoughts in the online discussion by applying the trolley problem to whether to lock down cities during the COVID-19 outbreak. She shared in the online discussion how her attitude changed after she read the book. Before she read it, she thought there was only one right choice that could best solve the problem and all other choices were wrong. After reading the book and others' views, she started to realize that things might not be that simplistic. Many other factors could affect the decisions and different approaches might be preferred by different people. At the end, she said: "we should not be so assertive". Here is a very good example to show the thinking change process. Through this project, she developed a broader view of the divergent reactions people hold and started to think about things from multiple perspectives. Similarly, Student E also shared his thoughts:

> Student E: In the book, the author gave us many variants of trolley problem. I admit there do exist some slight differences. But despite of such difference, whether you choose to turn the switch or to push the fat man, you will kill a innocent person, directly or indirectly. You will feel guilty the rest of your life although your aim is not to kill him but to save five people. Additionally, if we are not bystanders but the one of the five or the fat man, our choices are absolutely different. Sometimes I wonder why Western countries do not choose to lock down the infected city. I thought it will just sacrifice their freedom, but actually just like in Wuhan, maybe lockdown means that the healthy people will face the threaten of life. Now we are not people in Wuhan, we may not have such a deep feeling and we praise their sacrifice. Likewise, if we do not choose to push the fat man, why do we agree to lock down Wuhan. Because we are not those healthy people in Wuhan, we are not that fat man, instead we are the majority. I don't mean it is wrong to lock down Wuhan. I just think we all have a selfish nature and like Nietzsche said it is natural and healthy to be selfish. Also from another side, such selfishness can be said as to guard our right. For some policy makers, maybe they often face to such dilemma, no matter what decision they make, there is no clear standard between right and wrong. Finally, I think if the minority choose to sacrifice for the biggest benefit, it will be noble of them, but even if they don't want to sacrifice, we should not criticize them as selfish, because if we are the minority, we may not choose to sacrifice either.

In the first part of his discussion here, Student E gave his opinions about the different variants of trolley problems. He also offered his own judgment about what should be done and the possible consequences. After that, he started to talk about his thoughts about lockdown of Wuhan. Here he showed his ways of thinking in connection to the reading. He was able to think in a critical way when he questioned "Likewise, if we do not choose to push the fat man, why do we agree to lock down Wuhan?" He further explained his attitude towards the lockdown of the city and thought from the perspective of policy makers. At the end, again, he argued that the rights of minority should also be taken into consideration and their sacrifices should be appreciated. Furthermore, he added these people should not be criticized if they decided not sacrifice themselves. Here we could argue that indeed this participant demonstrated higher-order thinking.

Besides the presenters, the other participants who joined the discussion also showed their thinking about what is presented in the book. They thought about the trolley problem and offered their own understanding and evaluations of it. Two participants' online discussions are representative:

> Student H: The aim of truly trolleyology is to provide principles that make sense of our powerful reactions and that can reveal something to us about the nature of our morality. I think trolleyology can remind us that we need to reflect more deeply on our own behavior and whether we can make a better choice in practical ethical problems.
>
> Student J: I wouldn't like to kill the fat man to save the five skinny men either, unless the fat man intends to kill me at that time.
>
> According to the several theories contained in this book, I think I am a utilitarian. When I am forced to choose between killing one or more, I will just consider the number, because that is simple. However, if I know the fat man is the president and the five skinny men are just old beggars, I will not make the decision too quickly. Apart from the number, I must consider more factors such as the social contribution, etc. Therefore, we can see that the more factors are involved, the more difficult the choice will become.
>
> But if I must save those 5 people by pushing the fat man personally, I will give up, even the president is one of the five. That is not because I am kind enough, that is because I don't want to commit a murder just to save others who are unrelated directly with myself. Although there are different people in the world, I know the most will make the same choice as me. I think that is a nature of human beings, not just a matter of personality.
>
> Moral conflicts are everywhere in life. I don't think there is a solution that can satisfy everyone. In many cases, to make a choice is not to choose the right one, it is to avoid the worst one. In the same vein, the book is not aimed to tell us to do the "right things". The book is more closed to a reminder rather than a ruler.
>
> The book reminds me that, if choices have been made, try to figure out how they were made, and whether we can give an answer that is more reasonable. If we need to make such choices, don't expect to satisfy everyone. We just need to think and to do and to not regret. If it is us who are bonded with the rail, we should know why we must be the sacrifice at least.

In her discussion of the book, Student H gave a very brief summary of the purpose of trolleyology. Then she gave her judgement about how we can use it in our daily life. After finishing the book, she thought it is necessary to examine our own behaviors and use it in our own lives to guide us when we are faced with ethical dilemmas. In comparison, Student J gave a more detailed discussion. First, she mentioned her answer to the title of the book: will you kill the fat man? It was no and she added a conditional clause, "unless the fat man intends to kill me at that time." There is even a sense of humor here. Then she gave her detailed analysis by applying what she had read and claimed that she was a utilitarian, presenting the different decisions she might make in various scenarios. Student J also offered her reasons for her choices: "we can see that the more factors are involved, the more difficult the choice will become." In the following, she went further by giving her judgment that there are always moral conflicts in our daily lives and there are no perfect solutions to these dilemmas. She shared, "In many cases, to make a choice is not to choose the right one, it is to avoid the worst one. In the same vein, the book is not aimed to tell us to do the 'right things'. The book is more closed to a reminder rather than a ruler." From her discussion, we see that Student J not only understood the text well, but she was also able to analyze and evaluate the whole issue precisely in her own language. In the last paragraph of her discussion, she pointed out that it was important to know what and how decisions were made and that decision-makers arrived at them with a clear sense. In spite of some minor grammatical mistakes in her writing, we do see Student J was able to think in the higher level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

IV. Conclusion

Using Bloom's Taxonomy as its analytical framework, this study examined whether PBL could engage students in critical thinking. The data analysis showed that the participants did demonstrate higher levels of thinking according to the terms defined by Bloom's Taxonomy. The participants were not only able to read and understand the text, but they were also found to use multiple resources of their own choosing to help them better understand the reading materials. Besides, they were able to apply what they read and analyze the reading in connection with what happened around them. The participants also offered their evaluations of the readings and believed that they would be able to make better judgements in the future. Through this reading report project, the participants were found to integrate several skills together and conduct the project successfully. Besides using multiple resources to help them to understand the reading texts, they also learned to make online presentations by using relevant screen-recording software. The presentations gave the presenters opportunities to orally deliver what they had learned from this book to the class and the online discussion participation among all students further increased their understanding of the reading materials and promoted critical thinking development. Therefore, this study showed that PBL can be used as an effective approach to develop students' critical skills as well as other skills such as reading, collaboration, and self-exploration. The study also found that although the participants demonstrated higher levels of thinking, they tended to focus more on the revised Bloom's taxonomy levels of *Understanding*, *Applying*, and *Analyzing*. This may be related to the design of the project, which did not give explicit instructions about the proportion of higher level thinking and learning. In the future PBL design, it might be necessary for instructors to design the project to guide students to turn their focus more on the higher levels of the thinking ladder.

Acknowledgements

This paper is supported by the Teaching and Researching Grant of Central University of Finance and Economics (2020ZXJG31).

References

[1] Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl. D. R. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.* Longman.

[2] Beckett, G. H. (1999) *Project-based instruction in a Canadian secondary school's ESL classes: Goals and evaluations*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of British Columbia.

[3] Beckett, G. H., & Miller, P. C. (Eds.). (2006). *Project based second and foreign language education: Past, present and future*. Information Age Publishing.

[4] Beckett, G. H., & Slater, T. (2005). The project framework: A tool for language, content, and skills integration. *ELT Journal, 2*, 108-116.

[5] Beckett, G. H., & Slater, T. (2018). Technology-integrated project-based language learning. In C. A. Chapelle (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of applied linguistics*. John Wiley & Sons.

[6] Beckett, G. H., & Slater, T. (2020). *Global perspectives on project-based language learning, teaching, and assessment: Key approaches, technology tools, and frameworks*, Routledge.

[7] Bloom, B., Englehart, M. Furst, E., Hill, W., & Krathwohl, D. (Ed.). (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals*. Longmans.

[8] Deng, Y., & Wang, X. (2009). Xiang mu qu dong pei yang EFL xue sheng zi zhu neng li de shi zheng yan jiu [An empirical study on developing learner autonomy through project-based learning]. *Wai yu yu wai yu jiao xue, 8*, 31-34, 46-47.

[9] Dewey, J. (2016/1926). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. The Macmillan Company.

[10] Eslava, R. & Lawson, P. O. (1979). A project course in spoken English, *TESOL Quarterly, 13*, 65-72.

[11] Eyring, J. L. (1989). *Teacher experience and student responses in ESL project work instruction: A case study*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of California, Los Angeles.
[12] Fried-Booth, D. L. (2002). *Project work*. Oxford University Press.
[13] Gao, Y. (2010). Xiang mu xue xi zai da xue ying yu jiao xue zhong de ying yong yan jiu [The application of project-based learning in college English teaching]. *Wai yu jie, 6,* 42-56.
[14] Gu, P. (2007). Duo mei ti xiang mu jiao xue fa de li lun yu shi jian [Project-based CALL pedagogy: Theory and practice]. *Wai yu jie, 2,* 2-8.
[15] Gu, P., & Zhu, M. (2002). Wang shang ying yu xie zuo yu xiang mu jiao xue fa yan jiu [Online English writing and project-based learning: A case study]. *Wai yu dian hua jiao xue, 88,* 3-7.
[16] Hu. K. (2020). Xin wen ke shi yu xia wai yu xue ke de jian she yu fa zhan --li nian yu lu jing [The construction and development of foreign language and literature discipline in the context of new literal arts]. *Zhong guo wai yu, 17,* 14-19.
[17] Stoller, L. S. (1997). Project work: A means to promote language content. *Forum, 35*(4), 2–18.
[18] Wang, B. (2013). Xiang mu xue xi mo shi dui da xue ying yu xue xi dong ji de ying xiang yin su fen xi [An analysis of the effects of PBL model on college English learning motivation]. *Wai yu dian hua jiao xue, 149,* 37-41, 68.
[19] Wang, S. (2020). Project-based language learning in China: A literature review. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 11*(1), 66-72.
[20] Yang, L., & Han, G. (2012). Ji yu xiang mu shi xue xi mo shi de da xue wai yu xue shu xie zuo jiao xue shi zheng yan jiu [An empirical study of the PBL approach to academic college English writing]. *Wai Yu Jie, 5,* 8-16.
[21] Yu, W. (2017). Xin da xue ying yu xiang mu huo dong shi jian de xue sheng ping jia yan jiu [Students' perceptions of the impacts of project activities in learning *New Experiencing English*]. *Zhong guo wai yu, 14*(3), 82-91.
[22] Zhang, M. (2012). Xiang mu xue xi zai ying yu yu yan xue jiao xue zhong de ying yong yan jiu [Project-based learning in the teaching of linguistics]. *He bei shi fan da xue xue bao, 14*(8), 89-91.
[23] Zhang, W. (2015). iPBL: ben tu hua de yi tuo xiang mu ying yu jiao xue mo shi [iPBL: A localized project-based English teaching and learning model]. *Zhong guo wai yu, (12)*2, 15-23.
[24] Zhu, L., & Zhang, J. (2011). Shi jing fang zhen ji shu zai wai mao ying yu xiang mu xue xi zhong de ying yong [Visual simulation technology in the project-based foreign trade English]. *Zhong guo dian hua jiao yu, 299,* 110-113.

Sue Wang, Ed. D, is currently Associate Professor at School of Foreign Studies, Central University of Finance and Economics in Beijing, P. R. China. She has published books and papers on Chinese EFL students' oral and writing development. Her research interests also include discourse analysis, teacher development and translation studies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1014-1022, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.14

Investigating Semantic Change of Arabic Loanwords in Turkish

Anwar A. H. Al-Athwary
College of Languages and Translation, Najran University, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—This study aims at tracking the various semantic changes of Arabic loanwords in Turkish (ALTs). The loanword data of the study were collected from a number of dictionaries including Sapan's (2005) dictionary and *Webster's Turkish-English Thesaurus Dictionary*. Six types of semantic change are found at work in ALTs, the most frequent of which is radical semantic shift which represents more than 64% of the total loanword data followed by the processes of narrowing (20%) and widening (8%). The other three types have marginal roles to play in the semantic change process. Radical shifts involve some interesting cases which are peculiar to Turkish and are pertaining to the phenomenon of semantic replacement. The linguistic and extralinguistic factors like lexical need, the diachronic factor, the speaker's miscomprehension and ignorance upon loanword incorporation are among the factors that lead to and affect the direction of semantic change of ALTs.**

***Index Terms*—loanwords, Arabic, Turkish, semantic change**

I. Introduction

Turkish has intensively borrowed from Arabic. According to Johanson (2010, p. 660), most Turkic languages, including Turkish, possess words of Arabic and Persian origin that have partly superseded the native Turkic vocabulary. Although the Turkish language reform process in the modern age was very strict and harsh in eliminating foreign words of Arabic origin, hundreds of Arabic loanwords, if not thousands, have remained in use up to present (Lewis, 1999).

The most interesting characteristic of Arabic loanwords in Turkish (henceforth ALTs) is that almost all of them have been borrowed from the standard variety of Arabic. When Turkic tribes converted into Islam, they adopted the Arabic script for their native languages because Arabic was socially and politically very influential at the time and was also the language of their new religion. The number of Turkish borrowings from Arabic has dramatically reduced due to the reform process carried out by Ataturk which extended from 1923 to 1938 (Lewis, 1999). Lewis (1999, p. 6) maintains that the influence of Arabic was much larger than that of Persian, "not only because Arabic as the language of the Quran it naturally became the language of religion and theology, and because the Persian vocabulary was itself replete with Arabic borrowings, but also because when an Arabic word was borrowed it brought its whole family with it". For example, when the word *hak* 'right; authority' was first borrowed from Arabic [ħaqq], many other words like *hakikat* 'truth', *hukuk* 'law; rights', *hakikaten* 'in fact; truly', *tahkik* 'investigation', *muhakak* 'certainly', etc. came along with it.

Most of ALTs in general are well-established in the lexicon of Turkish because they have been incorporated in the language hundreds of years ago. Turkish came into contact with Arabic in the beginning of the eleventh century when Turkic tribes converted into Islam (see Lewis, 1999 and Johanson, 2010). Lewis (1999, p. 5) reports, "once settled within the civilization of Islam, the Turks took into their language as much of the Persian and Arabic vocabularies as they needed, and more." Moreover, McCarthy (1985, p. 13) notes, "Arabic and Persian grammatical rules were brought into Turkish". The lexical borrowing in Turkish doesn't only involve the adoption of individual lexical words, but it exceeds to include the incorporation of whole phrases and compounds, e.g. *suistimal* from [su:ʔ ʔistiʕma:l] 'misuse', *harikulade* from [xa:riqun lilʕa:dah] 'extraordinary', *binaenaleyh* from [bina:ʔan ʕalayh] 'accordingly'. They are usually written as a single word in Turkish due to the agglutinative nature of Turkish.

In all languages, lexical items, either native or foreign, are most likely subject to alterations in their meaning. Modifications made to the meaning of either the native words or to loanwords are usually called the types, sequences, or strategies of semantic change in the literature. They include widening, narrowing, semantic shift, metaphorical extension, pejoration and amelioration (Stern, 1965; Ullmann, 1962; Blank, 1999). These strategies are sometimes termed traditional ways of semantic change (Riemer, 2010; Moghaddam & Moghaddam, 2013; Hollmann, 2018). However, they are still valid and can account for most types of semantic change. In an attempt to propose a new model for semantic change, Moghaddam and Moghaddam (2013) examined French loanwords in Persian. They claimed that the previous models were not adequate because they couldn't provide a complete account of semantic change data. They argued that the new proposed model is synchronic, linear, and more elaborate in the sense that it covered all borrowed elements of the data and all the model categories were filled up by these elements. We believe that this model is to some extent helpful but not totally new. It just tried to reorganize the existing categories of semantic change in the literature and present them in a different way in terms of denotational change, connotational change and a mixture of both with some previously well-known subdivisions in each category such as widening, narrowing, metaphor, pejoration, etc.

Semantic change, as Pyles (1964) states, is something frequently unpredictable but it is deemed to be inevitable. Hollmann (2018, p. 337-338) further emphasizes, "while semantic change was, due to its apparently complete unpredictability, for a long time the black sheep of the family in areas of language change, as a result of recent developments it is now very well respected, and as such is likely to attract a lot more research in the future." Therefore, it has been argued recently that despite the unpredictability of semantic change, there is some kind of regularity in it and such changes have a unidirectional move from objectivity to subjectivity (Traugott & Dasher, 2003; Traugott, 2010; Hollmann, 2018; van Olmen & Athanasopoulos, 2018). Traugott and Dasher (2003, p. 4), for example, maintain that while regular changes in meaning can be found in conceptual structures of lexemes, especially those which are verbal and adjectival or adverbial, the nominal domain exhibit irregular semantic changes due to some “extralinguistic factors such as change in the nature or the social construction of the referent”. They also add that the main motive behind regular semantic changes is "pragmatic" which means that "the context-dependency of abstract structural meaning allows for change in the situations of use, most particularly the speaker’s role in strategizing this dynamic use" (Traugott & Dasher, 2003, p. 45).

Motivations for semantic change have been subjected to review from time to time. Blank (1999), for instance, revised critically the typology proposed by Ullmann (1962) which has been for decades the most popular and important theory in the domain of lexical semantic change. Ullmann introduced six types of causes of semantic change which could be 1) linguistic, 2) historical, 3) social, 4) psychological, 5) due to foreign influence, and 6) due to a need for a new name. According to Blank (1999, p. 66), these reasons “lack both a cognitive and an empirical background and Ullman’s list is merely an eclectic collection of motivations, necessary conditions and accessory elements”. Out of the six types, Blank argued that only two types are relatively unproblematic, namely the social and psychological causes.

In his review and critique of Ullmann's (1962) typology, which he termed as the traditional approach to the motivation for semantic change, Blank (1999) came with a new typology in which he established empirically six types of motivations: 1) need for a new name or concept, 2) abstract concepts with invisible referents, 3) sociocultural change, 4) close conceptual relations, 5) complexity and irregularity of the lexicon, and 6) emotionally marked concepts. Blank’s list was later carefully reviewed by Grzega (2004) and many other motivations were added. The long list Grzega provided includes: fuzziness (i.e. ambiguity, unclarity in designating the appropriate words to referents in the host language), word play/punning, changes in the referents (i.e. due to developments in the real life), excessive length of words, and prestige/fashion (the tendency on the part of the speakers of using foreign words and expressions to appear more modern and fashionable). These motivations were not clearly highlighted by Blank (1999). They are considered among the important causes of lexical borrowing and semantic change.

II. Research Questions

Upon their entrance into the lexicon of Turkish, Arabic loanwords have undergone phonological, morpho-syntactic as well as semantic adaptations. The focus in this study is on the semantic changes that occurred in Turkish borrowings from Arabic. Thus, the proper aim of the current study is to investigate the different strategies of semantic change of ALTs. In addition, it tracks the behavior of the loanwords that show semantic change and see whether they are in line with the general tendencies of semantic change agreed upon in the literature or not. For example, most studies conclude that the process of semantic narrowing or restriction is usually the most dominant strategy. Is it the same with regard to ALTs? Furthermore, it is anonymously agreed upon that the semantic change that take place in processes like amelioration and pejoration undergo always occurs at the level of connotative level rather than denotative level. Does this also happen in the case of ALTs? In other words, the present study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1) What are types of semantic change that ALTs may undergo?

2) How does semantic change of such types take place in the context of ALTs? Or how do semantic change strategies in the context of ALTs differ from those found in the literature? and

3) What are the possible motivations/ factors that may play a role in the process of semantic change?

III. Literature Review

Semantic change in loanwords in languages other than Turkish has been investigated by many studies; among these are Louwrens (1993), Moghaddam and Moghaddam (2013), Al-Athwary (2016), and Anam and Nirmala (2019). Research on loanword adaptation of ALTs has generally been scant. In addition, most of them focused on the phonological and morphosyntactic modifications made to loanwords. Therefore, the present study is motivated by the fact that there is almost no attention to the investigation of semantic change of ALTs.

An interesting study of lexical borrowing in Modern Turkish is McCarthy (1985). The study provided an account of the phonological, morphological and semantic adaptation of French, Persian, Arabic, Greek and English loanwords in Turkish. With respect to the semantic issue, McCarthy examined the development of meaning of Turkish borrowings from these languages. The author followed a diachronic approach which, as he claimed, helps "obtain a clearer picture of the synchronic state of Modern Turkish" (McCarthy 1985, p. 155). He concluded that most of loanwords went through three types of semantic changes, namely loss, restriction and extension of meaning. As for Arabic loanwords, the task was to compare the meaning of loanwords in Modern Turkish with their meaning in Ottoman Turkish and in

Arabic as the source language. Despite the fact that Arabic loanwords represent a major part of loanwords stock in Turkish, only few examples were analyzed semantically. In our view, this may not help realize the various aspects of semantic changes that take place in Turkish loanwords from Arabic.

Stachowski (2015, 2016) are two studies on the phonetic adaptations of Arabic loanwords in Ottoman Turkish. They provide detailed phonological analyses of the changes that take place in the consonants, semivowels and vowels of the Turkish borrowings from Arabic. Similarly, AlShammari and AlShammari (2020) analyzed 250 Turkish borrowings from Arabic to recognize and describe the phonological and morphological alterations that take place in such words.

From this brief review of literature, and to the best of my knowledge, it has become obvious that there are almost no comprehensive attempts carried out on the semantic change of ALTs. This study, therefore, comes to fill a gap in the literature regarding contact linguistics and lexical borrowing.

IV. Data Collection and Methods

The loanword data of the present study have been collected from many dictionary resources. The main resource of loanword data is Sapan's (2005) dictionary. This dictionary lists a large stock of Arabic loanwords in Turkish, and provides sufficient details about the meanings of such loans in addition to their phonological and morphological features. In the introduction to this dictionary, the author notes that this work includes only those Arabic words which are still in use in the modern Turkish and excludes all other words that are obsolete and no more used in the language. *Webster's Turkish-English Thesaurus Dictionary* is also used as a secondary source of loanword data in addition to Sapan (2005).

In the process of loanword data sampling, the approach followed is to focus on and list only those loanwords which involve, in one or another, a change in their meaning and exclude those loanwords whose meaning is similar to that of Arabic language as the donor language. The total number of the collected data is 134 out of hundreds of loanwords that we have come across in Sapan’s (2005) dictionary and other resources.

Al-Waseet Arabic-Arabic Dictionary and *Al-Maany Online Dictionary* are used to establish and validate the original senses of Arabic loanwords. Furthermore, the meanings of Arabic elements in Turkish are further checked by other two dictionaries, namely *Türk Dil Kurumu* (Turkish Language Association) and *Cambridge English–Turkish online Dictionary*. Some native speakers of Turkish were also consulted in this regard in order to establish the correct pronunciation and meanings of ALTs. The whole corpus was analyzed from a descriptive and qualitative point of view.

In the transliteration process, ALTs are presented in italics while their original Arabic forms are presented between square brackets. Both of them are accompanied by English glosses of their meanings.

It is unanimously agreed that nouns are the most frequently borrowed in a language contact situation (Cannon, 1998). In the present data, however, it has been noticed that Turkish has borrowed a considerable number of adverbs such as *asla* 'never' < [?aşlan], *elbette* 'certainly; of course' < [?al-battah], *maalesef* 'unfortunately' < [maʕa l?asaf], *evella* 'first of all' < [?awwalan] and many of them are subject to some kind of semantic change. Therefore, it is considered a very interesting phenomenon of lexical borrowing that deserves to be investigated.

V. Analysis and Results

As mentioned earlier, the collected data for this study involve only those ALTs whose meanings have undergone some kind of semantic change. Those loanwords whose meaning is similar in one way or another to their original counterparts in the donor language (Arabic) are excluded. Therefore, in this section, in order to recognize the different types or sequences of semantic change, the collected sample of 134 ALTs are analyzed and discussed. First the data are analyzed statistically. The results are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
The Different Strategies Of Semantic Change In ALTs

Type of semantic change	No.	%	Remarks
Narrowing	28	20.89	
Widening	11	8.20	
Radical semantic shift	89	66.41	
- Full shift	38	43	(% is out of 89 cases)
- Partial shift	51	57	(% is out of 89 cases)
Pejoration	2	1.50	
Amelioration	2	1.50	
Synecdoche	2	1.50	
Total	134	100	

The numerical data presented in Table 1 demonstrate six strategies of semantic change with difference degrees of frequency of occurrence. It also shows that the semantic change of ALTs is various and a little complicated, especially with regard to the processes of radical semantic shift, narrowing, and widening. What is striking is that the overwhelming of ALTs shows great tendency towards radical semantic shift (89/ 66.41%). This result is not in line with other studies such as Louwrens (1993), Al-Athwary (2016), and Anam and Nirmala (2019) in which change of meaning in loanwords tends towards either restriction or extension. ALTs exhibit two kinds of radical semantic shift: full shift and partial shift where the latter is more dominant (57%) than the former (43%). The strategies of amelioration, pejoration and synecdoche have a marginal role to play in the semantic change of ALTs. Mechanisms like metaphorical extension and metonymy are totally absent.

A. Radical Semantic Shift

It is appropriate to start our analysis with semantic shift of ALTs because it is the most frequent type of semantic change. For Bloomfield (as cited in Li, 2014) the term "semantic shift" refers to any change that a word may undergo. In other words, for Bloomfield, the terms "semantic change" and "semantic shift" are the same and can be used alternatively. In this study, however, the category "semantic shift" refers to that type of semantic change in which the meaning of an ALT is altered completely or partially due to some diachronic and socio-cultural factors. In other words, the new sense acquired by an ALT differs from the original meaning of Arabic counterpart. Following Louwrens (1993, p. 14), the term "radical shift", therefore, is used instead where "the semantic content of a loan-word shifts so radically from what the word originally meant, that only a meagre semantic relationship between the original word and the loan-word can be observed". The description of the semantic relationship as "meagre" means that the similarity between the meaning of the loanword and the meaning of its original counterpart is scant and inconsiderable. According to the degree of this semantic relationship of ALTs, radical semantic shift can be divided into two types: full radical shift and partial radical shift.

(a). Full Radical Shift

Full radical shift refers to those cases of ALTs in which the connection between the new meaning acquired by the ALT and that of Arabic word is very slight or almost absent. For example, the ALT *kasim* is surprisingly used in Turkish to designate the month of 'November'. [qa:sim] in Arabic, however, has totally different senses, some of which are 'distributor', 'divider' and ‘a proper name (for men)’. In Turkic culture, winter begins on the 8th or 11th of November. It is considered the month that 'divides' or 'breaks' winter from other seasons that come before it (Ipşirli, 2015). Hence, *kasım* is used to indicate this meaning of the Arabic word [qa:sim], that is the 'dividing' or the 'breaking'. Another interesting example is *mabeyn*. The category of this word in Arabic is originally a compound adverb of place. It consists of two constituents: [ma:] 'a person/ thing that' + [bayn] 'between' which generally means 'what is between'. In Turkish, however, the ALT *mabeyn*, which is naturally dealt with as a single word, denotes 'the place between the women's suite and other parts in the Sultan's Ottoman Palace'. The borrowing process here also involves a change in the word category from an adverb to a noun, a phenomenon which is very common on ALTs and which will be elaborated more below. Finally, the ALT *mısır* is used in Turkish to mean 'corn' or 'maize'. It is taken from Arabic [mişr] which refers to a place, that is the country of 'Egypt'. This example is really striking in the sense that it differs from the previous ones. The word *mısır* involves semantic shift through ellipsis. Corn was not known to the Turks in the early days of the Ottoman Empire (13th -14th century), but it was also not known in Egypt, because maize came from America and reached Turkey not before the 17th century. It was known as ‘Egyptian wheat’ *Mısır buğdayı* and as *Mısır darısı* ‘Egyptian millet’. So, what we have here is an elliptic usage. The second part is dropped through ellipsis and the part which remains, i.e. *mısır*, carries the meaning of the whole expression.

(b). Partial Radical Shift

It can be postulated that partial shift may not differ a lot from full shift; in the case of the former the degree of the relation between the original sense and new sense is only somehow stronger than in the latter. In each instance of partial shift, the semantic connection does exist but the new meaning is still different. Let us start with the ALT *misafir* which is borrowed from Arabic [musa:fir], meaning 'a traveler'. When borrowed into Turkish, *misafir* has the meaning of 'a guest'. The relation between the two is not difficult to notice: moving from one place to another implying the act of traveling. Another case of partial shift is represented by the term *cezve* 'a coffee pot'. This example is very interesting since it involves different strategy of partial shift from the previous examples. In the past, people used to make coffee in a special pot on burning wood, and an ember of this fire is called [jaðwah] in Arabic. The term *cezve* from Arabic [jaðwah] is therefore designated to the container in which coffee is made instead of denoting that part of fire, the ember. Like the loanword *cezve*, the ALT *hisar* has undergone a similar semantic change. The borrowed word of *hisar* is designated the meaning of 'a castle' or 'a fortress' in Turkish while its original Arabic [ħiṣa:r] means 'siege' or 'blockage'. In Arabic, the word used to denote the term 'a castle' is [qalʕah]. Thus, instead of using [qalʕah], the name of this referent is replaced by one quality or action pertaining to a castle, that is the act of surrounding a castle (being under siege). Unlike *cezve*, however, the semantic replacement is associated with an abstract feature of the castle (the siege) while in the case of *cezve* it is related to a concrete object (the ember of fire).

B. Narrowing

Narrowing is the second most dominant type of semantic change after radical semantic shift representing 20.89% of the whole loanword data. Semantic narrowing is that process in which the word meaning is restricted in time and range in the recipient language. Riemer (2010, p. 374) states that narrowing is a type of semantic change in which “a word narrows its range of reference”. This would mean that the restriction of meaning as a process that moves from a general meaning into a more specialized meaning of a loanword. If we start with the ALT *şarap*, we find that in Arabic [šara:b] means 'a drink in general', but in Turkish it only refers to the drink of 'wine'. In the same way, the meaning of Arabic word [madrasah] refers to 'any kind of school', but in Turkish the meaning of the loanword *medrese* is only restricted to 'a religious school', a school that is basically concerned with educating the Quran and other Islamic teachings. Finally, the meaning of the Arabic word [?ixba:r] usually refers to the act of 'informing' or 'notifying' in general. In Turkish, however, this sense is specialized or narrowed and its counterpart *ihbar* only comes to mean 'a police notice' or more specifically 'an arrest notice'.

C. Widening

Only eleven cases of widening are attested, so they rank as the third most dominant process of semantic change that takes place in ALTs. The semantic process of widening is just the opposite of narrowing. According to Riemer (2010, p. 374), widening or broadening is a tendency in which “a word’s meaning changes to encompass a wider class of referents". This would mean that widening is the expanding of the meaning of words by gaining wider range or senses. Many foreign words usually denote a specialized meaning. After incorporated into another linguistic context, they loosen the fixed range of their meaning and become more general. For example, in Classical Arabic, the word [maktab] is used to refer to 'a small place like a cottage in which children used to memorize the holy Qur'an and receive the basics of reading and writing'. Thus, in the past [maktab] was synonymous to the common word [kutta:b] (the plural of is [kata:ti:b], something different from the word [kutta:b] 'writers' which is the plural of [ka:tib] 'a writer'). The counterpart of [maktab] in Turkish is *mektep* which has acquired a wider meaning. It means 'an (elementary) school' in its well-known modern sense. The ALT *seyahat* is also a good example in point. It is adopted from Arabic [siya:ħah], which in Arabic context, means 'moving from one place to another for the purpose of comfort and entertainment', that is 'tourism'. In Turkish, *seyahat* has acquired a broader meaning and it refers now to 'traveling' in general. Sometimes a new sense is added to the borrowed word in Turkish. The ALT *ibre* from Arabic [?ibrah] has the same meaning of its counterpart in Arabic, both mean 'a needle'. Moreover, in Turkish *ibre* has got additional meaning; it also denotes 'the hand of a scale'.

D. Other Types of Semantic Change

The other strategies of semantic change listed in Table 1 above are pejoration, amelioration and synecdoche. They represent the least frequency of the collected data, two cases each. It is agreed upon in the literature that while widening and narrowing are related to the range of words, amelioration and pejoration imply changes in words’ evaluation (Ullmann 1962; Traugott & Dasher, 2003). In other words, if the former two processes include changes in word denotations, the latter ones work at the level of word connotations. In this study, however, the cases of amelioration and pejoration disagree with the previous studies and prove that the semantic change of ALTs occurs at the denotative level rather than at the connotative level.

Let us first start with pejoration. Semantic pejoration happens when words acquire negative senses (or connotations). This means that the sense of a word may get derogated or worsened. As Borkowska and Kleparski (2007, p. 37) put it, pejoration "occurs when a word is used to express negatively loaded values not inherent in its historically original (or historically prior) meaning scope." The case in point here is the ALT *badire* from the Arabic counterpart [ba:dirah]. In Arabic, this word has the normal meaning of 'a sign or an indication of something'. After incorporated into Turkish, it has gained a rather negative meaning and comes to mean 'a disaster' or 'a hardship'. Similarly, the word [xafiyyah] in Arabic simply means 'a secret'. When borrowed into Turkish lexicon, instead of denoting the abstract sense of ‘a secret', the ALT *hafiye* denotes a concrete referent, that is 'a spy or 'a detective'. The derogative sense of words like spy or detective is clear.

Amelioration, on the other hand, occurs when words acquire positive meaning (or connotations) (Traugott & Dasher, 2003), coming to represent something more favorable than it originally referred to. The word *mahdum* from Arabic [maxdu:m]. In Arabic it means 'the one who is served' like for example an employer. In Turkish, however, *mahdum* has acquired a more elevated sense coming to mean 'a son'.

Now we come to the semantic process of synecdoche. On the basis of Bloomfield definition of synecdoche, Moghaddam and Moghaddam (2013, p. 80) elaborate this definition by stating that synecdoche is "a semantic change based on whole-part or part-whole associations so that either a part of a whole would represent the whole, or the whole would be established in a way to represent the part associated with the whole". In the collected data, two examples are found and both refer to the part-whole association. The first is the ALT *kafa*. In Arabic the word [qafa:] is used to refer to 'the back part of neck or head' while in Turkish *kafa* means 'the brain or 'the head'. Thus, the part (the back of the head or neck) becomes a whole (the head or the brain). The second example of synecdoche is the loanword *hatira*. This ALT is taken from Arabic [xaţirah] meaning 'what comes to mind' or 'a thought'. In Turkish, it refers to 'the memory' as a whole.

VI. Discussion

When incorporated into Turkish lexicon, the meaning of ALTs is adapted in one way or another. The semantic analysis above reveals that ALTs have undergone six main types or sequences of semantic change: the most frequent ones are radical semantic shift, narrowing, and widening while amelioration, pejoration and synecdoche are less common or rather rare. Radical semantic shift records the highest frequency of occurrence of the 134 semantic change cases. This is one of the major findings of this study. This result disagrees with other many studies which report that semantic narrowing or restriction is usually the most common change in linguistic borrowing (Ullmann, 1962; Al-Athwary, 2016). The collected data seem to be void of any instances of metaphorical extension or metonymy as strategies of semantic change.

The results of the current study also contrast, to some extent, with those of McCarthy (1985) with regard to consequences of semantic change. The analysis of the loanword corpus shows that six types of semantic change have been found as listed in Table 1 above while McCarthy states only three: loss of meaning, restriction, and extension. The last two are straightforward and correspond to narrowing and widening in this study, respectively. As for the loss of meaning, the term used is rather vague. The same can be said about some examples discussed on pages 161 and 164 like *arife*, *hadim*, *karun*, and *azab* which he calls "a change of meaning". The ambiguity lies in the fact that such terms lack a more specific classification; it is not enough to state that there is a loss of meaning or a change of meaning. Examples under the term "loss of meaning" would be better categorized as instances of "restriction (in number of senses of the original word)". One of the examples given by McCarthy is the Arabic [bala:?] which has many senses such as 'Trial', 'affliction', 'plague', 'bravery', and 'heroic action'. When incorporated in Turkish, *bela* picked only one meaning which is 'calamity' or 'trouble'. Another example is *şafak* < [šafaq]. It is not enough to say that it undergoes a loss of meaning. The general meaning of the original word and that of the loanword is maintained, both of them refer to 'twilight'. What is changed is the type of the twilight, whether it is that of the morning or that of evening. Similarly, examples under the concept of ‘a change of meaning' can be rather classified as examples of radical semantic shift because the meaning of such borrowed words differs drastically from their original meaning in the donor language. The Arabic word [ʕazab; ?aʕzab], as provided by the author, means 'a bachelor (man)'; its counterpart in Turkish *azab* has acquired a totally different sense coming to mean 'a marine'. According to TKD dictionary, this word is defined as ‘a young soldier who joined the army and navy during the Janissaries’. Therefore, it is a clear example of full radical shift.

Loanwords, in general, get restricted or narrowed at two levels: in the number of senses of polysemantic words and in the range of the meaning of the borrowed word. In the context of the Arabic borrowings in Turkish, the process of narrowing almost takes place in the range of the loanword meaning not in the number of senses each original word has. Narrowing in range occurs when a single general meaning of the original word gets restricted leading to a narrower and, therefore, a less general meaning of that word. Going back to the example like *şarap* > [šara:b] discussed in the section on narrowing above, we find that the Arabic [šara:b] has only one single general meaning referring to 'drink'. Then, the range of this meaning is specialized enough and *şarap* only comes to mean 'the drink of alcohol'. The second type of restriction is found in McCarthy (1985) under the category loss of meaning (see the example of *bela* in the previous paragraph above). The only case of this second type is found in our data and also stated in McCarthy (1985) is the ALT *tilmiz* from Arabic [tilmi:ð]. In Arabic, this word is a polysemantic one denoting many referents such 'pupil', 'student', 'apprentice', 'probationer', 'trainee', 'disciple'. In Turkish, the loanword *tilmiz* preserved only the last meaning of 'disciple', the follower of a great religious teacher or scholar.

Another major fining of this study is that cases of amelioration and pejoration in ALTs involve changes in the denotations of the loanwords rather than in their connotations (cf. Al-Athwary, 2016). When it is argued that pejorative and ameliorative changes are usually connotative ones, this would mean that such derogated or elevated senses assigned to loanwords cannot be found in dictionaries (i.e. they don't have lexical slots), either of the original language or the recipient language. This does not hold true in case of ALTs. The new senses, either elevated or derogated, are listed in dictionaries, and this proves that they are denotations rather than connotations.

In addition to the above-mentioned six types of semantic change, there is a number of other linguistic phenomena which are related to or rather co-exist with these types and need to be discussed below in order to have an entire picture of the semantic change process in ALTs.

A. The Phenomenon of Synonymy

The phenomenon of synonymy as a sequence of lexical borrowing usually arises when a loanword in the recipient language has a native equivalent in the same language. The pair *faiz/ ilgi*, for instance, has a similar meaning, both mean 'interest (of a bank)' where the first part of the pair is an ALT from Arabic [fa:?iḍ] and the second part is a native (Turkish) word. The same can be said for the pair *misafir* (a loanword from Arabic [musa:fir]/ *konuk* (a native word), both mean 'a guest'. This seems to be the result of the language reform of Atatürk and not a normal process usually occurring in almost all borrowing languages (cf. Al-Athwary, 2016). What is interesting here is when the lexical borrowing process results in having two or more synonymous loanwords. This phenomenon is in fact attested in Turkish as a recipient language. In many cases, Turkish borrows two loanwords from Arabic which have similar meaning leading to synonymy. A pair in point is adam/ *insan*, both are borrowed from Arabic [?a:dam] and [?insa:n] and both mean 'a man; a human being' in Turkish. Table 2 illustrates more cases of loanword synonyms in Turkish.

TABLE 2
LOANWORD SYNONYMS IN TURKISH

The loanword pairs in Turkish	The original form in Arabic	Their meaning in Turkish
hisar/ kale	[ħiṣa:r]/ [qalʕah]	a castle
ardiye/ ambar	[ʔarḍiyyah]/ [ʕambar]	a warehouse
istikbal/ ati	[ʔstiqba:l]/ [ʔa:ti]	future
medrese/ mektep	[madrasah]/ [maktab]	a school
temiz/ saf	[tamyi:z]/ [ṣa:fi]	clean; pure

The existence of this kind of loanword synonyms can be attributed to the intensity of lexical borrowing process that took place from Arabic into Turkish. Another factor may refer to the difference in the emotive and evaluative meanings of the two members of each pair of synonymous words (see Al-Athwary, 2016). For example, although the ALTs *medrese* and *mektep* have the general meaning of 'a school', the former has religious considerations while the latter refer to public school in which pupils and students receive public education. Medrese is the place which provides Islamic education, so to speak, where the holy Quran, Islamic teachings as well as other modern subjects are taught.

B. Semantic Replacement

Semantic change in ALTs is further characteristic by a specific and interesting tendency which might be called "semantic replacement" as used by Crespo (2013). Instead of directly borrowing the name of the referent or concept that is used in the original language, Turkish tends to pick up one quality (adjective) of (or related to) that referent which is also originally Arabic to designate the new imported item. For example, the ALT *hisar* is used to mean 'a castle' or 'a fortress'. The equivalent term for a castle in Arabic is [qalʕah]. In the past, when an army want to conquer or take over a castle or fortress, they would make it under 'siege' until it surrenders. The word [ħiṣa:r] means 'siege' in Arabic. Therefore, instead of using [qalʕah] to designate the referent 'a castle', Turkish speakers also use *hisar*, as a feature related to a castle, to refer to the referent 'a castle'.

Another case of semantic replacement is the ALT *iskat*. In Turkish, it has the sense of 'alms' or 'prayers' which are paid or performed by one's family after his death. The equivalent terms for alms or prayers in Arabic are [zaka:h] or [duʕa:ʔ], respectively, which are also used in Turkish, i.e. *zekat* and *dua*. One quality or benefit of paying alms or making prayers for the dead, according to Islamic beliefs, is to get Allah's forgiveness or more specifically to get the dead's sins dropped off. The term *iskat* is in fact expressing this latter meaning of 'dropping one's sins off'. Thus, the borrowed word *iskat* (from Arabic [ʔisqa:ṭ]) is used to refer to alms or prayers instead of the Arabic [zaka:h] or [duʕa:ʔ]. Other examples of this phenomenon include words like *mukabele* 'response', *tedhiş* 'terror', *cezve* 'a coffee pot', and *idman* 'exercise'. All cases of semantic replacement belong to the semantic type of radical semantic shift analyzed above.

It is worth mentioning that the ALT *avrat* meaning 'a woman; wife' (from Arabic [ʕawrah]) provided by McCarthy (1985, p. 166) doesn't involve what he called semantic extension (widening); it is rather an example of partial semantic shift. It is also can be classified under the phenomenon of semantic replacement. McCarthy stated only its general meaning in Arabic, that is 'defectiveness, imperfection, or weakness'. From the religious point of view in Islam, [ʕawrah], however, comes also to mean "what must be covered or veiled of the woman's body'. So, [ʕawrah] denotes very particular parts of the body of the Muslim woman. In this way, the borrowed word *avart*, as a quality of a woman, is used to mean 'woman' while the Arabic words [ʔimraʔah] 'a woman' or [zawjah] 'a wife' have been abandoned in modern Turkish.

C. Motivations for Semantic Change

Motivations behind semantic changes in loanwords in general can be attributed to a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors (Ullmann, 1962; Stern, 1965; Blank, 1999; Hollmann, 2018). The former refers to factors like lexical need, semantic similarity, and morphological/ semantic contiguity while the latter involves social, cultural, contextual, psychological and historical factors. In the context of ALTs some of these factors are found operative and often overlap in many cases of semantic change. This means that the change in meaning in a given loanword can be interpreted as to be caused by both linguistic and non-linguistic factors in the same time.

The factor of lexical need usually represents the most important factor in loanword narrowing, widening and radical shift. Due to the fact that these three strategies of semantic change represent 95.5% of the present corpus of loanword data, so it can be safely stated that the major part of semantic change takes place due to the lexical need.

Sometimes the meaning of a borrowed word acquires a pejorative or an ameliorative meaning due its occurrence in syntagmatic relationships with other referential items. This phenomenon is motivated by what is known as linguistic contagion (Crespo, 2013). The deteriorative meaning of the loanword *badire* can be attributed to this linguistic factor. In Arabic, [ba:dirah] means 'a sign or an indication (of something)' and is usually combined with expressions like [ba:diratu xayr] or [ba:diratu šuʔm/ šarr], meaning 'a sign of good' or 'a sign of misfortune or bad', respectively. It can be inferred that, upon the incorporation of this word, it was used in the second combination more than the first. As a result, it acquired the pejorative meaning of 'a disaster' or 'hardship' which is basically underlying 'an indication or a sign of misfortune'.

In some cases of radical semantic shift, factors behind semantic change that occurred in ALTs are a little hard to pinpoint. Therefore, they can be also interpreted by another group of motivations rather than lexical need. It is generally agreed (Kay, 1995; Grzega, 2004) that semantic alterations may take place due to fuzziness/ ambiguity, miscomprehension, ignorance and laxity. Kay (1995, p. 72), for example, argues that one reason of semantic change is that the word meaning "in its original language may not be fully understood; nor need it be, as loanwords are used without reference to their source words". Such factors usually operate in loanwords that are incorporated into a language through spoken or written channels. Therefore, the factors of ambiguity, miscomprehension, and ignorance are clearly the main causes of radical semantic shift, either partial or full. This is why the instances of semantic shift in Turkish loanword from Arabic are the most frequent. Loanwords like *iskat*, *hisar* and *avart* discussed under semantic replacement above are good examples of the case.

Another important factor which contributes to the most of semantic alterations of Arabic borrowings in Turkish is of diachronic nature rather than of synchronic one (cf. Hollmann, 2018). These changes took place in the different intervals in the history of the Turkish language. Related to this is the length of the language contact between the two languages which continued for centuries. This has led to make the lexical borrowing more intensive. The intensity of the incorporated items into Turkish has its effect on the reception and comprehension processes of loanwords, and hence resulting into semantic change. The historical motivation is decisive, for example, in the semantic change of the ALTs *ictihat* < [?ijtiha:d], and *vatan* < [waţan] as argued by McCarthy (1985, p. 156-157). In both Arabic and Ottoman Turkish, the two words have the meanings of ‘individual judgment’ and ‘homeland’, respectively. In Modern Turkish they denote different senses of ‘parliamentary legislation’ and ‘one’s homeland’, respectively. The sociocultural influence of the West in the modern age plays a significant role in changing the meaning of such terms.

VII. Conclusion

The present study is motivated by the fact that there is very scant research on lexical borrowing between Arabic and Turkish in general and on semantic change in particular. The proper aim, therefore, is to examine the change in meaning that ALTs may undergo in Turkish. The analysis of 134 loanwords has revealed that ALTs exhibit a number of semantic change strategies when incorporated in the lexicon of the Turkish language. The most common ones are radical semantic shift, narrowing and widening with the first having the highest frequency of occurrence (89/ 66.41%). Turkish is considered one of the few borrowing languages in which the phenomenon of radical semantic shift (both partial and full) strikingly represents the most frequent process of semantic change. Other processes like amelioration, pejoration and synecdoche play a marginal role in the semantics of ALTs. The ameliorative and pejorative changes take place in the denotative level of the loanwords rather than in the connotative one. Although few cases are attested, it is sufficient evidence to prove that ALTs behave differently in terms of amelioration and pejoration processes.

Semantic change in ALTs is usually accompanied by a change in the grammatical category of the loanword. This would mean that ALTs don’t maintain the word class of the original counterpart as it usually happens in lexical borrowing. Another phenomenon which is associated to semantic change is what is called semantic replacement which is particularly occurs in the semantic type of radical semantic shift. The practice here is that instead of adopting the direct name of a referent or a concept, Turkish speakers tend to replace that name by picking up a quality or a function of that referent or concept and use it to denote that referent or concept.

The different processes of semantic change in ALTs are affected by a number of linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The extralinguistic diachronic factor is decisive in this regard because the long period of lexical borrowing which extends over centuries led to extensive incorporation of Arabic borrowings into Turkish. The adoption of the large number of loanwords together with the miscomprehension, ambiguity, and ignorance of these loans on the part of the recipient language users all resulted in semantic change in one way or another. Other linguistic factors like lexical need are found playing an important role in the process of semantic change.

This study evokes the urgent need for further research, not only on the semantics of Arabic borrowings in Turkish, but also on their pragmatic implications. Related to this is the study of Turkish loanwords in the various Arabic dialects also requires investigation from semantic and pragmatic perspectives, especially in those Arab countries which have been under the rule Ottoman Empire like Egypt, the Levant, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

References

[1] Al-Athwary, A. (2016). The semantics of English Borrowings in Arabic Media Language: The case of Arab Gulf States Newspapers. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, *5* (4), 110-121. http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.5n.4p.110

[2] *Al-Maany Online Dictionary*. (2021). Retrieved December 13, 2021, from https://www.almaany.com/

[3] *Al-Muεjam Al-Waseet* [Al-Waseet Arabic-Arabic Dictionary]. (2004). Arabic Language Academy, Cairo, Egypt: Al-Shorouk International Library.

[4] AlShammari, W. & AlShammari, A. (2020). Adaptation of Turkish Loanwords Originating from Arabic. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *10* (5), 388-398. 10.5539/ijel.v10n5p388

[5] Anam, K. A. & Nirmala, D. (2019). Semantic Changes of English Loanwords in Radar Kediri Daily Newspaper Headlines. *Parole: Journal of Linguistics and Education*, *9* (2), 80-89.

[6] Blank, A. (1999). “Why do new meanings occur? A cognitive typology of the motivations for lexical Semantic change”, in Blank, A.; Koch, Peter (eds.), *Historical Semantics and Cognition*, Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 61-90.
[7] Borkowska, P. & Kleparski, G. (2007). It Befalls Words to Fall Down: Pejoration as a Type of Semantic Change. *Studia Anglica Resoviensia* 4, Zeszyt 47, 33- 50.
[8] *Cambridge English–Turkish online Dictionary*. (2021). Retrieved August 24, 2021, from https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english-turkish/
[9] Cannon, G. (1998). Post-1949 German Loans in Written English. *Word*, *49* (1), 19-54. https://doi.org/10.1080/00437956.1998.11673877
[10] Crespo, B. (2013). Change in Life, Change in Language: A Semantic Approach to the History of English (*Studies in English Medieval Language and Literature*, vol. 37). Peter Lang Edition.
[11] Grzega, J. (2004). *Bezeichnungswandel: Wie, Warum, Wozu? Ein Beitrag zur englischen und allgemeinen Onomasiologie* [Name change: How, Why, What? A Contribution to the English and General Onomasiology], Heidelberg :Winter.
[12] Hollmann, W. B. (2018). Semantic Change. In Jonathan Culpeper, Francis Katamba, Paul Kerswill, and Tony McEnery (eds.), *English language: description, variation and context*, 321-339. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
[13] Ipşirli, M. (2015). *Selaniki Mustafa Efendi Tarih-i Selaniki* (971 - 1003 /1563 - 1595) Cilt:1 [Mustafa Efendi's History of Thessaloniki (971 - 1003 /1563 - 1595) Volume:1]. Turk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari.
[14] Johanson, L. (2010). Turkic Language Contacts. In R. Hickey (ed.), *The Handbook of Language* Contact. Wiley-Blackwell, 652-672.
[15] Kay, G. (1995). English loanwords in Japanese. *World Englishes*, *14* (1), 67-76. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1995.tb00340.x
[16] Lewis, G. (1999). *The Turkish Language Reform: A Catastrophic Success*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[17] Li, P. J. (2014). Semantic Shift and Variation in Formosan Languages. *Language and Linguistics*, 465-477. https://doi.org/10.1177/1606822X14531897
[18] Louwrens, L. J. (1993). Semantic change in loan words. *South African Journal of African Languages*, *13* (1), 8-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/02572117.1993.10586958
[19] McCarthy, K. (1985). *The Linguistic Adaptation of Loanwords in Modern Standard Turkish*. [Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. University Microfilms International: Michigan, U.S.A.].
[20] Moghaddam A. & Moghaddam F. (2013). A Semantic Change Model for French Loanwords in Persian. *Acta Linguistica Asiatica*, *3*(2), 71-86 https://doi.org/10.4312/ala.3.2.73-88
[21] Pyles, T. (1964). *The Origins and Development of the English Language*. Harcourt, Brace and World, INC.: New York.
[22] Riemer, N. (2010). *Introducing Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[23] Sapan, S. (2005). *muʕjam ʔal-ʔalfa:ḏ ʔal-ʕarabiyyah fi ʔalluġah ʔat-turkiyyah* [A Dictionary of Arabic loanwords in the Turkish Language]. Riyadh: King Fahd National Library.
[24] Stachowski, K. (2015). Phonetic adaptation of Arabic loanwords in Argenti’s Ottoman Turkish (1533). Part 1. Consonants and semivowels. In E. Mańczak-Wohlfeld, B. Podolak, Kraków (eds.), *Words and Dictionaries. A Festschrift for Professor Stanisław Stachowski on the Occasion of His 85th Birthday*, 297–317.
[25] Stachowski, K. (2016). Phonetic adaptation of Arabic loanwords in Argenti’s Ottoman Turkish (1533). Part 2. Vowels. In Opracowanie zbiorowe (ed.), *Oriental Studies and Arts. Contributions Dedicated to Professor Tadeusz Majda on His 85th Birthday*, 279- 304.
[26] Stern, G. (1965). *Meaning and Change of Meaning, with special reference to the English language*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
[27] Traugott, E. C. & Dasher, R. B. (2003). *Regularity in Semantic Change*. Cambridge University Press (netLibrary Edition).
[28] Traugott, E. C. (2010). Revisiting subjectification and intersubjectification. In K. Davidse, L. Vandelanotte and H. Cuyckens (eds), *Subjectification, Intersubjectification and Grammaticalization*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 29-70.
[29] *Türk Dil Kurumu* (Turkish Language Association). (2021). Retrieved October 17, 2021, from https://sozluk.gov.tr/
[30] Ullmann, S. (1962). *Semantics: An Introduction to the Science of Meaning*. Oxford: Blackwell.
[31] van Olmen, D. & Athanasopoulos, P. (2018). Semantics. In Jonathan Culpeper, Francis Katamba, Paul Kerswill, and Tony McEnery (eds.), *English language: description, variation and context*, 171-189. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
[32] *Webster's Turkish-English Thesaurus Dictionary*. (2008). Edited by Philip M. Parker, ICON Group International, Inc.

Anwar A. H. Al-Athwary is currently an associate professor at Najran University, KSA. He received his M.A. in Linguistics from Jawaharlal Nehru University, India. He got his PhD in linguistics from Aligarh Muslim University, India. His special areas of interest are lexical borrowing, phonetics and phonology, semantics, and linguistic landscape.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1023-1030, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.15

The Construal Configurations of Speakers' Subjectivity in Narrative Fictions

Junling Zhang
College of International Studies, Southwest University, Chongqing, China

***Abstract*—The paper examines different degrees of the subjectivity of speakers who act respectively as a narrator, a character in the story, and the author in narrative fictions. According to the speaker's four different cases of being on stage, off stage, whether serving as a reference point and cross-world identification, eight types of construal configurations of speaker's subjectivity have been summarized. Findings show that the speaker is characterized to be maximally subjective when he/she is an author, and minimally subjective when he/she is a character in the story. The degree of speaker's subjectivity is greater outside the story than that inside it, and it is also greater when he/she is being weakly perceived than that being strongly perceived. Overall, each configuration is a particular narrative strategy adopted by the author to achieve certain effects, and these configurations, to some extent, provide some cognitive interpretations for these achieved narrative effects.**

***Index Terms*—narrative fictions, speaker's subjectivity, construal configurations, narrative strategies and effects**

I. Introduction

The discourse expression is bound to bear the imprint of the speaker, which usually reflects the speaker's attitude, beliefs, and emotions, namely the speaker's subjectivity (Stein & Wright, 1995; Lyons, 1995; Langacker, 1985, 2008, 2013). However, with regard to the subjectivity's definition, scholars have made elaborations from their own research fields and have not reached a consensus. The subjectivity discussed in this paper is based on the speaker's perspective or construe of situations under the framework of Langacker's cognitive grammar. He has summed up five configurations of the speaker's subjective construe. Although these configurations focus on how the conceptual content activated by the speaker's linguistic expression is recognized in real situations, these findings have provided insights for this research on speakers' subjective construe configurations in fictional narrative texts.

The discussion of the speaker's identity has always been the focus of narratology. In narrative fictions, the speaker's identity can be either the author, the narrator, or even a character in the story, which is complex and changeable. While narrative voices are also explicitly discussed in the literature, "assuming that different forms in language are used in subtly different ways to represent the world, is a theoretical position that permits the linguistic analysis of literary texts" (Gylan & Sjölin, 2012, p. 88). Literary discourse is also a way for humans to express themselves, and cognitive grammar emphasizes the central role of meaning, which is crucial for analyzing literary discourse (Langacker, 2014). And "If CG is truly usage-based, it should be directly applicable to the language of literature. Literature is certainly a 'use of language', linguistically encoded by the particular choices made by, and through the competence of, an author" (Harrison, 2017, p. 2). As an important part of literary discourse, narrative fictions must be studied with cognitive grammar.

II. Langacker's Five Configurations of Speakers' Subjectivity

"Subjectivity pertains to the observer role in viewing situations where the observer/observed asymmetry is maximized" (Langacker, 1985, p. 109). As speech act participants, the speaker is responsible for conceiving the scene, while the addressee reconstructs the speaker's intent. As a conceptual subject, the speaker usually has different perceptions of the same scene. During this process, he will constantly adjust the observation arrangement between the self and the conceptual object, resulting in different cognitive configurations. In an optimal viewing arrangement, the speaker focuses his attention solely on the observed scene and completely loses his self-consciousness. What the speaker observes is the scene only rather than the speaker observing the scene. In this context, the speaker is construed with maximal subjectivity and the entity is construed with maximal objectivity. Opposite to the optimal viewing arrangement is the egocentric viewing arrangement, in which the speaker not only focuses on the conceptual object, but also brings himself into the scope of his observation, namely, the speaker is also part of the conceptualized object. However, this situation can be subdivided into two types: the speaker is either offstage, outside the objective situation, and acts as a reference point for entity positioning, or on the stage exposed to the spotlight.

The other two cases are related to the speaker's conceptual displacement. The utterance "Don't lie to your mother!" is described from a vantage point distinct from the real one. The mother assumes an "external" point of view from the child's perspective to refer to herself. Such a description is more objective and reduces the possibility of misunderstanding. Its configuration is shown in Figure 1 (a), where G represents the speaker's actual observation position of the relevant ground element in the real world, and G' exists in an imaginary world, an assumed position used to describe this element linguistically. The dotted line represents the connection between G and G'. This conceptual displacement of the speaker from G to G' allows the observed entity to be viewed from offstage. At this time, G is understood objectively, while G' is understood subjectively.

The last type of configuration is termed cross-world identification. In this case, the speaker's viewing position is still at his actual viewing position, but what he perceived is not a real world, but a virtual world as in photography, a movie, or a dream. For example, the sentence "That's me in the middle of the top row" is uttered by the speaker in his actual vantage point, but the reference to "I" in this sentence is not the "I" in the real space but the "I" in the virtual space, as shown in the Figure1(b) is shown. G represents the actual location of the speaker, and G' is the entity described by the language that corresponds to G in the real world.

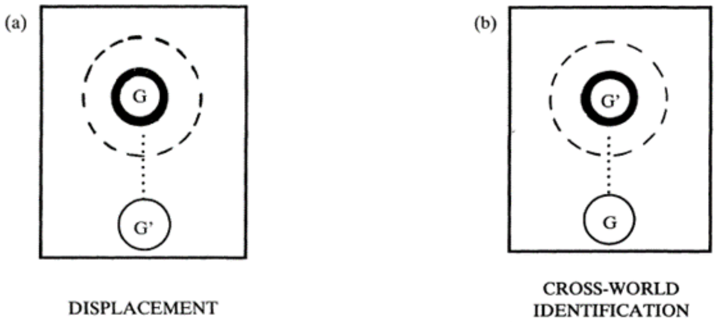


Figure 1

Even though these five types of spears' subjectivity are not used for discourse analysis, they are devoted to understanding the semantic content of language expressions, providing enlightenment for reading and analyzing literary texts. According to the characteristics of fictional narrative discourse, the speaker referred to in this paper includes the author, the narrator, and characters in the story. At the same time, except for the stage area, this paper adjusts the content of the configuration diagram, changing the predicate scope to the scope of the entire narrative text and the objective scene to the story layer. G is the real-world platform where the speaker stays, and G' is the speaker's projection onto the virtual-world platform. In fictional narration, G' in different situations has different identities, and he can be either the author, the narrator, or characters in the story. Applying cognitive grammar to analyze the meaning of language in fictional narrative texts helps us understand the sources of different voices in the text so as to better understand the speaker's intention underlying the narration.

III. The Narrator's Configuration

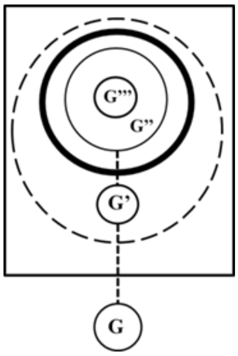
In fiction, the real author usually projects himself on the narrator, observes through the narrator's eyes, and speaks through the narrator's mouth. In this context, the narrator is usually offstage, but he guides the relationship among characters and the story's plot development, which mediates the author/reader and the characters' discourse, as what Langacker describes as the relationship between "conceptualizers", "reference points" and "targets" (Langacker, 1991, 1997). On the one hand, the author, as a conceptualizer, designates the narrator as a reference point to describe the scene and characters in the story; on the other hand, the reader also acts as a conceptualizer to understand the characters' discourses through the narrator. Therefore, the narrator serves as a reference, and the dots bridge the mental contact between the conceptualizer and the story's characters. As far as the narrator's perspective is concerned, he acts as a reference point offstage and can be divided into two configurations: weak perception and strong perception.

A. The Narrator Is Weakly Perceived From Offstage

When the narrator is weakly perceived, he almost focuses all his attention on the observed things, and forgets his own existence. At this time, readers also hardly feel the existence of the narrator.

(1) Elizabeth went away with her head full of him. She could think of nothing but of Mr Wickham, and of what he had told her, all the way home. (Austen *Pride and Prejudice*)

The narrator in (1) adopts an omniscient perspective. He puts all his attention to the character Elizabeth from her outside movement to inside mind. The expressions "went away" and "all the way home" are descriptions of her action, while other expressions of "her head full of him", "think of nothing But of Mr. Wickham" and "of what he had told her" are descriptions of Elizabeth's innate thoughts. This natural continuation from the character's external actions to the inner thought makes readers hardly feel the existence of the narrator. In addition, in this excerpt, the narrator's perception of the character's mental activities also indicates Mr. Wickham's perception. Namely, the character's psychology is also filled with other things, which is called "embedding of mental spaces" (Langacker, 2008) or "nested mental states" (Zunshine, 2015). One mental state is embedded or nested within another mental state, as is shown in Figure 2:



G: the author in the real world
G’: the narrator in the narrative fiction
G’’: scenes or characters in the story
G’’’: scenes or characters in the mind of G’’

Figure 2

The author G in the real world projects himself onto the narrator G’, who acts as a guide to introduce the character G’ in the story, and then G’’, in turn, further guides other characters’ G’’’ in the story. At this time, the narrator, as a viewing subject, in this case, is said to be construed with maximal subjectivity, and the objective scene with maximal objectivity, which explains why what we feel is not the presence of the narrator, but the direct presentation of the scene or characters. The narrator’s selfless observation mode not only makes his nuanced description possible, but also creates an uninterrupted reading experience for readers.

B. The Narrator Is Strongly Perceived From Offstage

When the narrator is strongly perceived, readers could clearly perceive the existence of the narrator during the reading process. In spite of this, readers’ involvement in the story has not been affected. On the contrary, readers need to understand the story or characters’ discourse through the narrator’s coordination. Example (2) presents two situations in which the narrator is strongly perceived.

(2) a. A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton’s shining brass plate, and as he pulled the bell at least a score of young heads **were seen peering out of** the narrow windows of the stately old brick house.

(William Makepeace Thackeray *Vanity Fair*)

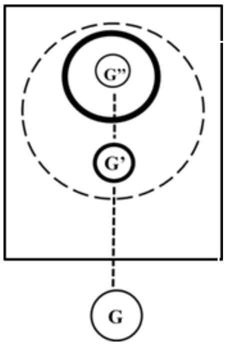
b. “Jim, darling,” she cried, “don’t look at me that way. I had my hair cut off and sold because I couldn’t have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. ...... Say ‘Merry Christmas!’ Jim, and let’s be happy......”

“You’ve cut off your hair?” asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.

“Cut it off and sold it,” said Della. “Don’t you like me just as well, anyhow? I’m me without my hair, ain’t I?” (O. Henry *The Gift of Magi*)

(2a) The description makes the presence of the narrator almost imperceptible initially, but the use of the prepositional phrase “out of” in the end reveals the narrator’s observation perspective from outside the window in the story. At the same time, the use of passive voice “was seen” clearly indicates an observing subject. In the current discourse situation, the viewing subject is actually the narrator, who deliberately exposes his position to make the reader realize his existence. But rather than reveal his identity, he invites readers to observe from his point of view, thereby creating an immersive simulation experience for readers. An important condition for simulation is to observe from the perspective of others, through which readers can imagine the characters’ actions and imagine the perceived details from that perspective (Hogan, 2017).

(2b) presents another condition in which the narrator is perceived. This is a dialogue between the heroine and the hero after the heroine had her hair cut. The narrator is able to hear their dialogue and see their facial expressions and perceive the entire dialogue atmosphere. The expressions “said Della” and “asked Jim” are the narrator’s guide to the characters’ dialogues, so readers can first correspond to the discourse with the character who said it. On the other hand, the use of modal adverbs, such as “curiously” and “laboriously” and the subjunctive mood “as if” expresses the narrator’s subjective speculation about the character’s inner mind. The recognition process of the narrator in the two discourses is shown in Figure 3.



G: the author in the real world
G': the narrator in the narrative fiction
G'': characters or scenes in the story

Figure 3

This is also another way for the narrator to express himself, from which the reader is strongly aware of the narrator's point of view. G' is bolded to highlight his existence. In this configuration, the narrator is both a conceptualizer and the subject of conception. On the one hand, the narrator perceives and records what he had seen from his point of view. On the other hand, he implicitly reminds readers of his existence to help them understand the characters' discourses. When the narrator is strongly perceived, his subjectivity is weakened, and the reader's perception of the authenticity of the narrative content is greater than when the narrator is weakly perceived.

IV. The Speaker Is the Character in the Story

When the speaker explicitly uses personal deixis to refer to himself, he is usually the character in the story. The character who speaks for himself is the most direct way to shape the characters' image and inner state. If the character does not lie, his utterances presented at this time are much more trustworthy. The two excerpts in example (3) are respectively two situations in which the speaker is the character in the story. In (3a), the character is expressed through the guidance of the narrator, while (3b) is another case in which the speaker is one of the characters in the story, and the story is narrated from his or her perspective. And in this context, "all these subjects take part in narrative communication and must take the perspective of the fictional characters to understand their motivation and deeds" (Rembowska-Płuciennik, 2012, p. 61). However, when the speaker is the story's character, he can be either offstage, on the stage, or as a reference point to guide the words of other characters in the story.

(3) a. "Jim, darling," she cried, "don't look at me that way. *I had my hair cut off and sold* because I couldn't have lived through Christmas without giving you a present. ...... Say 'Merry Christmas!' Jim, and *let's be happy......*"
"*You've cut off your hair?*" asked Jim, laboriously, as if he had not arrived at that patent fact yet even after the hardest mental labor.
"***Cut it off and sold it***," said Della. "*Don't you like me just as well*, anyhow? *I'm me without my hair, ain't I*?" (O. Henry *The Gift of Magi*)

b. 1801.*I have just returned from a visit to my landlord—the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with*. ***This is certainly a beautiful country***! In all England, *I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society*. (Emily Jane Bronte *Wuthering Heights*)

A. Characters Are Offstage

Like the narrator, the character who is offstage also focuses entirely on the designated object or scene and does not profile his existence. Compared with using person deixis to profile the speaker, the discourses "cut it off and sold it" in (3a) and "this is certainly a beautiful country" in (3b) are uttered by the character in the immediate situation. In (3a), Della is afraid of her husband's anger and disappointment due to her act of having her hair cut. At this point, her thought is full of her husband's attitude towards her outlook regardless of her own feelings. Similarly, (3b) is the character's concentration on the scene in front of her. The adverb "certainly" reflects the speaker's positive evaluation of the presented scenery, revealing the character's excitement and satisfaction. In this context, the description of the scene is objectively construed, and the speaker is maximally subjective, which explains our belief in the true beauty of the scene and our feeling for the speaker's strong subjective enthusiasm for this place.

In (3a), the understanding of the character's discourse is obtained through an intermediary, and in this case is the narrator. The configuration is shown in Figure5a, in which there are twice projections from the author to narrator and the narrator to the character. And (3b) presents the case that the author directly projects himself onto one of the characters in the story, as shown in Figure 4b. In Figure 4a, since the character's speech needs to be guided by the narrator, the speaker's subjectivity is less than that of the author directly projected on the character. It is also for this reason that the character's expression of himself or herself emotions in this configuration is not as strong as that of the author's direct projection onto the character, as the characters convey their personal emotions with the help of the narrator's perspective and voice.

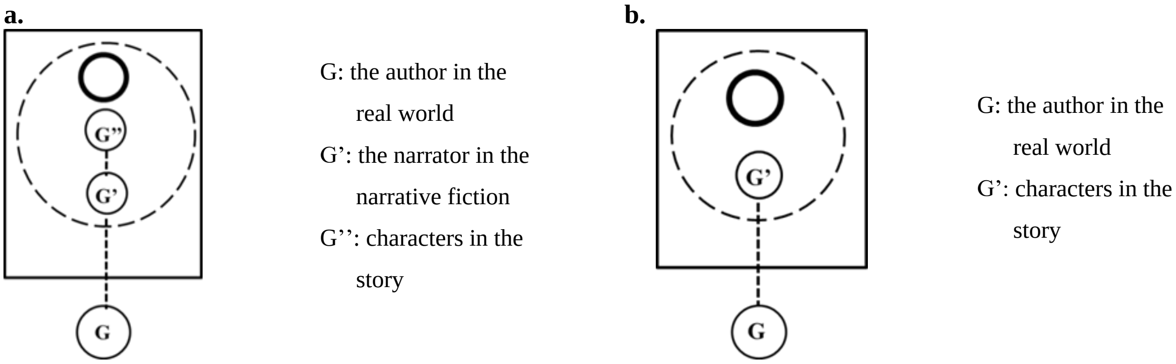


Figure 4

B. Characters Are Onstage

The most apparent linguistic sign of a character stepping onto the stage to profile himself is the use of first- or second-person deixis or what Hyland termed "reader pronouns" (Hyland, 2007). This configuration well invites readers to step on the stage and get involved in the current discourse situation. "The use of first person in a narration both identifies the narrator and providers a perspective for the reader to enter the text world," (Jeffries, 2008, p. 71) and "the second person generalized usage helps the reader see the 'story'" (Jeffries, 2008, p. 80). This is because the use of the first-person "I" could produce an empathic experience, and the use of "you" evokes the readers' first perceptual response to immediately think of themselves.

C. Characters Function as the Role of the Reference Point

The character in the story does not exist in isolation, he or she is unavoidably intertwined with other characters to construct the story. Therefore, they act as the reference point for other characters or the development of the story. For example, the frequent use of "I" and "you" in the dialogue between Della and Jim in (3a) is a way to guide the relationship between the characters, which promotes the plot. The inner monologue of the character in (3b) involves the relationship with her neighbor. The speaker's configuration in Figure 5a presents the discourse uttered by the onstage character with the guidance of the narrator, while Figure 5b depicts the use of the character's perspective to narrate the story, and everything is perceived and narrated from his or her point of view. It is worth mentioning that the characters' conversation mode, as in (3a), requires readers to maintain the awareness of identifying the character discourse while being immersed in the story. The generation of awareness requires more attention (Smith, 2017), thereby allowing readers to find out more details, as "conversation analysis has provided an alternative view of narrative as highly embedded in surrounding talk and deeply sensitive to different participation roles" (Fina & Johnstone, 2015, p. 156). Undoubtedly, the narrator can also take an omniscient perspective to report the characters' dialogue through indirect speech. But in this way, the subjectivity of the narrator will increase. As a result, "much of the significance of what is said lies in overtones which are too subtle to be captured," (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 235) and the interpretation of the characters' discourses will be subject to the narrator's subjective judgement.

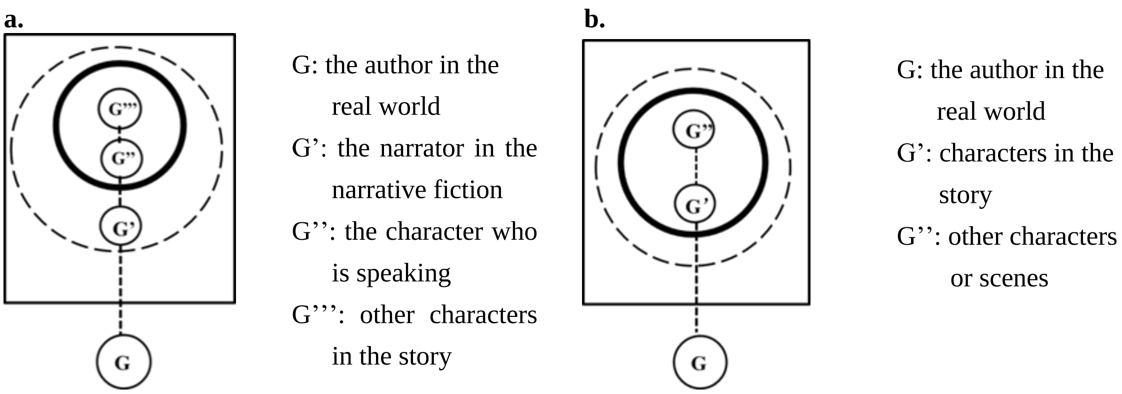


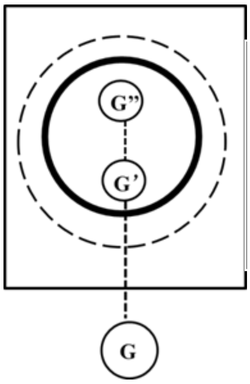
Figure 5

D. Characters' Displacement Across Time and Space

The space of fictional narrative discourse is often variable and multi-layered, because one story is embedded with another story. And the phenomenon that a story space embedded with another layer of story space leads to "embedding of mental spaces" or "nested mental states" as mentioned above, which creates distinct "self" images in different time and space. Della's "I'm me without my hair" in (3a) is a typical example of self-description in different time and space. "I" refers to the "self" image who had her hair cut at the moment of speaking, and "me" refers to the "self" image who had not had her hair cut. Similarly, example (4) also presents the situation where characters have different identities in different time and space.

(4) To begin my life with the beginning of my life, ***I*** record that ***I*** was born (as I have been informed and believe) on a Friday, at twelve o'clock at night. It was remarked that the clock began to strike, and ***I*** began to cry, simultaneously. (Charles Dickens *David Copperfield*)

The designated object that the first-person pronoun "I" refers to is the one in different periods of his life. The use of the present tense in the first sentence indicates that the first "I" refers to the grown-up "I" who is currently narrating the story in the real world, while the second "I" accompanied by the past tense refers to the infant "I" who was in the story world, more specifically, the hospital he was born. Since the speaker profiles himself on the stage in this context, subjectivity decrease, that is why readers would not confuse the exact "I" to whom he or she refers to in different time and space. The configuration is shown in Figure 6.



G: author in the real world
G': one of the characters in the story
G'': the character himself/herself in another space

Figure 6

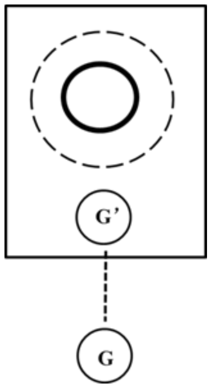
V. The Speaker Is the Author

In narrative fictions, authors usually do not profile their voice, but "an author may embody in a work ideas, beliefs, emotions" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002, P. 89-90), governing consciousness of the fiction. When reading such information in a fiction, we may regard this voice coming from the author[1].

(5) When a girl leaves her home at eighteen, she does one of two things. Either she falls into saving hands and becomes better, or she rapidly assumes the cosmopolitan standard of virtue and becomes worse. Of an intermediate balance, under the circumstances, there is no possibility. (Theodore Dreiser *Sister Carrie*)

In this discourse, the fact that a girl leaves her hometown after the age of eighteen, either for the better or for the worse, is a statement of opinion, not the narration of the story. This point of view may be the author's real belief, or may be opposed to those the author had in real life. As in Figure 7, the author G in the real-world projects into the narrative world G', in which he speaks. The author may present different opinions and beliefs in different fictions for the purpose of creation. Thus "the flesh-and-blood author is subject to the vicissitudes of real life" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002, p. 90). In this situation, the author keeps himself away from the complex story world and communicates with readers outside the story, which reflects the maximal extent of subjectivity. This explains why the voice that we regard from the author may not be the author's real thoughts, as the author puts all the concentration on the work creation regardless of the compatibility with his own idea. Meanwhile, since the author is outside the story, readers' sense of involvement is weak in this context. Offstage effect generates a distance between authors, readers, and characters (Langacker, 1985), especially when the author's attitude is inconsistent with readers' life experience and moral values.

[1] Even though authors are distinct from implied authors in narratology, they are not strictly distinguished in this paper.



G: the author in the real world
G': the projected author in the narrative fiction

Figure 7

Undoubtedly, the author can also stand on the stage to profile his identity as in the autobiography, diary or letter. However, if an autobiography or letter is a real reflection of the author's life experience, then it is not narrative fiction. And if it is adapted by someone else, then this is similar to the condition when the speaker is a narrator we discussed earlier. Therefore, this special case is not included in the current discussion.

VI. Conclusion

Having thoroughly explored a series of configurations of speaker's subjectivity in terms of three conditions when the speaker is the narrator, the character and the author respectively in narrative fictions, this paper found that the subjectivity of the speaker is maximal when he is the author, and the subjectivity is minimal when he is the character in the story. And the speaker's subjectivity outside the story is greater than that in the story. The subjectivity that the speaker is weakly perceived is greater than when he is strongly perceived. Each type of configuration adopted in a specific context is a narrative strategy to highlight a narrative effect. "It is the entirety of how speakers choose to express themselves, to package their ideas into words, sentences, and discourse to meet their communicative and social needs" (Mithun, 2015, p. 39). The comprehension and interpretation of a literary work is a conceptual process, which is in accordance with cognitive grammar's idea that meaning is conceptualization. Cognitive grammar has obvious advantages for analyzing literature, as the speaker is able to be actively involved in the elaboration of meaning construction and conceiving the same situation in alternative ways. The application of grammar to literary work provides empirical support for Cognitive grammar (Langacker, 2014, p. xiii).

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my doctoral supervisor Xu Wen for his inspiring ideas and careful guidance.

References

[1] Fina, A. D. & Johnstone, B. (2015). Discourse analysis and narrative. In D. Tannen, H. E. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 152-167). Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
[2] Glynn, D. & Sjölin, M. (2012). Cognitive-linguistic methods for literature: A usage-based approach to metanarration and metalepsis. In A. Kwiatkowska (Ed.), *Texts and minds: Papers in cognitive poetics and rhetoric* (pp. 85-102). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
[3] Harrison, C. (2017). *Cognitive grammar in contemporary fiction*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
[4] Hogan, P. C. (2017). Simulation and the structure of emotional memory: Learning from Arthur Miller's After the Fall In. M. Burke, & E. T. Troscianko (Eds.), *Cognitive literary science: Dialogues between literature and cognition* (pp. 113-133). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[5] Hyland, K. (2007). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. In T. A. van Dijk (Ed.), *Discourse studies.* (Vol.II, pp. 102-121*)*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
[6] Jeffries, L. (2008). The role of style in reader-involvement: Deictic shifting in contemporary poems. *Journal of Literary Semantics, 37,* 69-85.
[7] Langacker, R. W. (1985). Observations and speculations on subjectivity. In J. Haiman (Ed.), *Iconicity in syntax* (pp. 109-150). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
[8] Langacker, R. W. (1991). *Foundations of cognitive grammar Vol. II: Descriptive application*. Stanford/California: Stanford University Press.
[9] Langacker, R. W. (1997). A dynamic account of grammatical function. In J. Bybee, J. Haiman, & S. A. Thompson (Eds.), *Essays on language function and language type* (pp. 249-274). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
[10] Langacker, R. W. (2008). *Cognitive grammar: A basic introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[11] Langacker, R. W. (2013). *Essentials of cognitive grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[12] Langacker, R. W. (2014). Foreword. In C. Harrison, L. Nuttall, P. Stockwell, & Y. Wenjuan (Eds.), *Cognitive grammar in literature* (pp. xiii-xiv). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

[13] Lyons, J. (1995). *Linguistic semantics: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[14] Leech, G & Short, M. (2007). *Style in fiction: A linguistic introduction to English fictional prose* (2nd edition). London: Pearson Education Limited.
[15] Mithun, M. (2015). Discourse and grammar In In D. Tannen, H. E. Hamilton, & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (2nd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 11-41). Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
[16] Rembowska-Płuciennik, M. (2012). The narrative poetics of mindreading. In A. Kwiatkowska (Ed.), *Texts and minds: Papers in cognitive poetics and rhetoric* (pp. 57-70). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
[17] Rimmon-Kenan, S. (2005). *Narrative fiction* (2nd edition). London/New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
[18] Smith, M. S. (2017). *Introducing language and cognition: A map of the mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[19] Stein, D. & S. Wright. (1995). *Subjectivity and subjectivisation: Linguistic perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[20] Verhagen, A. (2007). Construal and perspectivization. In D. Geeraerts & H. Cuyckens (Eds.), *The oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (pp. 48-81). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[21] Zunshine, L. (2015). From the social to the literary: Approaching Cao Xueqin's The Story of the Stone from a cognitive perspective. In L. Zunshine (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of cognitive literary studies* (pp. 176-196). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Junling Zhang was born is Huaihua, China in 1988. She received her master's degree in linguistics from Sichuan International Studies University, China in 2013. She is currently a doctoral student in the College of International Studies, Southwest University, Chongqing, China. Her research interests include Cognitive linguistics and discourse analysis.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1031-1037, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.16

The Syntactic Argumentation of the Word / le: š / in Jordanian Arabic

Fatima M. Al Qaisiya
The Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Maha M. Al Qaisiya
The Ministry of Education, United Arab of Emirates

***Abstract*—This study aims at investigating the syntactic status of the word /le:š / in question formation in Jordanian Arabic (JA). It is argued that this word has two syntactic functions in JA questions. The first of which is that it works as interrogative operator, meaning 'why', which moved to the [Spec C] position in one type of wh-question. However, the second role of this word is found in other types of questions, wh-questions and yes-no questions. In these types of questions /le:š/ is realized as an interrogative complementiser formed within the C position and giving the interrogative force for the question. To this end, empirical evidence is given and discussed to distinguish between the two syntactic representations of this word especially in ambiguous cases of having two different types of questions sharing the same surface structure.**

***Index Terms*—question formation, syntactic argumentation, Jordanian Arabic, syntactic functions**

I. Introduction

Various studies have examined the syntax of question formation in Arabic, Standard and dialects. Some studies shed lights on the strategies followed for forming questions in Arabic and their constructions (see, e.g., Shlonsky, 2002; Fakih, 2003; Soltan, 2011a; Soltan, 2011b; Badie, 2018; and numerous others). However, the lion share in the body of literature goes for the studies probed to question phrase movement and question particles (see, e.g. Wahba, 1984; Abu-Jarad, 2008; Alsayed Gad, 2011; Al-Daher, 2016; Al-hamami & Al-fadly, 2018; Hallman, 2018; Jarrah et al, 2019; and numerous others).

Concerning the strategies followed for question formation, Soltan (2011a) highlighted four main types of question formation in Arabic dialects; these are: gap strategy, conventional resumptive strategy, Class II resumptive strategy, and in-situ strategy. What follow are examples for these strategies:

1. **Gap strategy**
   ʔayya walad Šuft b-l- madrasih?
   which boy saw.2sgm in-the- school
   'Which boy did you see in the school?'

2. **Conventional resumptive strategy**
   ʔayya walad Šuft-o b-l- madrase?
   which boy saw.2sgm-him in-the-school
   'Which boy did you see in the school?'

3. **Class II resumptive strategy**
   miin yalli Šuft-o b-l- madrase?
   Who that saw.2sgm-him in-the- school
   'Who is it that you saw in the school?'

4. **In-situ strategy**
   Šuft ʔayya walad b-l- madrase?
   saw.2sgm which boy in-the- school
   'Which boy did you see in the school?'

One can tell that the second and the third strategies labelled as Conventional resumptive strategy and Class II resumptive strategy are similar to the two strategies discussed by Shlonsky (2002). According to Shlonsky (2002), two question formation strategies are found in Palestinian Arabic to form wh-interrogatives; these are known as Class I and Class II. The following are representative examples of Shlonsky's strategies

5. Class I

a. miin l-ʔasad ʔakal mbaariħ
who def-lion eat.pst.sg.m yesterday
"Who did the lion eat yesterday?' (Class I; Shlonsky 2002, p.138)

6. Class II

miin ʔilli l-ʔasad ʔakal mbaariħ
who that def-lion eat.pst.sg.m yesterday
"Who did the lion eat yesterday?' (Class II; Shlonsky 2002, p.138)

Studying the examples in (2) and (5), it is noticed that the same strategy has been applied to form the two questions except for the overt use of the pronoun, him, following the verb in (2), Šuft-o, meaning saw.2sgm-him. The same applies for Slonsky's class II strategy and Soltan's Class II resumptive strategy, where in these two strategies the use of the resumptive pronouns ʔilli and yalli, respectively, distinguish them from Class I and Conventional resumptive strategy. Thus, it can be said that the overt use of the pronoun following the main verb in question formation found in 2 and 3 is a characteristic of the Egyptian Arabic (EA) when compared to the Palestinian Arabic (PA).

Soltan (2011a) asserted that each dialect has its own way of forming questions; for instance, a dialect as Lebanese Arabic can apply all of the four mentioned strategies. Even though the same strategies may be found in various dialects, they may be used for different purposes. In Jordanian Arabic (JA), the in-situe question is found in this dialect, but Jordanians commonly use it as an echo question to double check the information with the speaker as in (7):

7. **Speaker A**: mħammad đarab **maha**.
mhammad hit.3SGM maha
(Intended meaning: 'Mohammad hit Maha.')

Speaker B: mħammad đarab **mi:n**?
mhammad hit.3SGM who?
(Intended meaning: 'Who did Mhammad hit?')

It is observed that speaker B in (7) applies the in-situ strategy to check the direct object of the first sentence, i.e. who did Mhammad hit. If speaker B wants to know who Mhammad hit, the common way to ask this question is highlighted in (8).

8. mi:n mħammad đarab?
Who mhammad hit.3SGM

The other three types of questions are used in JA; nevertheless, as Jordanian native speakers we think that the Gap strategy is the most common strategy used. What follows are examples from JA highlighting Soltan's strategies.

9. Gap strategy

ʔayya suʔa:l dʒa:wabt b-l- madrasih?
which question answered.2sgm in-the- school
'Which question have you answered in school?'

10. Conventional resumptive strategy

ʔayya suʔa:l dʒa:wabt b-l- madrase?
which question answered.2sgm in-the-school
'Which question have you answered in school?'

11. Class II resumptive strategy

e:jsh (ya) lli dʒa:wabt -o b-l- madrase?
that answered.2sgm-him in-the- school question
'What is it that you have answered in the school?'

12. In-situ strategy

dʒa:wabt ʔayya suʔa:l b-l- madrase?
answered.2sgm which question in-the- school
'Which question have you answered in school?'

Thus, Soltan's four strategies are found in the formation of wh-question in JA. Here, several questions come to the mind concerning the formation of yes, no question in JA; what are the strategies followed to form these types of questions? Are the followed formation strategies similar to those used in Standard Arabic or other dialects?

For the formation of yes-no questions, other strategies are noticed to be followed. Perhaps the commonest way of forming yes-no question is by means of the sentential prosodic feature, i.e. the intonation. Intonation has a significant role in the production of a question. For example, in (13) below the given sentence is realized as a declarative sentence if read with a falling intonation, but with a rising intonation it would be interpreted either as an interrogative yes-no sentence or as an exclamation sentence.

13. mħammad Ša:f **maha**.
mhammad saw.3SGM maha
(Intended meaning: 'Mohammad saw Maha.')

Even in wh-question, intonation plays a significant role in illustrating the two readings of the wh-sentence, i.e. as a question or as an exclamation sentence. The examples demonstrated in Hallman (2018) go with this claim. According to Hallman (2018) there are two readings for the sentence in (14).

14. ʔaddēʃ Mona ʃāṭr-a?/!
How mona smart-FS
i. 'How smart is Mona?'
ii. ii. 'How smart Mona is!' (Hallman, 2018, p.309)

Hallman (2018) stated that the previous sentence could be interpreted as an interrogative sentence questioning how smart Mona is, or as an exclamation sentence expressing astonishment about Mona's smartness. Therefore, he argued that ʔaddēʃ has two functions; the first one, it works as an interrogative word like 'how' in English, and the second one is that the word ʔaddēʃ is used as an exclamative term. Hallman (2018) did not explicitly state the role of intonation in determining the intended meaning of the sentence. Instead, he used the word "the reading" of the sentence. However, as native speakers of JA, and because the same case is found in JA, we can say that it is the intonation that specify the meaning and the reading of the sentence.

Thus, intonation plays a crucial role in specifying the syntactic configuration of sentences in Arabic; the elaboration of this point would be given in the following section. Not only in Arabic, but also in Mehri intonation is found to have a role in forming yes-no question. This was explained by Alrowasa (2014) who provided examples from Mehri clarifying the role of intonation in yes-no question formation.

In addition to the use of intonation yes-no question can be formed by means of having certain question particles or complementisers at the question initial position, like /ʔa/ and /hal/ in Standard Arabic (Fakih & Al-deran, 2014), /huwwa/ in Egyptian Arabic (Soltan, 2011 b), and /ʔilli/ in Mehri (Alrowsan, 2014). In this research article, we argue that the word /le:š/ has a similar role like the complementisers /ʔa/, /hal/,/huwwa/ and /ʔilli/ , i.e. it is used as an interrogative complementiser in yes-no question in JA. Here, the syntactic role of the word /le: š/ has to be distinguished from its conventional role that it plays as a wh-phrase meaning 'Why' in JA.

One significance of this research article is that the configuration and the analysis of question words in JA has received a sparse attention, up to the researchers' knowledge. Besides, this article is significant because it shed lights on the different behaviours of the word /le:š/ in the configuration of wh- question and yes,no questions. We show that in wh-questions, this word works as an interrogative operator, meaning 'why', which moved to the [Spec C] position. Nevertheless, we argue that in yes, no question this word /le:š/ is realized as an interrogative complementiser formed within the C position and giving the interrogative force for the question. We proved this by giving pieces of evidence that support this claim. Moreover, this article shows similarities among Arabic dialects where certain words, homophones, can have various syntactic structures and roles. For instance, in Egyptian Arabic, Soltan (2011b) showed that in EA the word huwwa has three 'homophones', i.e. has three syntactic functions: the q-particle that preceeds yes, no question, the third singular person pronoun for males, and the nominal copula. Hence, it is the context that determines the syntactic structure of this word. In Syrian Arabic, as well, Hallman (2018) stated that the words ʔaddēʃ and ka:m have mainly two syntactic functions. The first is that ʔaddēʃ and ka:m have an exclamative interpretation, whereas the second function is restricted to the interrogative interpretation of these words in forming questions.

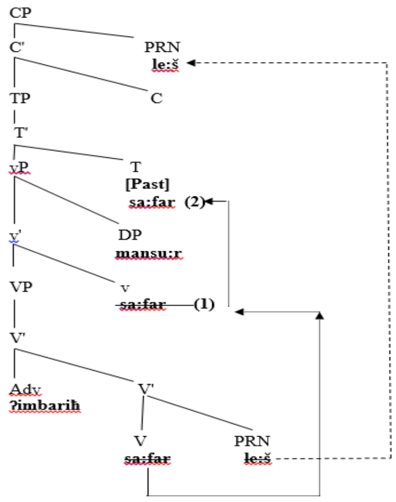
The remainder of the article is structured as follows: Section II provides analysis of the role of the word / le: š / as a wh-phrase. It highlights the function and the position of / le:š / as a wh-phrase that moves to [spec Foc] and does not originate as a force occupying the highest operator in CP. Section III investigates the role of the word / le: š / in yes, no questions. It analyses the role of this word as an interrogative complementiser similar to /ʔa/ and /hal/ in Standard Arabic (Fakih & Al-deran, 2014), /huwwa/ in Egyptian Arabic (Soltan, 2011 b), and /ʔilli/ in Mehri (Alrowsan, 2014). It also provides two pieces of evidence that prove in yes, no questions le:š functions as an interrogative complementiser and not as wh-phrase. Section IV summarizes the main findings of this article.

II. / le: š / THE WH-PHRASE

If the given sentence (15) is produced with a falling intonation at the end, the word **/ le:š /** would be regarded as a wh-verbial phrase that is found at a sentence initial level if has moved from its original adjunct position. In this role, the word **/ le: š /** is used to inquire about justifications for the question statement, working as 'why' in English**.**

15. le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ
Why travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Why did Mansour travel yesterday?)

Henceforth, the syntactic configuration of (15) would be (15.1):



Following Radford (2009), the word **/le:š/** would be originated in the Verb bar of the lexical verb safar, but it moves to satisfy the edge feature of the null interrogative complementiser to [Spec C] position.

Applying Rizzi (1997) proposal for splitting CP, **/le:š/** would move to the [Spec Foc] position, while the verb **sa:far** would move to the Affixal head Focus. Here, it is noteworthy highlighting that the verb **sa:far** originated in the lexical verb position then it moves to the light affixal, since the light verb has a strong affixal feature, as in (1). After that the strong affixal feature of T would also cause the movement of this verb to T, as in 2. Finally, the verb would move from T to the affixal head Foc as its last destination. Thus, the verb moves in successive-cylices from V to Foc. Consequently, the given sentence in (15) would be analyzed as in (15.2) by following splitting CP.

15.2 [ForceP [Force Ø] [Foc P **le:š [** Foc **sa:far**][TP **sa:far mansu:r sa:far ʔimbariħ sa:far le:š**]]]

Occupying [Spec Foc] position would support the argument that the word **le:š** in this type of question is an interrogative operator that moves to satisfy the interrogative condition. Other empirical piece of evidence that also support this argument is the presence of the preposition /la/ before this operator in such question, as in (16).

16. la.le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ
Prep. Why travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: ‘Why did Mansour travel yesterday?

The occurrence of such preposition would indicate that the following constituent, **le:š**, is not the highest operator in the sentence and thus could not be the force of the sentence. This in turns leads to the conclusion that the word **le:š** is a wh-phrase that moves to [spec Foc] and does not originate as a force occupying the highest operator in CP. Knowing that this preposition precedes also other wh-operators, as given in (16), goes along with our assumption that **le:š** in (15) is a wh-operator.

16. A**.** **we:n sa:far mansu:r**
Where travelled.3SGM mansour
(Intended meaning: Where did Mansour travel?)

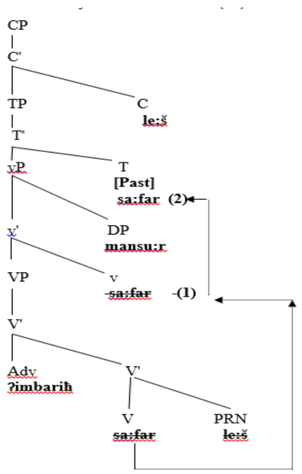
B. **la. we:n sa:far mansu:r**
Prep. Where travelled.3SGM mansour
(Intended meaning: Where did Mansour travel?)

III. / le: š / The Interrogative Complementiser

In this section the other syntactic function of the word **/le:š/** would be investigated. Going back to the sentence in (15); if this sentence is read with a raising intonation, a yes-no question would result inquiring to affirm or to deny the given proposition, i.e. whether Mansour has travelled yesterday or not. In this regard, the word **le:š** may be assumed to be an interrogative complemntiser that occur before TP and not being in sentence initial position by means of A-bar movement. Therefore, the question would be interpreted as in (17):

17. le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ
COMP travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: Did Mansour travel yesterday?)

17.1 The syntactic structure of (17) is:



According to this, **/le:š/** occupies the interrogative force to the sentence. Thus, applying Rizzi (1997) Split projection analysis structure of the given sentence in (10) would be reported as 10.2:

17.2 [ForceP [Force **le:š**] [Foc P**[** Foc **sa:far**][TP **sa:far mansu:r sa:far ʔimbariħ sa:far**]]]

In this structure, the word **/le:š/** is the force P head of the sentence which cannot be precede by other head like a prepositional head. This would satisfy the ungrammaticality of sentences (17) if it follows the prepositional head **la** as in (18)**.**

18. * **la.le:š** **sa:far** **mansu:r** **ʔimbariħ**
***Prep.Comp** travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: Did Mansour travel yesterday?)

What we mean by the ungrammaticality in the previous example is that if we were asked such a question, **la.le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ**, we will answer it by giving justifications and reasons for Mansours' travel. This means that we have realised this question as a wh-question that requires giving reasons in order to answer 'Why did Mansour travel yesterday? This in turn indicates that the question **la.le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ** cannot be interpreted as a yes, no question, consequently it proves the claim that in yes, no question le:š occupies the interrogative force of the sentence. Therefore, in this position le:š cannot be preceded by a preposition.

It can be noticed from the sentences in (15) and (17) how intonation plays a crucial role of intonation in specifying the syntactic function. Since wh-question starting with the wh-operator **le:š** is produced with a falling intonation, whereas yes-no question would result from reading the sentence with a rising intonation. Hence, going with the **direct theory** concerning the match between phonological domains and the syntactic ones, although the specification of such a match is beyond the scope of this paper (For more details about prosodic domains and the syntax-phonology interface, see Dobashi, 2014).

Another piece of evidence that indicates the use of the word **le:š** as an interrogative complementiser is its appearance in the initial position in certain wh-question other than the one having this word as a wh-operator. The following questions would clearly illustrate this point:

19. A. **mi:n** **šuft** **ʔimbaariħ?**
who saw.2SGM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Who did you see yesterday?)
B. **le:š** **mi:n** **šuft** **ʔimbaariħ?**
Comp who saw.2SGM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Who did you see yesterday?)

20. A. **we:n** **ruħt** **ʔimbaariħ?**
Where went. 2SM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Where did you go yesterday?')
B. **le:š** **we:n** **ruħt** **ʔimbaariħ?**
Comp Where went. 2SM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Where did you go yesterday?')

21. **A. mata** **ruħt** **ʔ.al** **madrasih?**
When went. 2SM to.the school
(Intended meaning: 'When did you go to school? ')
B. **le:š** **mata** **ruħt** **ʔa-l** **madrasih?**
Comp. when went. 2SM to-the school
(Intended meaning: 'When did you go to the school? ')

22. A. **ke:f ruħt ʔa-l madrasih?**
How went. 2SM to-the school
(Intended meaning:'How did you go to school?')

B. **le:š ke:f ruħt ʔ-al madrasih?**
Comp how went. 2SM to-the school
(Intended meaning: 'How did you go to school?')

21 **A. ʔade:Š ħaʔ li.lktab?**
How much price the.book
(Intended meaning: 'How much is the price of the book?'

B. **le:š ʔade:Š ħaʔ li.lktab?**
How much price the.book
(Intended meaning: 'How much is the price of the book?')

It can be observed from the B examples in the provided examples (19-21) that in JA, wh-questions can be also formed by means of having an overt interrogative complementiser, which is **le:š**. These examples would be empirical evidence to our analysis of the word **le:š** as an interrogative complementiser in certain contexts. Since in these examples the [Spec Foc] position is already filled with the wh-operator, while the Force head position is occupied by le:Š.

Concerning the different readings of sentence (15) and (17) in JA, what follows would illustrate the difference.

Sentence (15) **le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ**
Why travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Why did Mansour travel yesterday?
would be reported as (19):

22. **ʔana saʔalt Le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ**
I asked. 1SG Why travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'I asked why Mansour traveled yesterday.'

In (22) it is noticed that the wh-particle, le:š , remained the same in the reported sentence in 18; yet would this be applicable for the interrogative complementiser le:š? The sentence (23) would clarify how sentence (17) would be reported.

Sentence (17) le:š sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ
COMP travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Did Mansour travel yesterday?')

23. ʔana saʔalt ʔiðа sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ
I asked. 1SG **whether. Comp** travelled.3SGM Mansour yesterday.
(Intended meaning:'I have asked if Mansour travelled yesterday.')

It appears from (22) that le:š in (10) was replaced with another interrogative complementiser which leads to the conclusion that le:š in (16) is a complementiser and not a wh-operator. To double check this, it seems useful to apply this test on other wh-question and investigate whether the wh-operator would remain the same or be converted to a complementiser. Hence, sentence (13. A) is chosen and be reported in (21).

Sentence 13. A. **mi:n šuft ʔimbaariħ?**
who saw.2SGM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'Who did you see yesterday?')

21. **ʔana saʔalt mi:n šuft ʔimbaariħ**
I asked. 1SG who saw.2SGM yesterday
(Intended meaning: 'I asked who you saw yesterday.')

It appears from sentence (21) that wh-particle, mi:n, does not change when reported. Consequently, the paper assumption that the word le:š is a wh-operator in (15) and an interrogative complementiser in (17) is successfully proved.

IV. Conclusion

To sum up, in JA the word **le:š** has two syntactic configurations in JA questions. The first one is found in wh-question where this word is realised as an interrogative operator, meaning why, that moved to the [Spec C] position. The other behaviour of this word appears in yes, no questions where le:š is realized as an interrogative complementiser similar to /ʔa/ and /hal/ in Standard Arabic (Fakih & Al-deran, 2014), /huwwa/ in Egyptian Arabic (Soltan, 2011 b), and /ʔilli/ in Mehri (Alrowsan, 2014). Here, it is argued that le:š is formed within the C position and giving the interrogative force for the question. Two pieces of evidence were used to prove that in yes, no questions le:š functions as an interrogative complementiser and not as wh-phrase. The first piece of evidence is the insertion of the prefix preposition la before le:š to form lale:š. It is noticed that the use of lale:š is only restricted for the wh-question, while for yes, no question the insertion of this preposition leads to the ungrammaticality of the question and hence changing the intended meaning of the question. The other piece of evidence that indicates the use of the word **le:š** as an interrogative complementiser is its appearance in the initial position in certain wh-question other than the one having this word as a wh-operator. In this vein, it is recommended to search for the reason(s) why we cannot have the word le:š as an interrogative complementiser followed by a wh-question that has the word le:š as a wh-word, as in

* le:š le:š **sa:far mansu:r ʔimbariħ.**

REFERENCES

[1] Abu-Jarad, H. (2008). Wh-movement in Palestinian Arabic, *Al-Azhar University Journal Gaza, 10*(1), 49-62.

[2] Al-Daher, Z. (2016). *Pseudo wh-fronting: A Diagnosis of Wh-constructions in Jordanian Arabic*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Manitoba.

[3] Al-hamami, F. A., & Obeid Alfadly, H. (2018). Wh-Movement in Najrani Arabic. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, *6*(1), 111–118. Retrieved March 30, 2022 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339079901_Wh-Movement_in_Najrani_Arabic

[4] Alrowasa, W. (2014). *Question Formation in Mehri*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Florida. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UFE0046475/00001.

[5] Alsayed Gad, R. (2011). *A Syntactic Study of Wh-movement in Egyptian Arabic within the Minimalist Program*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Leeds. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/5397/1/540560.pdf.

[6] Badie, R. M. (2018). *Question formation in Iraqi Arabic: A generative approach*. Doctoral dissertation, Ain Shams University.

[7] Dobashi, Y. (2014). Prosodic domains and the syntax–phonology interface. In A. Carnie,Y. Sato, & D. Siddiqi. (Eds.), *The Rutledge Handbook of Syntax* (pp.365-388). London: Rutledge.

[8] Fakih, A. & Al-Dera, A. (2014). Question affix analysis in Standard Arabic: a minimalist perspective. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *4*(6), 1-15. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from https://www.google.jo/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj_hNTV2oDRAhXBHxoKHRr1At8QFgggMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ccsenet.org%2Fjournal%2Findex.php%2Fijel%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F40209%2F23455&usg=AFQjCNH2HBC7vPIeDiaVPUi5g-DyOAQM-g&bvm=bv.142059868,d.d2s

[9] Fakih, A.-H. A. (2012). *The syntax of questions in Modern Standard Arabic: A minimalist perspective*. USA: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303960245_The_Syntax_of_Questions_in_Modern_Standard_Arabic_A_Minimalist_Perspective

[10] Jarrah, M., Alghazo, S., and Nour Al Salem, M. (2019). Discourse functions of the wh-word Su: in Jordanian Arabic. *Lingue e linguaggio*, *18*(2): 291-318.

[11] Radford, A. (2009). *Analysing English Sentences: a Minimalist Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[12] Rizzi, L. (1997). The fine structure of the left periphery. In: L. Haegeman, (Ed.), *Elements of Grammar* (pp. 281–337). Berkeley: Kluwer. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from http://arcaold.unive.it/bitstream/10278/1354/1/L_Rizzi_Fine_Structure_of_Left_Periphery.pdf.

[13] Shlonsky, Ur. (2002). Constituent questions in Palestinian Arabic. In J. Ouhalla, and Ur. Shlonsky (Eds.). *Themes in Arabic and Hebrew Syntax* (137-159). Dordrecht: Springer.

[14] Soltan, U. (2011a). On issues of Arabic Syntax: an essay in syntactic argumentation. *Brill's Annual of Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics*, *3*: 236-280. Retrieved November 10, 2017 from http://sites.middlebury.edu/usamasoltan/files/2013/05/AALL03_07_Soltan_off_print.pdf.

[15] Soltan, U. (2011b). On strategies of question-formation and the grammatical status of the q-particle huwwa in Egyptian Arabic wh-Questions. *Proceedings of the 34th Annual Penn,Linguistics Colloquium*, 17(1). Retrieved November 10, 2017 from http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1184&context=pwpl

[16] Wahba, W. (1984). *WH-constructions in Egyptian Arabic*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Fatima M. Al Qaisiya is a full-time lecturer in linguistics at the University of Jordan. She received her PhD in linguistics from the University of Jordan in 2020. Her research interests include lexicography, translation, English for specific purposes, Teaching English as a second and foreign language syntax, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics.

ORCID: 0000-0002-1034-5593

Maha M. Al Qaisiya is a project manager at the Ministry of Education, UAE. She received her M.A in English Language and literature from the University of Jordan in 2008. Her research interests include educational sciences, teaching English as a second and a foreign language, teaching strategies, discourse analysis and sociolinguistics.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1038-1047, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.17

A Study of Blended Teaching Practice of Business Interpreting Based on Objective Problem Orientation

Shaohui Zheng
School of Foreign Studies, Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology, Maoming, Guangdong, China

Chaoqun Deng
School of Foreign Studies, Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology, Maoming, Guangdong, China

***Abstract*—Aiming to help cultivate students' independent thinking and problem-solving ability, in accordance with the current situation and characteristics of Business Interpreting teaching in China, this paper proposes a blended online and offline teaching mode of Business Interpreting based on "objective problem orientation" with the help of the MOOC platform. Combined with scientific and reasonable formative assessment in teaching according to their aptitude, students are motivated to make full use of fragmented time to improve the efficiency of online and offline learning. Through pushing, discussing and solving five types of objective problems before class, in class and after class, students are asked to make more self-evaluation, peer evaluation on their simulating interpreting practice and teachers give more constructive advice in class and after class to help students further improve their practical interpreting skills. The results of the teaching experiment and the course satisfaction survey show that the proposed teaching mode can help to improve students' interpreting skills, practical ability and the ability to solve cross-cultural problems, which provides an effective experimental reference for the future course enhancement of Business Interpreting. It is hoped that this mode can also provide a new perspective for the development and research of interpreting teaching in the post-epidemic era.**

***Index Terms*—business interpreting, objective problem, blended teaching, interpreting practice**

I. Introduction

With the further deepening of China's reform and opening-up policy and the rapid development of economy, foreign exchanges and cooperation in various fields are becoming more and more frequent. There is an urgent need for business talents with professional knowledge and interpreting skills. At present, China's translation market has entered a new stage of export-oriented translation. Translation from Chinese to other foreign languages has become an important driving force to serve the national development, build a community with a shared future for mankind, help China to expand its international market share and enhance China's international influence (Huang, 2018). However, according to the results of the market survey, English majors have poor knowledge structure and weak communication and cooperation skills (Wang, 2015). Therefore, it is imperative to enhance the teaching of Business Interpreting in order to improve students' interpreting skills and to better meet the needs of the international market.

At present, there are many problems in the teaching of Business Interpreting in China. First of all, the traditional interpreting classroom is teacher-centered, and most teachers only teach theoretical knowledge and demonstrate some interpreting skills. As listeners, students can only accept passively and imitate mechanically. At the same time, due to the lack of class hours and the lack of opportunities for skills training, students are more likely to fear difficulties and lack motivation when learning interpreting, which is a professional course that requires higher comprehensive ability such as listening, speaking, reading, writing and interpreting. Secondly, due to factors such as insufficient teachers and other teaching resources, teachers have to teach large classes with little interaction and it is difficult to teach according to students' aptitude with students as the center. In addition, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, trade fairs and exhibitions where students often participate in interpreting practice were and will be held online, which has brought lots of challenges to both business interpreting teaching and practice. In view of this, this study combines the characteristics of interpreting teaching, learning and interpreting practice in the post-pandemic era, and proposes a business interpreting teaching mode based on "objective problem orientation" with the help of the MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) platform, so as to provide students with more skills training and practice opportunities, to improve students' interpreting and their ability to solve cross-cultural problems.

II. Objective Problem Orientation

Objective problem orientation teaching is a new teaching mode first proposed by Professor Zhou Rujin (2020), vice president of Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology. The objective problem refers to the course teaching problem designed in accordance with the course knowledge system in order to promote the effective realization of the objectives of talent training at the national, university and professional levels. According to the requirements of training objectives for students' comprehensive quality, this teaching mode integrates the specific teaching contents of the course, carefully designs five types of objective problems, i.e., basic problems, key problems, difficult problems, practical problems and extended problems, and then transforms the objective quality requirements and the course content system into the objective problem system. In teaching practice, teachers push objective problems before class to test students' mastery of basic problems, and solve key, difficult and practical problems together in class through four sessions: teacher's lectures, group discussion, sharing reports, and simulating practice. After class, students are urged to continue to complete the study of extended problems and evaluate the course. This teaching mode organizes teaching through objective problems, which helps to stimulate students' interest in learning, cultivate students' ability to think and solve problems independently, and enable students to better apply theories they have learned to practice. The interpreting course places great emphasis on skills, practicality and communication (Ren, 2020). Blended teaching based on "objective problem orientation" can better solve the problem of lacking skills training and practice due to the lack of class hours, and teachers can make full use of students' self-evaluation, peer evaluation in simulating practice and give constructive suggestions so as to help students further improve their interpreting skills and practical ability.

III. Blended Teaching Practice of Business Interpreting

A. *Teaching Objectives*

By adopting the student-centered concept and the teaching mode based on "objective problem orientation", this course aims to consolidate business professional knowledge and interpreting skills, highlight practical skills of business interpreting, enhance cultural self-confidence and the awareness of cross-cultural communication, cultivate self-learning ability, improve foreign language academic and professional literacy, and strive to serve regional economic development. Knowledge and skill objectives are learned independently online before class and internalized offline in class. Cognitive ability objectives and emotional objectives are accomplished with interaction between teachers and students, or between students and students online and offline. Details are shown in Figure 1.

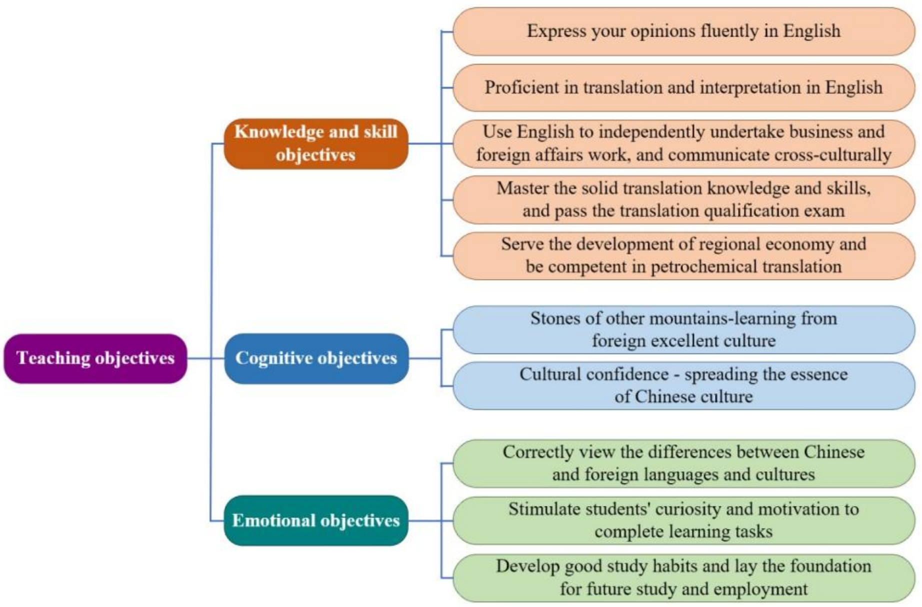


Figure 1 Teaching Objectives of Business Interpreting

B. *Teaching Contents*

Based on the teaching materials, this course is divided into three modules: knowledge learning, skills training and business-themed interpreting practice. Online learning mainly includes interpreting knowledge, interpreting skills and business knowledge, which can help to consolidate interpreting ability. Offline learning mainly includes interpreting training, simulating practice and interpreting evaluation, which can help to test the effectiveness of online learning. The learning of knowledge and skills includes listening skills, memory training, note-taking, interpreting skills and figure interpreting. Business themes include protocol routine, ceremonial speech, business meeting, international exhibition and business negotiation. Among them, in the course design, especially in the business theme design, the training objective of serving the regional economy must come first and related materials should be fully prepared. Details are shown in Figure 2.

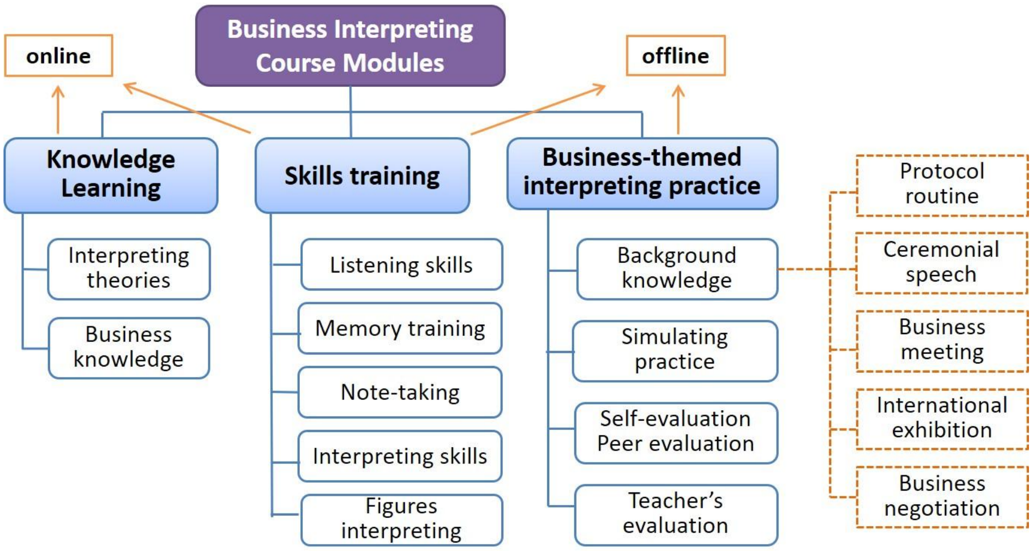


Figure 2 Course Module of Business Interpreting

In addition, the "Conference and Exhibition Translation Training" and "Interpreting Skills Training" in the translation curriculum system are offered as the interpreting practical weeks in the same semester. These two practical weeks are the extension of simulating interpreting practice of this course, which enables students to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned online and offline to the real field interpreting practice. Under the guidance of the teachers, the students work in groups to participate in the interpreting workshops and complete the interpreting and translation tasks carefully. Besides, students will also step out of school to participate in the biannual Canton Fair or other exhibitions, providing online and offline interpreting and translation services for domestic and foreign clients. After the practice, students will conduct self-evaluation and write reports to be submitted online. Teachers review and select some practical cases for further discussion and analysis online and offline.

C. Teaching Design

Business Interpreting effectively adopts blended teaching through the MOOC platform, releasing special assignments and tests to improve the effectiveness of online and offline teaching activities. This course is based on the "objective problem orientation" with the "student-centered" education concept, and constructs the "objective-problem-oriented six-step teaching method", as is shown in Figure 3.

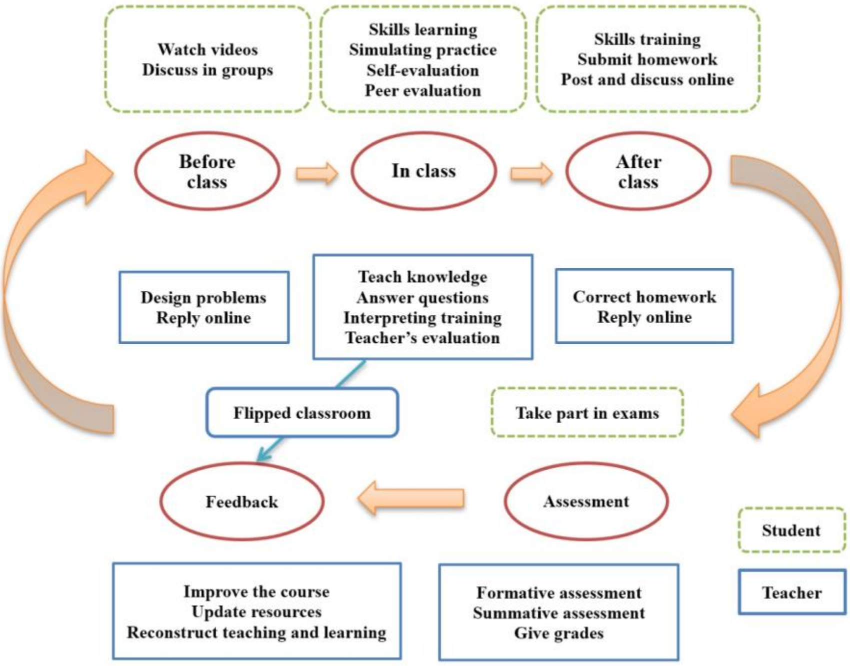


Figure 3 Overall Design of Online and Offline Blended Teaching of Business Interpreting

Step 1: Self-study—self-collection of data—self-analysis (self-exploration). Before the course starts, teachers release related teaching resources in advance, and then release online and offline teaching videos after students enter the course online.

Step 2: Group learning and discussion, and preparing business-themed simulating materials (cooperative exploration). Students watch videos online, teachers push basic problems for group discussion. Students review literature to summarize and conduct business-themed simulating practice.

Step 3: Teachers' lectures on key and difficult problems—students' self-evaluation and peer evaluation and teachers' evaluation. Teachers first select 3 to 5 questions raised by the students as the key and difficult problems to be discussed in class, conduct corresponding interpreting skills training and practical drills, encourage students to make self-evaluation and peer evaluation, and then give comments and suggestions to help students solve practical problems, and at last raise extended problems for students to discuss online after class.

Step 4: Getting multiple valid feedback. In the teaching process, teachers pay special attention to tracking and feedback. According to the feedback of students before class, in class and after class, teachers timely adjust the teaching progress and methods, grasp the key points and difficulties, and then adjust the relevant teaching contents and resources.

Step 5: Using the evaluation results to reconstruct the teaching and learning process. After the course, the course evaluation is carried out through questionnaires and other methods. Teachers will focus on the problems found in the formative evaluation process, and try to make breakthroughs in key and difficult points with students in class.

Step 6: After the end of the course, evaluate the degree of achievement of the course objectives.

The core of "objective-problem-oriented six-step teaching method" includes one main line, three modules and five skills."One main line" is to cultivate students' ability to use English effectively to solve practical problems. "Three modules" refers to organizing the teaching contents with the clues of interpreting knowledge, interpreting skills and practical exercises, so as to realize the integration of "teaching, learning and doing"."Five skills" refers to the cultivation of students' five basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, writing and interpreting. In addition, the interpreting skills taught in this course are transferable, which can also be applied to other language activities.

D. Example of Objective-problem-oriented Blended Teaching

This paper takes "Business Interpreting Practice Module–Business Negotiation Interpreting" as an example to introduce the practical teaching process of "objective-problem-oriented six-step teaching method", as is shown in Figure 4.

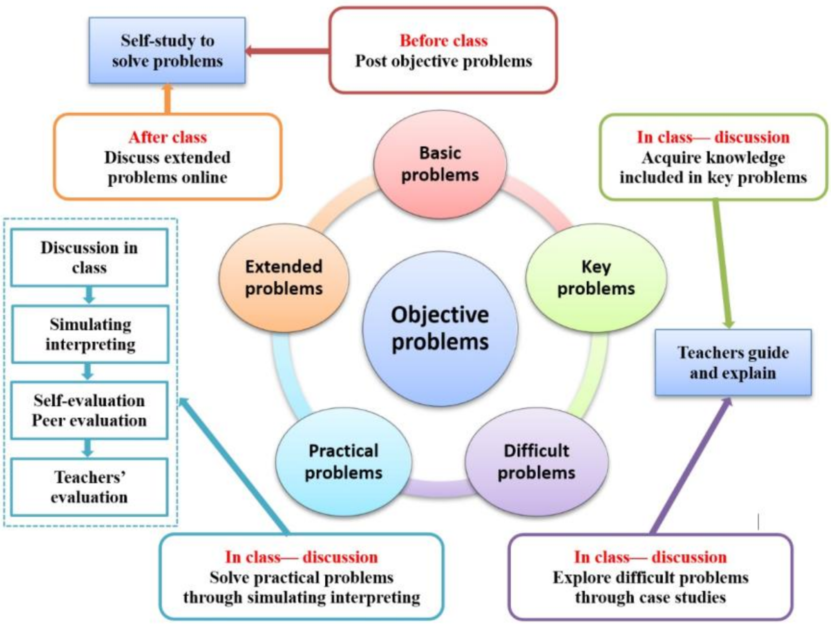


Figure 4 Example of Teaching Practice—Business Negotiation Interpreting

(a). Before Class – Push Objective Problems

Students first watch the micro-video on the MOOC platform to learn about the background knowledge of business negotiation. Second, they watch the micro-video of business negotiation interpreting and the simulating field interpreting video of senior students and evaluate the interpreters' performance in the video. Then they are divided into groups to prepare the materials needed for the simulating practice in class, conduct rehearsals, mark the professional words related to the materials, and submit the materials online before class. Students are required to give priority to the negotiation materials related to petrochemical industry which is the pillar industry in the city where the university is located, including the price, packaging, transportation, terms of payment, insurance, claims, arbitration, etc. Finally, students watch the video of the on-the-spot interpreting performance of Zhang Jing of the Sino-US High-level Strategic Dialogue on March 18th to 19th, 2021, and try to answer the following questions and post a discussion online: Should Zhang Jing interrupt the Chinese leader who has spoken for a longer time than is expected? Can we interrupt the speaker? How can we interrupt?

(b). In Class – Discuss and Solve Key, Difficult and Practical Problems

The first step in class: review the video and discuss the key problems. Teachers and students first evaluate the performance of the interpreters in the videos watched before class, and discuss the following questions: How can we fully prepare after receiving the interpreting task for business negotiation? What should we do if we don't understand what the speaker has said during the interpreting process? If we don't understand, when and how can we ask the speaker? If we still don't understand the speaker, can we ask for the second time? In this process, the role of the teacher is a listener and a guide, summarizing students' speeches and giving specific suggestions on the preparation before interpreting, including the accommodation, clothing, transportation, payment, specific content of the task, etc. Through discussion, students are taught the three-step method of practical interpreting: asking, supplementing and throwing away (Lin, 2004). Students are suggested to make post-interpreting summaries, including self-evaluation and inviting clients to evaluate on their interpreting for further improvement.

The second step in class: discuss difficult problems through case analysis. Review Zhang Jing's interpreting performance in the Sino-US High-level Strategic Dialogue, and discuss the following questions: How can the interpreter interrupt skillfully? When the negotiating parties encounter cultural conflicts, how can the interpreters play a better role as the cross-cultural bridges? If there is a dispute between the negotiating parties, should the uncivilized language of both parties be faithfully interpreted? How should the interpreter deal with the difficulties posed by the client or speaker? In this process, the role of the teacher is a sharer and a guide. By sharing personal interpreting experience and analyzing some negotiation cases, teachers guide students and discuss how to deal with cross-cultural conflicts as interpreters, focusing on how to behave without being too humble or arrogant when confronted with disputes and then give constructive advice.

The third step in class: discuss practical problems through simulating field interpreting. Before interpreting: students write the related professional vocabulary on the blackboard in advance for the interpreters' reference. Students play the roles of the Chinese and the foreign parties and conduct a live simulating dialogue. The teacher randomly selects an interpreter for each speaker for consecutive interpreting. During interpreting: the teacher and other students record and videotape the performance of the negotiating parties and the interpreter during the simulating interpreting process for review in and after class. Post-interpreting: the interpreters are encouraged to make self-evaluation and peer evaluation according to the evaluation scale made by the course team. Finally, the teacher makes comments and focuses on discussing the following problems: What should we do if the client's accent is too strong to understand? What should we do if the negotiation content is too professional? How can we overcome some interference? What should we do if some accidents occur during the negotiation, such as the client getting sick? In this process, the role of the teacher is a bystander and a guide. Teacher observes the whole process, helps students to explore how to solve the problems encountered in negotiation and interpreting, and then gives some suggestions.

(c). After Class—Explore Extended Problems

Students are required to discuss the following extended problems online: How can we deal with the cross-cultural conflicts between the negotiating parties? What are the etiquette precautions on business occasions? Students are then asked to review the simulating field interpreting and summarize the difficult problems in class and the extended problems after class, make the next study plan, write a report and submit the homework online.

E. Course Assessment

This course reconstructs the process of "teaching" and "learning", and designs a scientific and measurable assessment system. The course adopts a standard-referenced evaluation, that is, a series of standards formulated according to the course objectives and course concepts. It emphasizes the adjustment of teaching contents and methods in the teaching process by formative evaluation, which reflects the teaching concept of being student-centered. Specifically, the formulation of the assessment criteria for each task is based on the requirements of language knowledge, language skills, cognitive strategies and emotional attitudes of the course objectives. The course assessment consists of 50% summative assessment and 50% formative assessment. The summative assessment is mainly in the form of oral examination. The formative assessment consists of two parts, the online score (50%) and the offline score (50%), as is shown in Figure 5.

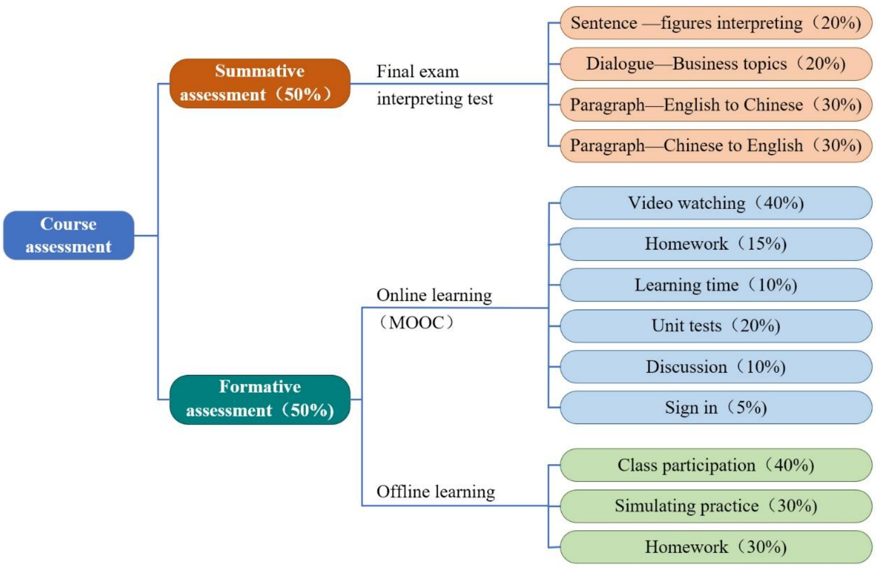


Figure 5 Course Assessment of Business Interpreting

IV. Effect and Analysis of the Blended Teaching Practice

A. *Teaching Evaluation and Experiment Results*

This course has been highly praised by students and other teachers because of its clear professionalism, practicality, purpose and cross-cultural communication, and has been offered as a core course for many years. The teaching evaluation on the course team from the students is satisfactory and the author ranks the first in the English department in the teaching performance evaluation in 2020 and 2021. Through hard learning, students can basically achieve the training objectives of the course, and can better complete the interpreting tasks on different occasions.

In order to verify the effect of blended teaching practice based on “objective problem orientation”, the author randomly chooses 2 classes from the 2018 English majors as the experimental group, and the other 2 classes as the control group. This experiment takes the spring semester of 2021 (second semester of the third year) as the experimental period, in which the interpreting final score of the control group consists of 70% of the final exam and 30% of the class performance as before. Statistical analysis is performed on the final examination results of the two groups, as is shown in Table 1. The results show that there is a significant difference in the average scores of the two groups (/z/=3.32 > 1.96), and the standard deviation of the experimental group is smaller than that of the control group (see Table 1), indicating that the difference between the students in the experimental group is not large, and the overall final grades are significantly better than those of the control group. It can be seen that through the blended teaching and scientific assessment, students get more training and practical opportunities, further consolidate and improve their interpreting skills and improve their ability of bilingual expression. Therefore, it is verified that the blended teaching mode based on “objective problem orientation” can improve the interpreting ability of English majors, and the teaching effect is better.

TABLE 1
STUDENTS’ FINAL SCORES OF BUSINESS INTERPRETING

Experimental sample	Number	Average score	Standard deviation	/z/
Experimental group	73	82.63	4.06	3.32
Control group	68	78.70	7.51	

B. *Results and Analysis of the Course Survey*

In order to further understand the students’ opinions and suggestions on the blended teaching mode, the author distributed 73 questionnaires to the experimental group at the end of this course, and received 73 valid questionnaires. The questionnaire is divided into four parts. The first part is the frequency analysis of demographic variables, including 15 males, accounting for 20.55%, and 58 females, accounting for 79.45%. The second part is a survey of respondents’ personal learning situation and their usage of the MOOC platform. The third part is the survey of respondents’ satisfaction with the blended teaching of Business Interpreting, which is the focus of this survey. There are 13 questions in this part. According to the “Likert Scale”, five levels of answers are set for each question, including “very satisfied, satisfied, average, dissatisfied and very dissatisfied”. The fourth part is mainly open-ended questions, including the questions and suggestions of the respondents on the blended teaching of this course. The software SPSS 21.0 was used to conduct reliability analysis, validity analysis and difference test on the third part of the questionnaire.

TABLE 2
RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF THE COURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY

Cronbach Reliability Analysis			
Item	Corrected Item—Total Correlation (CITC)	Cronbach α if item deleted	Cronbach α
Teacher's teaching method	0.638	0.913	
Attendance management	0.495	0.916	
Assessment method	0.781	0.906	
Course schedule	0.775	0.906	
Convenience of operation of the MOOC platform	0.608	0.912	
Online learning resources acquired in class	0.699	0.908	
Overall satisfaction with this course	0.722	0.908	0.917
Flexible and diverse teaching design helps to motivates students	0.597	0.912	
Blended teaching enables students to learn actively	0.642	0.911	
More convenient and in doing exercises	0.767	0.906	
learning resources of blended teaching are more abundant	0.606	0.912	
Able to learn more from blended learning	0.62	0.912	
Will recommend this course to others in need	0.555	0.915	
Standardized Cronbach α：0.920			

According to the above reliability analysis results (see Table 2), the overall standardized Cronbach α is 0.917. As for the "Cronbach α if item deleted", it can be seen that all of them are less than 0.917 of the total, indicating that the questionnaire questions do not need to be adjusted. The overall reliability Cronbach α is 0.917, which is greater than 0.9, indicating that the reliability of the research data of the questionnaire is very high.

TABLE 3
VALIDITY ANALYSIS OF THE COURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY

KMO and Bartlett's test		
	KMO value	0.879
Bartlett sphericity test	Approximate chi-square	533.638
	df	78
	p value	0

According to the results of the above exploratory factor analysis (see Table 3), the coefficient of the KMO test is 0.879, and the KMO value is greater than 0.8, indicating that the research data is very suitable for extracting information. It can also be seen from the significant difference of the sphericity test that the P value is infinitely close to 0, rejecting the null hypothesis, which means that the validity of this questionnaire is very high. In addition, in the difference test conducted for different genders (see Table 4), the P values of 13 items were all greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant statistical difference between different genders in the blended teaching satisfaction survey.

TABLE 4
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T TEST ANALYSIS OF COURSE SATISFACTION SURVEY

	Gender: (mean±SD)		t	p
	Male(n=15)	Female(n=58)		
Teacher's teaching method	4.40±0.91	4.22±0.88	0.686	0.495
Attendance management	4.73±0.46	4.55±0.63	1.261	0.217
Assessment method	4.53±0.64	4.34±0.61	1.058	0.293
Course schedule	4.47±0.74	4.31±0.57	0.889	0.377
Convenience of operation of the MOOC platform	4.47±0.74	4.29±0.56	0.995	0.323
Online learning resources acquired in class	4.13±0.92	4.45±0.63	-1.569	0.121
Overall satisfaction with this course	4.40±0.74	4.38±0.52	0.102	0.92
Flexible and diverse teaching design helps to motivates students	4.47±0.64	4.34±0.61	0.684	0.496
Blended teaching enables students to learn actively	4.20±0.94	3.91±0.60	1.12	0.278
More convenient and in doing exercises	4.20±0.94	4.05±0.57	0.583	0.568
Learning resources of blended teaching are more abundant	4.40±0.63	4.29±0.56	0.64	0.524
Able to learn more from blended learning	4.33±0.72	4.10±0.61	1.248	0.216
Will recommend this course to others in need	3.93±1.16	4.22±0.59	-0.937	0.363
* p<0.05 ** p<0.01				

Based on the above analysis results, it can be seen that the questionnaire design is reasonable, the research data has high reliability and validity, and there is no significant difference in satisfaction between different genders, which provides a reliable basis for further analysis of the teaching effect of this course.

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF COURSE SATISFACTION

Item	Evaluation results（Number/Percentage）				
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Average	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Overall satisfaction with this course	42.47%	53.42%	4.11%	0%	0%
Teacher’s teaching method	45.21%	42.27%	8.22%	1.37%	2.74%
Flexible and diverse teaching design helps to motivates students	43.84%	49.32%	6.85%	0%	0%
Able to learn more from blended learning	27.40%	61.64%	9.59%	1.37%	0%
learning resources of blended teaching are more abundant	36.99%	57.53%	5.48%	0%	0%
Blended teaching enables students to learn actively	20.55%	57.53%	20.55%	1.37%	0%
Online resources acquired in class	49.32%	41.10%	8.22%	1.37%	0%
Convenience of operation of the MOOC platform	39.73%	53.42%	6.85%	0%	0%
More convenient and efficient in doing exercises	24.66%	60.27%	13.7%	1.37%	0%
Attendance management	64.38%	30.14%	5.48%	0%	0%
Assessment method	45.21%	47.95%	6.85%	0%	0%
Course schedule	41.10%	52.05%	6.85%	0%	0%
Will recommend this course to others in need	32.88%	53.42%	12.33%	0%	1.37%

Judging from the overall teaching effect (see Table 5), the vast majority of students are satisfied with the blended teaching of Business Interpreting (95.89%). The teacher’s teaching mode is novel, the classroom design is flexible and diverse, and the learning enthusiasm and initiative of the students are effectively mobilized through the learning and simulating practice based on five types of objective problems. Under the guidance of teachers, students make full use of various online and offline resources for self-learning and training, collaborative exploration, simulating business scene for interpreting practice, and thus their ability to solve practical problems and cross-cultural communication is significantly improved. In addition, the results of the fourth part of the survey also give some enlightenment to the course enhancement. Regarding the drawbacks of traditional classrooms, 71.23% of the students believed that their initiative to study was not strong enough and online classes could not be adjusted according to their own learning habits, 43.84% of the students thought that there were not rich learning resources, teachers had limited time to answer questions offline, and could not answer questions in a timely manner. 27.4% believed that there was little interaction between teachers and students, and it was easy to get distracted in class. 26.03% thought that there were fewer opportunities to express their opinions and the content of traditional classroom teaching was relatively simple. After the online-offline blended teaching was launched, 56.16% of the students said that their learning attitude was more positive than before, 24.66% of the students said they had always been positive, and only 5.48% of the students were more lazy than before. Therefore, 91.78% of the students believed that the combination of traditional classroom and the information-based classroom was a necessity for future study. Students discuss objective problems through the MOOC platform, upload personal assignments such as note-taking training in a timely manner, and publish team simulating training videos for self-evaluation, peer evaluation and teacher evaluation, which can effectively solve the problems that affect interaction and skills training due to less learning hours and more students in class.

However, there are still some practical problems that need to be solved urgently from the survey. For example, when students were not paying attention during online learning, they would do something that had nothing to do with learning. As for the reasons, 50.68% of the students thought that the teaching videos lacked interactivity so that they could not concentrate on video learning. 32.88% of the students thought the videos were rather boring, affecting their interest in learning, and only 8.22% of the students thought the course content was a bit difficult. The lack of concentration and efficiency of online video learning makes it urgent to improve the content and interactivity of teaching videos. The design of the objective problems needs to be more scientific, reasonable and interesting. At the same time, more interactive designs should be added during the video playback to attract students’ interest in learning so as to improve their learning efficiency. This is also one of the important problems to be solved for this course in the future.

In addition, students are unable to make completely objective self-evaluation and peer evaluation because of their self-esteem and mutual relationship. The teaching effect relies more on teachers’ on-the-spot demonstration and timely comments on students’ classroom performance, such as the content of their interpreting, the completeness and accuracy of the language expression, the fluency and authenticity of the language expression. Teachers also need to pay attention to students’ paralinguistic and non-verbal expression, the structure and method of the notes, etc (Ren, 2020). In order to achieve a scientific and comprehensive evaluation within the limited class hours, with students as the center, the team of this course will make full use of the “Interpreting Competence Scales in China’s Standards of English” (Wang, 2017) to further optimize our self-made scale of students' self-evaluation and peer evaluation, providing students with scientific evaluation tools to effectively monitor the learning effect and progress. At the same time, anonymous and public evaluation, online and offline evaluation can be used in peer evaluation to help students improve their interpreting skills during practical training in class and after class.

C. Future Improvement of Business Interpreting

Reconstructing teaching and learning according to the results of the survey, the course team should not only enrich online teaching resources, but also optimize offline classroom teaching and course design. Specifically, the following four aspects in the future should be done well:

First, enrich course resources. Based on the experience and feedback of teachers and students, the teaching methods will be continuously improved, and necessary resources will be supplemented. The survey mentioned above shows that 78.08% of the students wanted to have the course team record online teaching micro-videos, which can be watched and studied repeatedly after class. Therefore, the course team will select popular teachers with rich teaching experience and solid professional foundation so as to record high-quality teaching micro-videos, and supplement more practical interpreting videos to meet the needs of interpreting learning and training. In addition, based on the needs of the industry, the content of the course should be kept pace with the times. More practical interpreting cases can be used for teaching design to cultivate students' ability to solve complex problems.

Second, standardize the course teaching. Through on-the-spot research and careful analysis, the training objectives, knowledge of each module, teaching tasks and activity descriptions will be further formulated in detail, and the course teaching standards will be formed to standardize the teaching of each teacher in the team and ensure the quality of teaching.

Third, improve the ability of the teaching staff. Regular teaching salons will be held to invite experts to share practical experience and solve practical problems. More academic exchange activities and lectures inside and outside the university will be organized to improve teachers' professional quality. At the same time, teachers will be encouraged to participate in off-campus interpreting practice to enrich teaching and practical experience.

Fourth, standardize the management. The team will have a clearer work division responsible for the course management, such as participating in topic discussions, answering students' questions and feedback on learning and reviewing assignments online.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the current teaching situation and characteristics of Business Interpreting in China, this paper constructs a blended online and offline teaching mode of Business Interpreting based on "objective problem orientation" with the help of the MOOC platform. As a guide, a listener and a bystander, teachers push and discuss with students before class, in class and after class about the five types of objective problems, including basic problems, key problems, difficult problems, practical problems and extended problems, and teach students according to their aptitude. Combined with scientific and reasonable formative evaluation, this teaching mode can help to stimulate students' interest in learning, enhance learning motivation, enable students to make full use of fragmented time, and improve the efficiency of online and offline learning. The results of the experiments and the survey show that the teaching mode proposed in this paper is helpful to improve students' interpreting skills, practical ability and the ability to solve cross-cultural problems, and it provides an effective experimental reference for the construction of future business interpreting courses. It also provides a new perspective for the development and research of interpreting teaching in the post-pandemic era. However, since this study is mainly aimed at students in Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology, there are some limitations in its findings, and more extensive and more in-depth empirical researches are still needed to further verify the teaching mode proposed in this paper in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported in part by grants from The 2021 Education and Teaching Research and Reform Project of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Universities Online Open Course Alliance, PRC (grant number: WGKMII034), The Department of Education of Guangdong Province, PRC (grant number: 2021-29), Guangdong Higher Education Association, PRC (grant number: 19GYB021), The Department of Science and Technology of Maoming, PRC (grant number: 2022054), The 2021 Education and Teaching Research and Reform Project of Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology (grant number: 2021JY46） and Foreign Language Professional Skills Teaching Team of Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology (grant number: JXTD201924).

REFERENCES

[1] Propaganda Department of Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology. *Yi pian du dong shen me shi mu biao wen ti dao xiang shi jiao xue* [An Article to Understand What is Objective- problem-oriented Teaching]. Retrieved March 2, 2022, from https://www.sohu.com/a/389579975_656828.

[2] Huang Youyi. (2018). Fu wu gai ge kai fang si shi nian: fan yi shi jian yu fan yi jiao yu ying lai zhuan xing fa zhan de xin shi

dai [40 years of Serving Reform and Opening-Up, Translation Practice and Translation Education Usher in a New Era of Transformation and Development]. *Zhong guo fan yi*, 3, 5-8.

[3] Lin Chaolun. (2004). *Shi zhan kou yi* [Field Interpreting] (1st ed., pp, 10-11). Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

[4] Ren Wen. (2020). Yi qing he hou yi qing shi dai de kou yi jiao xue: ji yu jiao shi shi jiao de an li jiao xue yu fan si [Interpreting Teaching in the Pandemic and Post-pandemic Era: Case Analysis and Reflection From the Perspective of Teachers]. *Zhong guo fan yi*, *6*, 69-74.

[5] Wang Honglin. (2015). Ji yu Moodle ping tai de kou yi fan zhuan ke tang jiao xue shi yan yan jiu [Research on Flipped Interpreting Class with the Aid of Moodle]. *Zhe jiang wan li xue yuan xue bao, 2*, 93-96.

[6] Wang Weiwei. (2017). Zhong guo ying yu kou yi neng li deng ji liang biao gou jian yu ying yong: yi kou yi jiao xue zhong de xing cheng xing ping gu wei li [The Construction and Application of the Interpreting Competence Scale—with Focus on the Formative Assessment in Interpreting Teaching]. *Wai yu jie*, *6,* 2-10.

Shaohui Zheng is a lecturer of School of Foreign Studies, Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology. She graduated from Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, PRC, and got her master’s degree in 2008. Her areas of specialization include English teaching, intercultural communication and translation.

Chaoqun Deng is an associate professor of School of Foreign Studies, Guangdong University of Petrochemical Technology. She graduated from Foreign Language Department of Hunan Normal University, PRC, and got her master’s degree in 2007. She specializes in English teaching and applied linguistics.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1048-1057, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.18

The Effect of Coda Voicing Contrast on Vowel Duration in American English and Najdi Arabic: A Comparison Study

Manar Alhabshan
Department of English, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia

Haroon N. Alsager*
Department of English, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**This paper presents a comparative study investigating the influence of consonant voicing status on the duration of preceding vowels in Najdi Arabic and American English. In this study, the phonetic correlates of the voicing feature in Najdi Arabic and American English were examined with regard to vowel duration were examined. In addition, acoustic measurements (duration, fundamental frequency, and second formant frequency levels) were taken. The vowel /a:/ is produced in monosyllabic /CVC/ forms by Najdi Saudi and American speakers. The goal of this study is to determine the effect of the voicing feature of the consonant on the preceding vowel in Najdi Arabic and American English by measuring the vowel duration. This study adopts some statistical analyses that might offer a novel perspective on speech recognition analysis.**

Index Terms—**American English, Najdi Arabic, vowel duration, voicing effect**

I. Introduction

Vowels vary from language to language according to their qualities and duration. In addition, several factors affecting vowels are present in some languages and not in others. For example, the properties of vowels may differ because of different consonantal environments (Fairbanks et al., 1950). This paper examines the voicing effect of the coda on vowels, which is one of the most common factors influencing vowel duration. Najdi Arabic (NA) was chosen in this study as a counterpoint to American English (AE) to compare vowels in terms of their duration. This phonetic interference is a possible factor contributing to difficulties for Najdi speakers learning English, as these phonetic differences may lead to miscommunication in some cases. Catford et al. (1974) reported that Arab speakers produce all English vowels with the same length. As a result, this mechanism is used to detect the speaker's dialect when addressing difficulties that second-language learners experience because of their articulatory habits (Weinreich, 1953).

According to Fries (1945), in his contrastive analysis hypothesis, determining the new and similar sounds between two languages can help facilitate the learning of English as a second language. As the goal of this paper is to explore the phonetic distinctions between NA and AE regarding vowel duration, the analysis below will examine one of the most common pronunciation errors of Arabic speakers: shortening English vowels (Alahmari, 2022; Mitleb, 1978).

Such vowel pronunciation errors occur because Arabs are not sensitive to the voicing feature of the following consonant. While there is little relevant phonetic data for Arabic in general, a small number of studies address vowel duration and voicing effect (VE) in NA. Therefore, the first research question is as follows: How does the vowel variety in Najdi Arabic affect the universality claim of the voicing effect? This question leads us to consider two related questions that might be asked at this point: Does the voicing feature affect vowel duration in Najdi Arabic as opposed to vowel duration in American English? Is the difference in vowel duration due to the voicing effect one of the major difficulties for Najdi Arabic speakers?

The purpose of this study is to distinguish the voicing effect of the coda on vowel duration between NA and AE. This study will provide new phonetic data for NA, which will serve as a point of comparison to explain why NA speakers of English have difficulty producing vowels of varying duration according to the voicing feature of the following consonant.

This study begins with a review of the previous studies regarding the acoustic classification of these sounds, including English varieties according to the vowel system and Arabic colloquials followed by the vowel system of Arabic. Next, the focus of this study is outlined through a review of relevant studies on vowel duration and VE in AE and Arabic. The following section then explains the methodology of the experiment and describes the participants of this study, illustrating why vowels are tested within a /CVC/ syllable. The results section explains the phonetic

* Corresponding Author. (h.alsager@psau.edu.sa)

differences among the vowels in NA and AE with regard to VE. Related analyses and observations are then discussed, and the last sections present conclusions, additional comments, and the limitations of this study.

II. Literature Review

A. Acoustic Classification

Bell invented the first phonetic classification in 1867, and he divided the speech sounds – or segments – into consonants and vowels according to their articulation in terms of airflow obstruction (Bell, 1867). Consonants have a varying degree of airflow obstruction, whereas vowels are open sounds with no obstruction in the vocal tract (Roach, 2001). However, the traditional classification is ambiguous because it considers all vowels to be syllabic and consonants to be marginal constituents (Hjelmslev, 1938). In fact, there are vowels which cannot function as a syllabic – semivowels – such as the glides in English sounds: [j] in [ˈjɛs] "yes" and [w] in [wiːp] "weep". Moreover, some vowels act like consonants in some syllables. For instance, the letter <u> is usually a vowel, but it functions as a consonant when it comes after the letter <q>, as in the word "unique" (LibreTexts, 2022). Therefore, Pike (1943) introduced a new acoustic dichotomy based on syllabic functions and phonetic form. In this system, he refers to vowels as vocoids and consonants as contoids. This classification system has four categories: syllabic vocoid, non-syllabic contoid, non-syllabic vocoids (semivowels), and syllabic contoids (like /l/ and /n/ sounds in "muddle" /mʌd.əl/ and "sudden" /ˈsə-dᵊn/, respectively).

In 1968, Chomsky and Halle introduced a phonetic feature system influenced by the generative grammar framework to analyse the structure of sounds. They proposed a binary opposition in terms of + or - values within a list of major classes based on phonetic properties, including the manner of articulation features, major class features, source features, cavity features, and prosodic features. These distinctive features are called a feature matrix, enabling us to differentiate speech sounds. For instance, the English segment [d] can be characterized as [-syllabic, +consonantal, +voice]. Nevertheless, the Chomsky–Halle feature has not accurately fulfilled the criteria for determining the vowel quality because the physical scale of only two points is insufficient. Instead, multivalued scales are needed.

Although methods such as x-ray show the speaker's sound-producing movements, the whole process of phonetic articulation needs to be observed to measure the exact degree of vocalicness, and contrast features cannot be generalized to all languages (Ladefoged, 1972). Unlike the consonant, all vowels are produced without friction or obstruction of airflow, and they share some basic features: [+sonorant, +voice, +continuant]. Moreover, vowels have no absolute boundaries in terms of describing their types because some vowels take place between high and low positions (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014). Hence, the categorization of vowels requires a multi-level scalar to describe sound quality based on the position of the tongue and lips.

Jones (1956) proposed a set of eight cardinal vowels that can be used or compared to any vowel in any language: /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, /a/, /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, and /ɔ/. This universal vowel system has three parameters, height, backness, and rounding (lip rounding), with variant degrees of each vowel in each language. Overall, the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, and /ɔ/ have a back rounded position, while /i/, /e/, /ɛ/, and /a/ are characterized as front unrounded vowels (Catford, 1988). The following sections outline additional vowel variations in NA and AE.

B. English Varieties

The variety of English accents arises mostly from differences in producing vowels. A particular accent can be recognized from the speaker's use of vowels. The most common forms of English are Standard Southern British English (SSBE; usually referred to as the Received Pronunciation) and American English (AE; sometimes called General American English), which is spoken in most regions of the United States except in southern and eastern states (McMahon, 2002). The main differences between AE and SSBE can be found in the manner of articulation. For instance, AE has /ɑː/ in the words *god* and *stop*, whereas it is pronounced as /ɒ/ in SSBE. In addition, the word *trap* has a different utterance as it is produced as /trap/ in SSBE and /træp/ in AE (McMahon, 2002).

Another major factor distinguishing between the British and American forms is rhoticity: SSBE is considered a non-rhotic accent, and AE is a rhotic accent. Therefore, the vowel quality differs in SSBE to differentiate between words with the same pronunciation. For instance, the words *heart* and *hot* are pronounced similarly because of omitting /r/ -non-rhotic-, so the vowel quality would be changed in the word *hot* /hɑt/ to /hɒt/ to distinguish it from the word *heart* [ˈhɑːt].

In contrast, the Standard Scottish English (SSE) forms do not have short-long vowel distinctions. For instance, *bit* and *beat* have the same vowel length, so they are homophones in SSE. Moreover, there is no distinction between /æ/ and /ɑː/; therefore, the vowels in *father* and *had* are pronounced the same in Scottish English. Hence, the vowel length in Scottish English is considered to be non-phonemic (Cao & Jin, 2017). However, certain vowels can be shortened or lengthened in some cases according to the Scottish Vowel-Length Rule (SVLR), depending on the environment of the vowels (Aitken, 1981; Scobbie et al., 1999).

As a final example, New Zealand English has certain distinct phonetic characteristics compared to AE. For instance, the vowel in *trap* is pronounced as /trɛp/ instead of /træp/ in AE (McMahon, 2002). Overall, the examples above illustrate that accent differences in English can be deduced from systemic differences and contrasts in vowel treatment.

C. Arabic Varieties

Arabic is one of the Semitic languages spoken in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, originating from the peninsula's northern and central regions (Watson, 2002). The Arabic language is variable, as it is a diglossic language. It includes a high variety, such as the Modern Standard Arabic language (SA), and a low variety that refers to an acquired dialect spoken as a mother tongue, such as Moroccan Arabic, Egyptian Arabic, and Najdi Arabic (Ferguson, 1959). Currently, SA remains restricted to written and formal speech while the speech community grows continually (Al Suwaiyan, 2018).

It is challenging to determine the exact time when a given change in dialects occurred (Blau, 1961; Garbell, 1958). Versteegh (1984) found that the evolution of language has no specific beginning because of a lack of agreement on chronology; it is not clear whether dialects descending from Old Arabic should be viewed as a sudden break or a gradual development. Most theories about the origins of the Arabic dialects limit their scope to an explanation of the differences and similarities between the dialects. Moreover, Ferguson (1959) mentioned that no assumption is made that all the varieties of the Arabic language have emerged simultaneously. Some theories have explained this phenomenon as a polygenetic process, asserting that the colloquial variety has appeared because of the Arab armies and different dialects accompanying them (Miller, 1986; Versteegh, 2014). In addition, communications with new immigrant populations and mixed marriages led to long-term creolization (Holes, 2004). Some studies disagree with previous findings, discovering forms of rural dialect which are much older than SA; this discovery could support the idea that Arabic colloquials should not be considered to be deviations (Versteegh, 2014). Owens (2006) claimed that Arabic dialects already existed even before Classic Arabic and are not innovative.

Diglossia helps explain the varieties of SA:

> A language situation in which two or more varieties of the same language are used by some speakers under different conditions in many speech communities where many speakers speak their local dialect at home or among family or friends of the same dialect area but use the standard language in communicating with speakers of other dialects or on public occasions. (Ferguson, 1959, p. 325)

However, Arab colloquial dialects were not generally written down nor given literary status or grammatical legitimacy, and they never reached separate language status (Ryding, 2005).

One of the most common Arabic colloquials is NA, which is spoken in the central area of Saudi Arabia. It is similar to SA in many ways. NA enjoys prestige by virtue of its conservatism and relative closeness to SA, and it is the dialect of the Saudi government (Omar & Nydell, 1975). However, there is no official or geographical limitation for the area called Najd. Still, it usually refers to the area lying from Yemen to the south to the borders of Jordan to the north, and from Ahsa Oasis to the east of the mountains of Hijaz and the plains of Asiir to the west (Al-Sweel, 1987). Some studies divide the Najdi dialect into Southern Najdi and Northern Najdi (Abboud, 1979; Ingham, 1994). The Najdi dialect shares more phonological characteristics with SA than other dialects and is considered one of the major spoken dialects. Although NA is the closest form to SA, some sounds exist in NA that cannot be found in SA: [ts] and [dz] as the allophones of the phoneme /k/ and /q/, respectively (AlAmro, 2015; Ingham, 1994).

The SA vowel inventory consists of six vowels with three different qualities: the close front vowel, [i], the central open vowel [a], and the back close vowel [u]. The long vowels are about twice as long as the short vowels and are indicated by doubling the long vowel symbols /aa, ii, uu/ (Al-Ani, 1970; Gairdner, 1925; Newman, 2002; Ryding, 2005). The differences between long vowels and short vowels can be found in their quality, as the short vowels are significantly more centralized, while long vowels are peripheral (Kalaldeh, 2018). However, the vowel inventory varies among the regional dialects (Newman, 2002). Alghamdi (1998) concludes that "the system of Arabic vowels is variant according to the dialects in terms of phonetic implementation and the difference could be an acoustic cue to identify the dialect". Although NA features the same length contrast as SA vowels /a/, /u/, and /i/, it also includes the back mid vowel /o:/ and the front high mid vowel /e:/, which have no long counterparts (Al Mahmoud, 2021; Ingham, 1994; Johnstone, 1967).

D. Vowel Duration

Duration of American English Vowels

The acoustic characterisation of vowel length in AE has been clearly documented. Rositzke (1939) investigated the American vowel length of monosyllabic words, including stop-vowel-stop and stop-vowel. His results align with Meyer's (1903) findings, as he found that the percentage of lengthening for the vowels [i, u, e, o] is .38 to .55, and for [ə, ɑ, ɔ], it is .26 to .31. He concludes that the duration in General American (GA) vowel pattern is not phonemic and varies because of speech habit; additionally, it is affected by the nature of the following consonant. As a result, he classifies the vowels in GA into two groups that are only based on the vowel position before mediae, long vowels [i, u, e, o, æ, ɔ, ɑ], and short vowels [ʊ, ʌ, ɪ, ɛ].

Black (1949) measured the American vowel in CVC syllables, and he found that the duration of the vowel /æ/ is about 210 ms, and for /ɑ/, it is 198 ms. Although the findings of Van Santen (1992) showed identical vowel patterns to Black (1949) in the vowel /ɑ/, the vowel /æ/ is slightly shorter in connected speech (200 ms). However, Crystal and House (1988b) measured the vowel duration of AE over different tempos in continuous speech. Their categorization of the vowel according to length is identical to Rositzke's (1939). They found that the duration of both vowels /æ/ and /ɑ/

showed a similar vowel pattern (ranging from 173 to 175 ms). They found that the average duration of the long vowels is approximately 130 ms, and 72 ms for the short vowels. According to Hillenbrand et al. (1995), the average duration of the vowel /æ/ is 311 ms – produced by males, females, and children. As noted in the previous studies, the mean duration of the long vowels is almost twice that of the short vowels.

Flege (1979) reported that the duration of the long Saudi Arabic vowel /aa/ is 176 ms and the short vowel /a/ is 98 ms. On the other hand, Tsukada (2009) reported that vowel length in Arabic – as uttered by different dialectical speakers, some of them Saudi – is 108 ms for the short vowel /a/ and 250 ms for the long vowel /aa/. Al Mahmoud (2021) conducted a study to investigate the identification of Najdi vowels /a/ versus /ɛ/ by the duration cue, and he found that the duration of /a/ is 245 ms.

Since the dialect of Jordanian speakers is similar to NA speakers in many phonetic specifications, it is essential to report that the duration of English vowels /ɪ, æ, a/ – as produced by Jordanians – are in the range of 79–132 ms, which is shorter than those vowels produced by Americans (Mitleb, 1978). Port et al. (1979) show similar results for Saudi speakers.

E. Voicing Effect

Many studies have shown that vowel duration is affected by the voicing feature – called the voicing effect (VE) – of certain consonants, as it is known that the duration of vowels before voiced consonants is longer than those preceding voiceless counterparts (Chomsky & Halle, 1968; Heffner, 1937; Mitleb, 1982; Rositzke, 1939; Thomas, 1947). Belasco (1953) explained this phenomenon: “Voiceless consonants require greater force to be produced than their voiced counterparts that will tend to shorten the preceding vowel” (p. #). VE can be observed in English vowels, such as in beat [biːt] versus bead [biːd] (Delattre, 1962). Peterson and Lehiste (1960) reported that the duration of long vowels is 188 ms before /p/ and 307 ms before /b/, 210 ms before /t/ and 318 ms before /d/, 200 ms before /k/ and 314 ms before /g/. Chen (1970) also measured the vowel duration before voiceless and voiced consonants. He reported that the vocalic duration in pre-voiceless consonants is 146 ms and 238 ms in pre-voiced consonants, with a ratio of 61%. Hillenbrand et al. (2001) supported the results of that study, and they reported that the average duration of the vowel /æ/ in a CVC syllable is 234 ms before unvoiced consonants and 309 ms before voiced consonants. Moreover, it has been confirmed that vowels produced in voiced environments are longer than those produced in voiceless cognates (House & Fairbanks, 1953).

On the other hand, several studies claim that VE has no effect on AE vowels. Crystal and House (1982, 1988a) analysed the impact of VE on AE vowels in connected speech produced by fast and slow speakers and reported no change in vowel duration. In addition, Klatt (1975) investigated the effect of postvocalic consonants and concluded that they have a non-significant influence on vowel duration.

In the Arabic context, many studies show that the VE does not exert an effect on the preceding vowel. In other words, the universal principle cannot be applied to Arabic. Mitleb (1984) and Flege (1984) found that the duration of /æ/ is not affected by the voicing of post-consonants. Flege and Port (1981) found a minor effect of consonant voicing on vowel duration produced by Arabic speakers, with a ratio of 96.62% as calculated from their results. Mitleb (1981) reported a similar finding for Arabic speakers. Moreover, Mitleb (1984) investigated the voicing-dependent vowel duration variation of [æ] in Saudi Arabic and concluded that VE has no effect on vowel duration. Similarly, Flege (1979) reported that there is a minor effect of the post-stop consonant on the duration of the vowel [æ] in Saudi Arabic. He concluded that the vowel duration contrast produced by Saudis is 7 ms compared to 30 ms for Americans, which reveals a significant difference in vowel duration between Americans and Saudis. In other words, the vowel duration contrast before voiced/voiceless stop consonants in Arabic is smaller than the VE of English (Port et al., 1979). Moreover, Hussein (1994) argued that there is no noticeable difference in the vowel duration of /æ/ in the pre-voiceless and pre-voiced environments for SA as compared with AE vowels. Moreover, he found that the length of /æ/ (177.7 ms) is almost identical to Flege’s (1979) study (177 ms).

In contrast, Port et al. (1980) supported the study of Chen (1970) on the influence of the voicing of postvocalic consonants on the vowel duration of the short and long /æ/. In addition, they presented evidence for temporal compensation in trisyllabic words. This implies that the voicing change of medial stops has a significant effect on the duration of SA vowels. In general, it has been noted that the VE on preceding vowel duration in English is greater than in Arabic.

However, the voicing effect is not constant. It varies due to several phonetic factors, such as a variety of speech rates (Cuartero Torres, 2002). For example, the voicing effect is reduced when the speaker talks fast. In addition, the height of the vowel is one of the universal factors affecting vowel length in all languages (Chomsky & Halle, 1968). Several studies have found that lower vowels are longer than high vowels because of the time spent opening the jaw to produce the low vowels (Lehiste, 1970; Solé & Ohala, 2010). The findings of Mitleb (1984b) support this fact, indicating that the Arabic and English languages have the same height effect on vowel duration.

III. Methodology

Two groups were examined in this study. The first group included five native NA speakers, and the second group included five native AE speakers. To assess whether L1 features of the VE can be carried over into L2 production, it was necessary to recruit Najdi Saudis with a background in English from middle and high school. All participants were males between the age of 22 and 30. To ensure dialect homogeneity, the selected native Arabic speakers had lived in Najd for their entire lives, and the native English group had grown up in the southeastern United States and did not speak with a strong regional accent. The sample was composed exclusively of male participants to minimize random results (Disner, 1986) and avoid the higher frequency of formants from female participants (Samuelsson, 2006). All participants gave their consent to participate in this study.

In these recordings, each group was instructed to read a randomised list of the words presented below. Furthermore, the Najdi group were asked to read two lists of words, both in their native language and in English. Each tested word was articulated in the same context for each language to minimise the speakers' bias (Alsager, 2020).

The context of words:

- qul _____ marra ɵanya "Najdi Arabic context"
- 'say ____ again'. "English context"

The Arabic subjects were encouraged to utter the words informally in their Najdi dialect, and all participants were allowed to repeat the sentence as many times as they wished.

A. Najdi Arabic Data

-Alveolar Fricatives

/da:s/ '' stepped on '' /da:z/ ''running fast ''

-Alveolar Stops

/ma:d/ '' extend '' /ma:t/ ''died ''

-Velar Stops

/ða:g/ ''tasted'' /ða:k/ ''that''

B.American English Data

-Alveolar Stops

/mæd/ ''mad'' /mæt/ ''mat''

-Bilabial Stops

/kæb/ ''cab'' /kæp/ ''cap''

-Velar Stops

/bæg/ ''bag'' /bæk/ ''back''

The long vowel [a:] was chosen because its qualities correlate with the AE vowels [æ] and [a] (Flege, 1979; Holes, 1990; Mitchell, 1990). Three CV(V)C monosyllabic NA minimal pairs (voiced versus voiceless final consonant) were used as stimuli. In addition, three CV(V)C monosyllabic AE minimal pairs were used.

Voices were recorded with an iPhone (model: iPhone 12 Pro Max, Apple, USA) using a voice memo application. The recordings were submitted to acoustic analysis to determine the differences in acoustic parameters for the two sets of utterances. The vowel duration and the mean of F1 and F2 of the vowel /a:/ were examined using Praat acoustic measuring software (Boersma & Weenink, 2001). The quality of the vowels is displayed at various frequencies; therefore, the higher the frequency of F1, the lower the vowel height, while F2 correlates inversely with the vowel backness. Thus, the low front vowel /æ/ has a high F1 and F2 (Essner, 1947). Also, the manner of articulation can determine the formant frequencies; therefore, the low vowel [a] has an F1 value which is interpreted as high frequency (Flanagan, 1955; Sundberg, 1977). The settings used with the Praat software were the default settings of 0.0 s time step, a maximum formant frequency of 5000 Hz, a maximum of five formants, a window length of 0.025 s, and a dynamic range of 30 dB.

Data Collection: Context-Dependency

In everyday speech, vowels tend to appear within a context. The vast majority of studies indicate that the characteristics of vowels can be identified more easily in a specific formant pattern within a syntactic or semantic context rather than in their isolated form (Maurer, 2016). These static articulatory positions are considered the goal states when coarticulating vowels in syllabi contexts (MacNeilage, 1970). Therefore, the concept of a static, context-free target to discriminate between vowels is insufficient (Strange, 1989). Moreover, Lindblom (1963), Stevens and House (1963), Verbrugge et al. (1976) and others have shown that when vowels are coarticulated with consonants in consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) syllables in continuous speech at different rates, they can be identified with surprising accuracy, but "the canonical acoustic (and articulatory) targets are often not reached" (Strange, 1989, p. #). Therefore, based on the former studies, the vowels in this study were analysed in the form of a CVC syllable.

IV. Results and Discussion

The phonetic correlates of vowels in NA and AE differ in certain respects. There are differences in vowel duration in both languages when followed by a voiced consonant, and the effect appears to be greater in AE than in NA. However, it is interesting to note that the productions of the two groups when producing English words are affected by the voicing condition even though it shows a slight difference in NA speakers' production.

The long monophthong /a:/ represents the letter 'alif' (أ), and this vowel quality is one of the most common in the vowel inventories of almost all languages (Lindblom, 1986; Newman, 2002). Figure 1 shows the averaged F1 and F2 values for /a:/ before voiced and voiceless consonants across all NA participants.

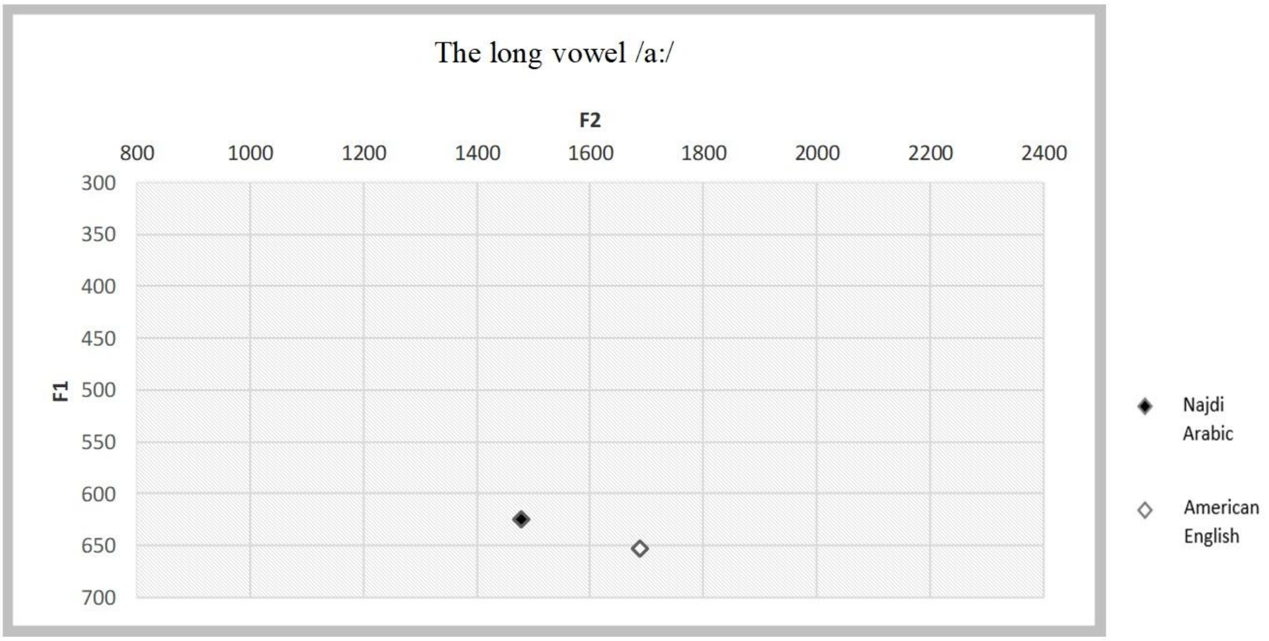


Figure 1. Averaged F1 and F2 Values of /a:/ by Najdi Arabic Speakers and American English Speakers

The pattern of voicing effects was assessed by calculating the mean duration for each subject, and the average mean duration across all subjects was extracted. The mean duration of the focused words was measured within a sentence-medial context.

It can be deduced from Figure 1 that the vowel /a:/ in NA is located at a low and central back position in the vowel space with a height (F1) in the range of 550–600 Hz, while F2 is in the range of 1400–1600 Hz. In the AE values, the vowel is more centralized (F2 mean ~1688 Hz) and has a lower position (F1 mean ~653 Hz). Notably, the AE system has a lower and more fronted quality for the vowel /a:/ as compared to NA.

Figure 2 shows the average duration in milliseconds (ms) of the vowel /a:/ when followed by voiced or voiceless consonants in all NA-tested words across all NA participants.

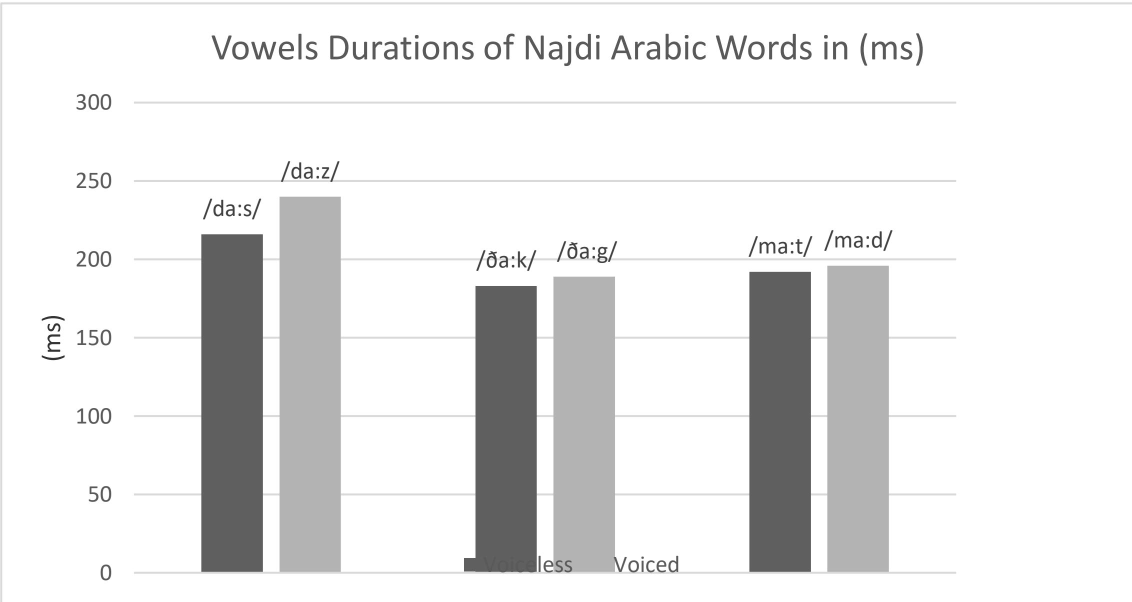


Figure 2. Average Duration of /a:/ in NA Test Words Across all NA Participants

It should be noted that the vowel /a:/ was tested before stop consonants except for /da:z/ and /da:s/, which are fricatives. Many observations can be made from Figure 2. First, there is a significant effect of the voicing feature of alveolar fricatives on vowel duration: /a:/ is ~216 ms in داس /da:s/, compared to ~240 ms in داز /da:z/. On the other hand, the mean duration of /a:/ in the velar stops minimal pair /ða:k/ and /ða:g/ showed a slight difference in vowel duration: /a:/ is ~1830 s before the voiceless consonant in /ða:k/ and ~189 ms in /ða:g/. Moreover, the difference in the duration of /a:/ in /ma:t/ (~1920 s) and /ma:d/ (~196 ms) showed a minimum difference among other minimal pairs. Based on NA vowel findings, the difference in the vowel duration of /a:/ is insignificant in voiced and voiceless contexts.

Overall, the average duration of /a:/ is 208 ms before a voiced consonant, whereas it is 197 ms before voiceless consonants. Furthermore, the overall ratio of /a:/ across voiced-voiceless minimal pairs is 95%, which indicates that the duration of NA vowels is similar to Arabic vowels, as they both have no major differences caused by VE.

TABLE 1
AVERAGED VOWEL DURATION (IN MS) OF /A:/ IN ALL ENGLISH TESTED WORDS FOR BOTH GROUPS (NA AND AE), MEAN DURATION DIFFERENCES, AND DURATION PERCENTAGES (RATIOS) ACROSS MINIMAL PAIRS IN MEDIAL UNFOCUSED POSITION

	American English		**Najdi English**	
	ms	%	ms	%
cab	209.8		176	
cap	158.6	75.59	158	89.77
	51.2		18	
bag	207.8		184	
back	186	89.50	172	93.47
	21.8		12	
mad	229		162	
mat	158.2	69.08	164	98.78
	70.8		-2	
voiced	215.53		174	
voiceless	167.6	77.76	164.66	94.63
	47.93		9.34	

The vowel duration of the low central vowel /a:/ before voiced consonants was longer than the duration before voiceless consonants. Even when accented, the test words showed a slight increase in vowel duration that resulted from the voicing feature of the following consonant except for the minimal pair (mad-mat), which shows contradictory data. It should be noted that no consistent vowel duration differences emerged between vowels before exclusively voiced consonants and vowels before voiceless consonants. However, the major difference in vowel duration between such pairs of words in AE is greater than in NA, as shown in Table 1.

For NA speakers, there is a minor difference in vocalic duration of /a:/ in the minimal pair cab/cap, with a voicing ratio of 89.79%. For AE, in contrast, there is an obvious decrease in the vowel duration resulting from the voiceless consonant (75.59%). In their productions of /a:/ followed by /g-k/, the vowel duration difference of the native English group (21.8 ms) is longer than that of the NA group (12 ms). However, the NA acoustic data of mad/mat showed a striking result that reports a slightly shorter vowel duration before the voiced consonant (162 ms) compared to (164 ms) before the voiceless one. In addition, AE shows a greater amount of vowel lengthening before /d/ (215.53 ms) and before /t/ (158.2 ms).

In conclusion, duration differences in the vowel /a:/ in the minimal pairs of voiced/unvoiced consonants are non-significant in NA compared to duration differences in American speakers' production. The voicing effect in the data in Table 1 shows that the durational range of /a:/ before voiceless-voiced consonants in AE is about a third larger than in NA. The overall English ratio is 77.76%, and the difference ratio of NA is 94.63%. For Najdi-accented English, the results showed a similar voicing effect (94.63%) to those in NA test words (95%), which was still weaker than the AE effect.

The results of this study are comparable to similar findings in other studies on vowel duration. First, the average of /a:/ duration in the test words produced by AE is 192 ms, shorter than the 210 ms reported in Black (1949). The average vowel length for NA reported here (203 ms) is longer than that reported in Flege (177.7 ms) and shorter than the 245 ms reported in Al Mahmoud (2021). The 77.76% ratio of /a:/ in pre-voiceless and pre-voiced consonants in AE is close to the 76% ratio found by Heffner (1937) and Hillenbrand et al. (2001) in /CVC/ syllables. By contrast, the corresponding ratio of NA (95%) was found to be similar to the 97% reported in Flege's (1979) study of Saudi Arabic. Moreover, the ratio of vowel duration in a voiceless environment to that in a voiced one in Najdi-accented English (94.63%) is similar to Mitleb (1981), who investigated the ratio of voicing effect on English vowels produced by Jordanian speakers (91%). In the case where the vowel is longer before the voiceless consonant /t/ than before the voiced /d/ in Najdi speakers (98.78%), Hussein (1994) reported a similar slight difference in vowel duration in these contexts of about 5.4 ms. He reported an overall ratio of 98% in focused and unfocused contexts, as there is a lack of VE in some subjects' production. Moreover, Hussein interprets the lack of voicing effect as being due to the pre-dental environment.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of this comparison between coda voicing-conditioned vowel duration in AE and NA productions replicate those of previous single-language studies of English and Arabic. Previous studies have found that the effect of coda voicing on preceding vowel duration is highly variable. In particular, vowel duration differences are greatly intensified in AE compared to NA. Thus, both AE and NA exhibit various vowel durations that are highly dependent on various linguistic factors like the voicing effect. On the other hand, the NA results of this study provide practical evidence of

Mitleb's (1984) claim that the voicing effect on the vowel duration cannot be a universal rule. Finally, the findings of phonetic interference in NA speakers showing a tendency to shorten vowels could contribute to a better description of this phenomenon. This information can be useful in speech recognition or for TESOL purposes.

VI. LIMITATIONS

Since the acoustic analysis relies on the respective fundamental frequencies of the sounds, the higher the fundamental frequency, the more difficult it becomes to determine the expected spectral envelope peaks. It also becomes increasingly difficult to determine the formants within the existing analytical frameworks (Maurer, 2016), and sounds at a fundamental frequency substantially above 350 Hz can no longer be clearly distinguished. However, indications of dependence of F1 on the fundamental frequency of the vowel /a:/ in the last records may prove to be weak, and corresponding observations may require a comparison of sounds with a very extended vocal range (Maurer, 2016).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to colleagues and students, for their encouragement, patience, and invaluable academic guidance and comments. We would also like to thank my anonymous reviewers for their careful and insightful comments and suggestions. This Publication was supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University.

REFERENCES

[1] Abboud, P. F. (1979). The verb in northern Najdi Arabic. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *42*(3), 467–499. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X0013575X

[2] Aitken, A. J. (1981). The Scottish vowel length rule. In M. Benskin & M. L. Samuels (Eds.). *So Many People, Longages and Tonges.* Edinburgh: Middle English Dialect Project, 131-157.

[3] Al Mahmoud, M. (2021). Acoustic effects of durational cues in the perception of Najdi Arabic vowel continua. *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching*, *5*(1), 57–70. https://doi.org/10.30743/ll.v5i1.3591

[4] Al Suwaiyan, L. A. (2018). Diglossia in the Arabic language. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, *5*(3), 228-238.

[5] Al-Ani, S. H. (1970). An acoustical and physiological investigation of the Arabic/E/. In *Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Linguistics*, (pp. l55-166).

[6] Al-Sweel, A. A. I. (1987). Verbal and nominal forms of Najdi Arabic. *Anthropological Linguistics*, *29*(1), 71–90.

[7] Alahmari, M. (2022). Shared vowels in English loanwords in Arabic: Variation in similarity-based adaptation. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, *22*(1), 203–220. https://doi.org/10.33806/ijaes2000.22.1.11

[8] AlAmro, M. (2015). Syllabification in Najdi Arabic: A constraint–based analysis. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)*, *6*(4), 373–388.

[9] Alghamdi, M. M. (1998). A spectrographic analysis of Arabic vowels: A cross-dialect study. *Journal of King Saud University*, *10*(1), 3–24.

[10] Alsager, H. N. (2020). The influence of guttural consonants /χ/, /ħ/, and /h/ on vowel /a/ in Saudi Arabic. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *10*(1), 115–126. https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n1p115

[11] Belasco, S. (1953). The influence of force of articulation of consonants on vowel duration. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *25*(5), 1015–1016. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1907201

[12] Bell, A. M. (1867). *Visible speech: The science ... of universal alphabetics or self-interpreting physiological letters for the writing of all languages in one alphabet*. London: Simpkin, Marshall

[13] Black, J. W. (1949). Natural frequency, duration, and intensity of vowels in reading. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, *14*(3), 216–221. https://doi.org/10.1044/jshd.1403.216

[14] Blau, J. (1961). *The importance of Middle Arabic dialects for the history of Arabic.* Hebrew University.

[15] Boersma, P., & Weenink, D. (2001). PRAAT, a system for doing phonetics by computer. *Glot International*, *5*(9/10), 341–345.

[16] Cao, R., & Jin, S. (2017). Phonological differences between received pronunciation and standard Scottish English. In *Proceedings of the 2017 International Seminar on Social Science and Humanities Research* (pp. 121–130). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/sshr-17.2018.21

[17] Catford, J. C. (1988). *A practical introduction to phonetics*. Clarendon Press.

[18] Catford, J. C., Palmer, J. D., McCarus, E., Moray, E., & Snider, S. A. (1974). *A contrastive study of English and Arabic*. University of Michigan.

[19] Chen, M. (1970). Vowel length variation as a function of the voicing of the consonant environment. *Phonetica*, *22*(3), 129–159. https://doi.org/10.1159/000259312

[20] Chomsky, N., & Halle, M. (1968). *The sound pattern of English*. Harper & Row.

[21] Crystal, T. H., & House, A. S. (1982). Segmental durations in connected speech signals: Preliminary results. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *72*(3), 705–716. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.388251

[22] Crystal, T. H., & House, A. S. (1988a). Segmental durations in connected-speech signals: Current results. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *83*(4), 1553–1573. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.395911

[23] Crystal, T. H., & House, A. S. (1988b). The duration of American-English vowels: An overview. *Journal of Phonetics*, *16*(3), 263–284. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0095-4470(19)30500-5

[24] Cuartero Torres, N. (2002). *Voicing assimilation in Catalan and English* [Doctoral dissertation, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona].

[25] Delattre, P. (1962). Some factors of vowel duration and their cross-linguistic validity. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *34*(8), 1141–1143.https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1918268
[26] Essner, C. (1947). Recherche sur la structure des voyelles orales [Research on the structure of oral vowels]. *Archives néerlandaises de phonétique expérimentale*, *20*, 40–77
[27] Fairbanks, G., House, A. S., & Stevens, E. L. (1950). An experimental study of vowel intensities. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *22*(4), 457–459. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1906627
[28] Ferguson, C. A. (1959). Diglossia. *WORD*, *15*(2), 325–340. https://doi.org/10.1080/00437956.1959.11659702
[29] Flanagan, J. L. (1955). A difference limen for vowel formant frequency. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *27*(3), 613–617. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1907979
[30] Flege, J. E. (1979). *Phonetic interference in second language acquisition* [Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University].
[31] Flege, J. E. (1984). The effect of linguistic experience on Arabs' perception of the English /s/ vs. /z/ contrast. *Folia Linguistica*, *18*(1–2), 117–138. https://doi.org/10.1515/flin.1984.18.1-2.117
[32] Flege, J. E., & Port, R. (1981). Cross-language phonetic interference: Arabic to English. *Language and Speech*, *24*(2), 125–146. https://doi.org/10.1177/002383098102400202
[33] Fries, C. C. (1945). *Teaching and learning English as a foreign language*. University of Michigan Press.
[34] Gairdner, W. H. T. (1925). *The phonetics of Arabic: A phonetic inquiry and practical manual for the pronunciation of classical Arabic and of one colloquial (the Egyptian).* Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press.
[35] Garbell, I. (1958). Remarks on the historical phonology of an East Mediterranean Arabic dialect. *WORD*, *14*(2–3), 303–337. https://doi.org/10.1080/00437956.1958.11659673
[36] Heffner, R. S. (1937). Notes on the length of vowels. *American Speech*, *12*(2), 128–134.
[37] Hillenbrand, J. M., Clark, M. J., & Nearey, T. M. (2001). Effects of consonant environment on vowel formant patterns. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *109*(2), 748–763. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1337959
[38] Hillenbrand, J., Getty, L. A., Clark, M. J., & Wheeler, K. (1995). Acoustic characteristics of American English vowels. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *97*(5), 3099–3111. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.411872
[39] Holes, C. (1990). *Gulf Arabic*. Routledge.
[40] Holes, C. (2004). *Modern Arabic: Structures, functions, and varieties* (Rev. ed.). Georgetown University Press.
[41] House, A. S., & Fairbanks, G. (1953). The influence of consonant environment upon the secondary acoustical characteristics of vowels. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *25*(1), 105–113. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1906982
[42] Hussein, L. (1994). *Voicing-dependent vowel duration in Standard Arabic and its acquisition by adult American students* [Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University].
[43] Ingham, B. (1994). *London Oriental and African Language Library: Vol. 1. Najdi Arabic: Central Arabian*. John Benjamins Publishing.
[44] Johnstone, T. M. (1967). Aspects of syllabication in the spoken Arabic of 'Anaiza. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, *30*(1), 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00099067
[45] Jones, D. (1956). *An outline of English phonetics* (8th ed.). Heffer.
[46] Kalaldeh, R. (2018). Acoustic analysis of Modern Standard Arabic vowels by Jordanian speakers. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, *18*(1), 23–48.
[47] Klatt, D. H. (1975). Vowel lengthening is syntactically determined in a connected discourse. *Journal of Phonetics*, *3*(3), 129–140. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0095-4470(19)31360-9
[48] Ladefoged, P. (1972). Phonological features and their phonetic correlates. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, *2*(1), 2–12. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0025100300000384
[49] Ladefoged, P., & Johnson, K. (2014). *A course in phonetics* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning.
[50] Lehiste, I. (1970). *Suprasegmentals*. MIT Press.
[51] LibreTexts. (2022, June 15). *1.3: Vowels that can be consonants- <y>, <w>, and <u>*. Retrieved March 23, 2022 from https://k12.libretexts.org/@go/page/3535
[52] Lindblom, B. (1963). Spectrographic study of vowel reduction. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *35*(11), 1773–1781. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1918816
[53] Lindblom, B. (1986). Phonetic universals in vowel systems. In J. Ohala & J. Jaeger (Eds.), *Experimental phonology* (pp. 13–44). Academic Press.
[54] MacNeilage, P. F. (1970). Motor control of serial ordering of speech. *Psychological Review*, *77*(3), 182–196. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0029070
[55] Maurer, D. (2016). *Acoustics of the vowel: Preliminaries*. Peter Lang.
[56] McMahon, A. (2002). *An introduction to English phonology*. Edinburgh University Press.
[57] Meyer, E. A. (1903). *Englische Lautdauer: eine experimentalphonetische Untersuchung*. Akademiska bokhandeln; O. Harrassowitz.
[58] Miller, A. M. (1986). The origin of the modern Arabic sedentary dialects: An evaluation of several theories. *Al-'Arabiyya*, *19*(1/2), 47–74
[59] Mitchell, T. F. (1990). *Pronouncing Arabic* (Vol. 2). Oxford University Press.
[60] Mitleb, F. (1978). *Segmental duration and VOT as voicing cues across native and non-native speakers (Arabic) of English*. Unpublished manuscript. Department of Linguistics, Indiana University.
[61] Mitleb, F. (1981). Timing of English vowels spoken with an Arabic accent. *Research in Phonetics*, *2*, 193–226.
[62] Mitleb, F. (1982). Voicing effect on vowel duration is not an absolute universal. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *71*(Suppl. 1), S23. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.2019285
[63] Mitleb, F. (1984b). Vowel length contrast in Arabic and English: A spectrographic test. *Journal of Phonetics*, *12*(3), 229–235. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0095-4470(19)30879-4
[64] Newman, D. (2002). The phonetic status of Arabic within the world's languages: The uniqueness of the lughat al-daad. *Antwerp Papers in Linguistics*, *100*, 65–75.

[65] Omar, M. K., & Nydell, M. K. (1975). *Saudi Arabic: Urban Hijazi dialect: Basic course*. Foreign Service Institute, Department of State.
[66] Owens, J. (2006). *A linguistic history of Arabic*. Oxford University Press.
[67] Peterson, G. E., & Lehiste, I. (1960). Duration of syllable nuclei in English. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *32*(6), 693–703. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.1908183
[68] Pike, K. L. (1943). *Phonetics: A critical analysis of phonetic theory and a technic for the practical description of sounds*. University of Michigan Press.
[69] Port, R., Al-ani, S., & Maeda, S. (1979, August). *Temporal compensation for segmental timing in Arabic and Japanese* [Paper presentation]. 9th International Congress of Phonetic Sciences, Copenhagen, Denmark..
[70] Port, R. F., Al-Ani, S., & Maeda, S. (1980). Temporal compensation and universal phonetics. *Phonetica*, *37*(4), 235–252. https://doi.org/10.1159/000259994
[71] Roach, P. (2001). *Phonetics*. Oxford University Press.
[72] Rositzke, H. A. (1939). Vowel-length in General American speech. *Language*, *15*(2), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.2307/408728
[73] Ryding, K. C. (2005). *A reference grammar of Modern Standard Arabic*. Cambridge University Press.
[74] Samuelsson, Y. (2006). *Gender effects on phonetic variation and speaking styles: A literature study*.
[75] Scobbie, J. M., Hewlett, N., & Turk, A. E. (1999). Standard English in Edinburgh and Glasgow: The Scottish vowel length rule revealed. In P. Foulkes and G. J. Docherty (Eds.), *Urban Voices: Accent Studies in the British Isles*. London: Arnold, 230-245.
[76] Solé, M.-J., & Ohala, J. J. (2010). What is and what is not under the control of the speaker: Intrinsic vowel duration. In C. Fougeron, B. Kühnert, M. D'Imperio, & N. Vallée (Eds.), *Laboratory Phonology 10* (pp. 607–656). De Gruyter Mouton. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110224917.5.607
[77] Stevens, K. N., & House, A. S. (1963). Perturbation of vowel articulations by consonantal context: An acoustical study. *Journal of Speech & Hearing Research*, *6*(2), 111–128. https://doi.org/10.1044/jshr.0602.111
[78] Strange, W. (1989). Evolving theories of vowel perception. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *85*(5), 2081–2087. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.397860
[79] Sundberg, J. (1977, March 1). The acoustics of the singing voice. *Scientific American*, *236*(3), 82–91.
[80] Thomas, C. K. (1947). *An introduction to the phonetics of American English*. Ronald Press Company.
[81] Tsukada, K. (2009). An acoustic comparison of vowel length contrasts in Arabic, Japanese and Thai: Durational and spectral data. *International Journal on Asian Language Processing*, *19*(4), 127–138.
[82] Van Santen, J. P. H. (1992). Contextual effects on vowel duration. *Speech Communication*, *11*(6), 513–546. https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-6393(92)90027-5
[83] Verbrugge, R. R., Strange, W., Shankweiler, D. P., & Edman, T. R. (1976). What information enables a listener to map a talker’s vowel space? *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *60*(1), 198–212. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.381065
[84] Versteegh, K. (1984). *Current issues in linguistic theory: Vol. 33. Pidginization and creolization: The case of Arabic*. John Benjamins Publishing.
[85] Versteegh, K. (2014). *The Arabic language* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh University Press.
[86] Watson, J. C. E. (2002). *The phonology and morphology of Arabic*. Oxford University Press.

Manar Alhabshan has received her Bachelor degree in English language from Sattam bin Abdulaziz University and recently she got her Master degree in linguistics from PSAU. Her research interests are phonetics and phonology, sociolinguistics, and dialectology.

Haroon N. Alsager finished his PhD in linguistics from Arizona State University in 2017. His research interests include syntax, phonetics, historical linguistics and computational linguistics. Currently he is an associate professor of linguistics and applied linguistics at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3778-5801

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1058-1065, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.19

Teacher Identity Construction of Non-Local English-Speaking EFL Teachers in the Intercultural Adaptation Process*

Li Yi
Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, China

Ling Meng[1]
South China Normal University, Guangzhou, China

***Abstract*—Non-local English-speaking EFL teachers are increasingly employed in the outer or expanding circle of English-speaking countries, but little is known about how these non-local EFL teachers construct their language teacher identity while they go through the intercultural adaptation process. Employing the narrative analysis, this study analysed the data of the in-depth interviews with three non-local English-speaking EFL teachers in one Chinese university and explored their teacher identity construction in the process of intercultural adaptation. Three major types of intercultural challenges were identified in their cross-cultural work in Chinese tertiary education. It was also found that the non-local EFL teachers strategically shift their teacher identities and instrumentalize their non-local identity to adapt to their intercultural teaching work and to empower themselves professionally in the language classes. This study contributes to the understanding of identity making in the intercultural adaptation process and provides implications for the adaptive policymaking and training for non-local teachers.**

***Index Terms*—non-local English-speaking EFL teachers, intercultural adaptation, language teacher identity, Chinese tertiary education**

I. Introduction

With English becoming the Lingua Franca and EFL teachers mobilizing globally, non-local English-speaking EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers are increasingly employed in the outer or expanding circle of the English-speaking countries over these two decades. For instance, more than 400,000 teachers from English-speaking or other western countries were working in the Chinese educational field in the year of 2019, with about 20,000 in government-funded or private higher education institutions (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2018). Most of non-local English-speaking teachers are employed as EFL teachers in Chinese tertiary education where English is taught as a compulsory course and functions as a stepping-stone to a university diploma (Gil & Adamson, 2011).

As employing non-local EFL teachers has become growingly popular in these outer or expanding circle countries, controversial issues around hiring the non-local EFL teachers are also arising. These non-local EFL teachers are sojourners staying in the local places for a few months or several years, and they have the feature of high mobility in the education market and enjoy more legitimacy as language teachers because they are native speakers, but they also face cultural challenges working as guest teachers in diverse host culture. They are “backpack teacher” playing foreignness for transnational capital (Stanley, 2013, p.152), and their qualification as EFL teachers with limited short-term TESOL/TEFL training furthermore puts their teacher-in-the-making identity into question.

When they enter the Chinese classroom facing the local Chinese students, they have to adapt to their teaching work emotionally, behaviourally, and cognitively as well as to renegotiate and reconstruct their teacher identities (Ting-Toomy, 2007). How these sojourn EFL teachers construct their teacher identity in a culturally shifting educational setting is a topic that deserves further academic scrutiny. This study therefore aims to use the non-local EFL teachers in China as examples to explore the non-local EFL teachers’ identity construction in the process of their adaptation to the local educational culture. This study could be of both theoretical and practical significance. By shedding light on the understanding of intercultural adaptation in the specific educational context, this study can contribute new knowledge to uncover the complexity of identity making of non-local EFL teachers in the intercultural setting and thus adaptive policy-making and pedagogical practice from both government and universities could be made in accordance with the needs and characteristics of these non-local teachers.

* Funding details: The study was supported by the National Social Science Fund of China [grant number: 16CYY027], Guangdong Philosophy and Social Science Fund [grant number: GD21CWY06], and Guangdong Society of Education Fund [grant number: 21GYB49].
[1] Corresponding Author

II. Literature Review

When a growing number of the non-local native English-speaking EFL teachers are hired in the outer or expanding circle of the English-speaking countries, the intercultural adaptation, their life and their work have been gradually put under the academic spotlight. Abundant research has focused on their intercultural adaptation in the teaching (eg. Hu & Ma, 2018, Ma, 2007; Liu, 2014), but little attention has been paid to how the intercultural challenges that they meet in the classes would influence the construction of their language teacher identity.

A. Teacher Identity and EFL Teacher Identity

Teacher identity is widely acknowledged as being multifaceted and multidimensional, developing through on-going progresses, and being shaped and negotiated in social contexts (Beijaard et al., 2004). Teachers gradually develop their teacher identity in a boarder socio-cultural context considering their relationships with others and contextual identity forming within socio-cultural and historical context (Rodgers & Scott, 2008), and they derive their professional identity from (mostly the combination of) their perception about themselves as subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, and didactical experts (Beijaard et al., 2000).

Language teacher identity has its subject-specific features. Firstly, language teacher identity is defined by their subject-specific roles or their competence in class. Farrell (2011) distinguishes 16 main role identities of EFL teachers in the language classes and concludes three major role identity clusters: teacher as a manager to manage what happens in class, teacher as a professional who are devoted to work, and teacher as an "acculturator" engaging in activities to help students adapt to local culture. Furthermore, language teacher identity is featured by their core knowledge and skills that they are supposed to have, including the fundamental skills of language itself, discipline knowledge, teaching techniques, and awareness of self and students and advanced competences of adaptive teaching, theorizing from teaching, and membership in community of practice (Pennington & Richards, 2016).

The formation process of EFL teacher identity is highly complex, which involves an experimental period of reifying oneself as a member of community, obtaining legitimate access to practice, and developing the required competence (Tsui, 2007). Their sociocultural identity is the constant negotiation of their personal histories as well as the changing contextual elements (Duff & Uchida, 1997). Meanwhile, researchers (see Varghese et al., 2005) also noticed some problematic issues in the language teacher identity both inside and outside the classroom, including their professional or social marginalization, the disputing relationship between the native and non-native speaker teachers, the questioned status of the language teaching work in general as a profession, and the salient instability and vulnerability in their work and life.

B. Teaching Across Borders and the Complexity of Identities

EFL teachers teaching across borders, an intertwining process of cultural adaptation and teacher identity construction, are explored from different perspectives. It is on the one hand explained as an intercultural adaption process and regarded as a two-way reciprocal adaptation between teachers and students (Zhou & Todman, 2008); as a self-adjustment process of going through puzzlement, endeavour, and empowerment (Liu, 2001); and as a transforming period to adapt professional identity including both a reciprocal intercultural learner and an adaptive agent in the increasingly internationalized classroom (Tran & Nguyen, 2015).

Researchers are also interested in the complex and tangling identity making process of the language teachers who teach in other cultures (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Menard-Warwick, 2008; Shim, 2019), especially the complexity caused by the dichotomy between native and non-native speakerism. How the non-native speaking English teachers strive for professional legitimacy is well researched, particularly about the teachers from outer circle of the English-speaking countries like China, such as the research about the language teachers who teach English in the US (Park, 2012), in Singapore (Zhang & Zhang, 2014), in Hong Kong (Benson, 2012), etc. But conversely how the native speakers seek professional development as sojourn teacher in non-English speaking countries is relatively under-researched.

C. Non-Local Language Teachers in China and Their Identities

China has an almost "insatiable appetite" for English teachers from western countries (Wolff, 2009, p.5) because of the importance that has been attached to the English language in the era of economic globalization. Both L1 (native) and L2 (non-native) English speakers are widely recruited and the overwhelming volume of non-local EFL teachers in China (about 20,000 in tertiary education) starts attracting scholarly attention.

In her one-of-a-kind research, Stanley presents a kaleidoscope view of the English teaching work of nine westerners in a Chinese university from a critical ethnographic perspective. The seller's market provides EFL teaching positions for these backpack teachers (2013, p.211). They conveniently perform foreignness to get legitimacy and are thus "trapped" or "Shanghaied" in the EFL teaching work (p.155). Unavoidably, they suffer emotional and professional struggles (p.209) because they feel that they are like clowns or "foreign monkeys" in the classes and their EFL teaching job is like "baby-sitting" or "grunt work" (pp.212-215). Her authentic account of the western EFL teachers in China echoes with the description of the work of the non-local English teachers by Wolff (2009), and they argue that this remains and will always remain problematic in China if it is still the seller's market. When the unpromising and paradoxical situation is discussed, the teacher-in-the-making process is not yet quite well addressed through the lens of intercultural adaptation.

Chinese researchers care about how these non-local teachers adapt to local Chinese culture (Ma, 2007; Liu, 2014) and the effectiveness of their teaching methods and strategies (Ai, 2014; Huang, 2015, Lu & Dong, 2015; Chen, 2018). By problematizing their life and work in China, most of these studies offer remedies to their intercultural adaptation or provide managerial suggestions for universities. But little work has been done on the adaptation or the struggling in the language teacher identity construction of those non-local EFL teachers.

As "becoming a teacher" is a process of identity formation (Danielewics, 2001, p.3), it is therefore of vital importance to know how these non-local EFL teachers learn and adapt to become a language teacher in monolingual and monocultural China. The identity of the non-local EFL teachers in the classroom is tentatively probed by Hu and Ma (2018), and by means of conversation analysis they find that the non-local EFL teachers construct three role identities in the classes, namely the identity as communicators, lecturers, and learners. This study attempts to shift the perspective and goes one-step further to examine the non-local EFL teacher identity construction in the process of intercultural adaptation. Two research questions are addressed:

1) What intercultural challenges do the non-local EFL teachers experience when they teach in the EFL classes in Chinese tertiary education?

2) How do the non-local EFL teachers construct their language teacher identity in the process of intercultural adaptation in Chinese tertiary education?

III. Research Design

This study took in-depth semi-structured interviews as the data collection method and employed the narrative analysis to explore the language teacher identity construction of the non-local English-speaking EFL teachers in their intercultural adaptation process in Chinese tertiary education.

A. *Participants*

The participants were three non-local native English-speaking EFL teachers from the Faculty of English Education in S University. There were 56 local teachers and 14 non-local teachers (only 6 were in-service in the semester when the interview was conducted, and all of them were male) in this department. They taught fundamental English courses, advanced ESP course, and English-mediated liberal art courses.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS – THREE NON-LOCAL ENGLISH-SPEAKING EFL TEACHERS IN S UNIVERSITY

Name	Gender	Country	Native language	Work experience
Aaron	Male	United Kingdom	English	1.5-year English major (China); 1.5-year EFL in S University (China)
Jade	Male	United States	English	1-year primary English teaching (Korea); 1-year adult English teaching in EF (China); 2-year EFL in S University (China)
Kevin	Male	United States	English	6-year high school history (America); 1-year English major (China); 1.5-year EFL in S University (China)

B. *Data Collection*

The data collection method was in-depth semi-structured interviews (guided by Richards, 2003; Wells, 2011; Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Interview questions were designed on the theoretical premise that the non-local English-speaking EFL teachers would experience a process of stress-adaption-growth dynamic (Kim, 2001) in a cross-cultural educational setting in China. As illustrated by Liu's (1999) personal teaching story, the experience of teaching abroad generally goes through three stages: the initial puzzlement facing different teaching culture, the endeavour to learn to fit in the culture, and the empowerment stage of becoming a professional in the field. Interview questions were thereby classified into three sub-categories: general questions, the questions about difficulties in teaching, the questions about the adaptation to the local culture. The interview was conducted by the first author and the interview process was audiotaped and transcribed verbatim with the assistance of the transcribing tool TEMI (available at https://www.temi.com).

C. *Theoretical Backdrop*

Farrell's (2011) theory about EFL teacher role identity was utilized as the theoretical framework in this study. Two major types of teacher role identities were used to analyse the teacher identities that the non-local teachers construct in the language classes. The first one is the role identity of "teacher as a manager", referring to the role identities that the EFL teachers construct when they manage the EFL classes. It includes seven sub-identities: the vendor to sell learning, the entertainer to amuse the class, the communication controller to control the class interaction dynamics, the juggler to do multi-tasks in classes, the motivator to keep students on tasks, the presenter to deliver information, and the arbitrator to offer feedbacks to the classes. The second one is the role identity of "teacher as a professional", referring to the identities that teachers construct in their devotion to the work. There are three sub-identities (Farrell, 2011): the collaborator who works and shares with other teachers, the learners who seek the knowledge to improve their teaching work, and the teachers as the knowledgeable agent about teaching and subject matters.

D. Analytical Method

Narrative inquiry was used as the analytical method to explore these non-local teachers' identity construction in the Chinese EFL classes. Narratives are the means by which the people make sense of themselves and the world (Squire, see Wells, 2011, p.5), and it is also a way for people to construct and reconstruct their identities (Riessman, 2008, p.8). The stories of non-local EFL teachers narrated in interviews are one of the richest data for identity research (Vásquez, 2011), as teachers' identity is the "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p.4). The data was analysed and coded by Farrell's (2011) teacher role identity categories and sub-identities with the assistance of NVIVO 11 (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, pp.101-142). Both authors independently analysed one third of the data and the discrepancies in the data analysis were then detected and discussed till the agreement was reached between the two authors. The first author then finished the analysis of the other two third of the data.

E. Research Ethics

Research ethics were carefully observed throughout the research. Before the interview, the participants were informed of the research purpose and research procedures. Consent forms were signed with them before the interviews. During the data analysing and interpreting process, the researchers constantly cross-checked with the participants about the data interpretation in order to maintain the research validity and to avoid the subjective projection of researcher's own values, emotions, and attitudes in the research process (Boyatzis, 1998, p.13) considering that the researcher is an insider who works in the same field and even in same the department with the participants.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of data showed that the non-local teachers in Chinese tertiary education have experienced frustrating moments when they faced students with different learning culture. These teachers strategically utilized different teacher role identities in the EFL classes and instrumentalized their non-local identity to adapt to their teaching work.

A. Intercultural Challenges in College English Classes in China

The analysis of the data demonstrated that there were three major types of intercultural challenges that the non-local teachers had experienced in the English classes in Chinese tertiary context.

(a). Students Who Are too Deferential and Teacher-Dependant

The participant non-local EFL teachers reported that the main difficulty was that the students were too deferential and teacher dependant. In the Chinese "Confucian-heritage" culture of learning (Jin & Cortazzi, 2006), teachers are the authoritative and knowledgeable model, and they receive sincere respect and concentrating attention in classes. The students are thus respectful and teacher-dependent, and the high regard held by students towards teachers could be a double-edged sword. It is helpful for them to conquer stage fright or make their work easier, and meanwhile too much attention on the teacher could be very stressful for teachers, as reported by the participants:

> *"I think students were typically … they held you in very high regard. So it almost felt like sillies to feel nervous just because… the students have very high opinion of you." (Jade)*
>
> *"They're very obedient, very deferential. I like that. I do. It makes my job a lot easier." (Aaron)*
>
> *"It was generally that they were a little quiet and it made me nervous, made me nervous because it's like so much more focuses is on me rather than some level of balance between what the students do and what I do." (Kevin)*

(b). Students Who Are Shy and Quiet, Reluctant to Talk, or Poor in English Communication Skills

The participants reported that they received enough respect but not much response from the students in classes and one of the biggest challenges for the language class was that the Chinese students were too quiet or shy, too reluctant to talk, or too inexpressive in English. The role expectations of a teacher differ across cultures (Stanley, 2011), and Chinese students expect to learn expert knowledge from their teachers whose role is an authority of knowledge. Students tend to listen quietly rather than to talk a lot in the classes, and thus their oral communication skill are not so well developed as reading or writing skills. The non-local teachers complained that they suffered from the conflict of learning and teaching styles and felt upset that their classes were usually quiet when they tried to implement student-centred communicative approach in the classes. For instance:

> *I didn't realize there's such an emphasis on writing and reading before university. … But then you meet them and say how are you? And they're like, don't know how to answer it, but then you give them an essay question and they will write two pages on it, but they won't be able to speak at all. (Aaron)*
>
> *"I will ask a question that I think is pretty simple. … it's very quiet and nobody wants to volunteer. And so maybe I think they didn't understand me, but I think typically they did and they do know the answer, but it's just that they don't really want to come out and say it. (Jade)*

(c). Oversized Classes with Students From Different Majors With Different Level of Proficiency and Motivation

The participant non-local EFL teachers illustrated that another challenge was that the classes were oversized with students from different majors with different level of proficiency and motivation. In these days English language obtains unprecedentedly high status in China, and it plays the gatekeeper role for both study and work and is regarded as a judge of value and talent (Gil & Adamson, 2011). English is taught as a key curriculum subject since grade three of primary school, and in college education all non-English-major undergraduate students are still required to take College English courses for two years. In this case, the interviewed non-local teachers complained that they had to face over-sized classes with students from different majors whose language proficiency and learning motivation vary significantly. They struggled to balance the needs of students of different levels, to modify teaching materials to attract attention, and to survive in a hostile environment of compulsory course (Wolff, 2009, p. 51), which were vividly reported as follows:

> *"Whereas here, you know, students, um, obviously they're here because they want to get their degree, but maybe they're in English class, maybe they're just not very interested in English… (Jade)*
>
> *"Teaching especially the way we, I was, I learned to do it and the only foreigners prefer to do it and that means a lot of interaction, communication, a very group oriented, uh, we expect students to speak more and participate more, but for certain students of certain majors, they're just not used to it at all. And it's very challenging to kind of drive them to adapt to our style of teaching. So, it's still, even now it's quite a struggle. (Kevin)*

B. Language Teacher Identity Construction in Intercultural Adaptation

The non-local teachers who were working in the culturally different Chinese tertiary context were found strategically shift among their different role identities and instrumentalize their non-local identity in the language classes to adapt to the local educational culture and to empower themselves professionally as language teachers.

(a). Strategically Shifting Their Teacher Role Identities to Manage the Class

The identity of being a "teacher as a manager" refers to the teacher identity that the teachers construct in the classes when they attempt to control what happens in class, and it includes seven sub-identities (Farrell, 2011): the vendor to sell learning, the entertainer to amuse the class, the communication controller to control the class interaction dynamics, the juggler to do multi-tasks in classes, the motivator to keep students on tasks, the presenter to deliver information, and the arbitrator to offer feedbacks to the classes.

When facing the deferential and teacher-dependant Chinese students who were quiet and reluctant to speak in English, the non-local teachers made themselves as the cheerleaders in class. They frequently took the role of entertainer and motivator to make a quiet class cheerful and tried to use their "cheerful character" to fuel students to talk, to reach the "friend zone" to create fearless and comfortable class atmosphere, and to narrow down the large power distance between teacher and student.

> *"Uh, well, it's also your own character because in a way how you teach your character kind of fuels, uh, their willingness to interact. If you're kind of like bored or kind of a not, not too active yourself, then they won't have much, uh, they don't have much motivation to be active in return, you know." (Kevin)*
>
> *"The other one is like you get in with them, you sit next to them on the desks. You sort of talked to them. You get to know them; you ask them personal questions; you answer their questions. I think that's an important thing that you sort of become a bit of the friend zone and they respond well to that. (Aaron)*

The affective classroom climate created by such means can have a profound influence on the development of language competence (Chappell, 2014, p.56), and the non-local teachers strategically shifted to their role identity of communication controller if the Chinese students just remained silent and dared not to speak in public. They resorted to group activities, a ready-made panacea for all sorts of difficulties in class management (see Table 2). These activities helped to divert the focused attention to the teachers towards the students themselves, to encourage the shy and quiet students to communicate with their friends, and to manage the over-sized classes more effectively.

TABLE 2
GROUP ACTIVITIES AS A READY-MADE PANACEA FOR CLASS MANAGEMENT

Challenges	Solutions
Students over-focused on teachers	*"They always focused on speaker (teacher), and I always do a big thing about, uh, getting the students to speak, discuss things amongst themselves especially. They like it's so fun to them to be able to speak amongst themselves in the class." (Aaron)*
Students too shy to speak in public	*"They already have these friend groups in classes, so if you just make them feel comfortable enough to talk to their friends but just use an English, then they're going to be open..." (Aaron)*
Students in over-sized classes	*"Just kind of learning how to conduct a class with a big group, is kind of how um, pair work and group work and different kinds of activities." (Jade)*
Students too quiet and unresponsive	*"It's just that they don't really want to come out and say it. I guess that's one thing that I've done is not necessarily too much teacher to student interaction. It's more like having them discuss things I think works a little better." (Jade)*
Students unmotivated	*"Usually my method is to have these less-motivated students to be mixed into groups with the students may be at a better level, are more motivated…" (Kevin)*

The participants reported that they used various methods and endeavours to cheerlead the class and organize different group activities, which would divert from the original purpose of the class and eventually convert all kinds of EFL classes into an oral English class. Although prevailing teaching methodology for language classes is the communicative approach and it is worthwhile for the non-local teachers to use this teaching method to shape the local learning culture for better language learning outcome, the communicative approach is not supposed to be used for the sake of convenience but should be used for the purpose to motivate students and to engage them in the communication activities. When too many group activities are organized and the speaking is promoted as the core skill, the other skills like reading and writing are possibly ignored, which could be illustrated in the following interview:

> *"I feel I should do more sort of specific parts of language, sometimes I'm just giving them practice, an opportunity to practice what they already know rather than explaining the sort of finer points of English." (Aaron)*

The above analysis shows that these non-local teachers in the Chinese EFL classes tried to strategically shift different teacher role identities and acted as a cheerleading oral English teacher in class to build a fearless atmosphere to talk and organize various group activities. They also utilized their non-local or native-speaker identity to build a complementary role to their local Chinese counterparts and made the class a place to learn authentic English language and culture. The cheerleading work that the participant teachers tried to do in the relatively quiet and inactive Chinese classes in this study was exactly identical with the research findings about the western oral English teachers' efforts of making the class funny in the research of Stanley (2013, p.125). Chinese students hold the view that they benefit from the funny, active, passionate, and interactive non-local teachers' EFL classes, but also complain the classes are oversimplified and unsystematical (Huang, 2018, p.68).

(b). Instrumentalizing Native-Speaker Identity to Empower Themselves Professionally

The identity of being a "teacher as a professional" refers to the idnetity that teachers construct in their devotion to the work, and there are three sub-identities (Farrell, 2011): the collaborator who works and shares with other teachers, the learners who seek the knowledge to improve their teaching work, and the teachers as the knowledgeable agent about teaching and subject matters.

The analysis revealed that the non-local EFL teachers constructed their "teacher as a professional" identity by the native-speakerism and presented themselves as being knowledgeable in English as a language and a culture. By empowering themselves professionally and by othering Chinese teachers (Holliday, 2011, p.69), they construed the identity as a teacher complementary to their local Chinese counterparts through the following three means:

1. Exemplifying Authentic English

The non-local teachers believed that when they as English-speaking teachers could exemplify authentic English in the class the students could learn genuine examples of the language, could have real-time authentic experiences of communication, could obtain more exposure to English, and could have ideal native speakers for language drills.

> *"Even if the class (of a foreigner) is a complete disaster, the fact that the teacher is only speaking English and the students are forced to speak English to the English teacher, that's great. Because the thing is that it is real-time authentic experience speaking the language. So that's something the Chinese teacher can't offer." (Jade)*

2. Concretizing the Culture of English-Speaking Countries

The non-local EFL teachers held the view that they could concretize the culture of English-speaking countries because they could share their first-hand experience and they themselves were the best example of the cultural norms for students to explore.

> *"I always noticed they pay the most attention is when I'm giving a sort of personal anecdotes about life, about life back home… So I was trying to do as many because they've had main Chinese teachers talking about the English language, but maybe the Chinese teachers talking about life, just the West in general." (Aaron)*

3. Differentiating From Local Teachers

These non-local EFL teachers also branded themselves as a foreigner as a selling point, which differentiated them from local teachers and built a complementary role to the local Chinese counterparts.

> *"Um, so obviously the role is different, and I guess in my life when I was learning how to teach, I was always told that I'm not really supposed to fulfill that Chinese teacher role. I am more supposed to fulfill a foreign teacher role, which is kind of allowing the students to have an example and allowing the students to practice." (Jade)*

Such attempts of the non-local EFL teachers to utilize their non-local or native-speaking identity as a complementary role to the local Chinese teachers in this study were also supported by the research findings of Huang (2018). Based on her classroom observations and interviews, she found that the local Chinese teachers also othered the non-local teachers and established their own credibility by their unique strengths and hard work to reach the balanced power dynamic with the presence and possible threats of native-speaking teachers in their work. The instrumentalization of their non-local or native-speaking identity is a strategic resort or compensation of their insufficient training or experience in EFL teaching, especially the teaching in a culturally different environment. Most of the non-local EFL teachers are not well-trained, and they are insensitive to the linguistic problems of local students because they lack experience of learning English as a second language (Rao & Yuan, 2015). Their problem of limited knowledge of the linguistic difficulties of the local learners was vividly demonstrated by the following examples:

> *Whereas obviously maybe if you are a foreign teacher and you can't, er, you don't have Chinese language ability. You don't really have the um, you know, you don't have the language to explain these sort of grammar concepts that you might need, you know, a high level or level of English to explain. (Jade)*
>
> *Especially for let's say like computers science students, sometimes they have to work with their first language and also you have difficulty in understanding your students because we're in, er, we come from a different culture, raised in a different system. (Kevin)*

The non-local English-speaking EFL teachers' overuse or over-dependence on their non-local or native-speaker identity leads to the trickery of performing stereotypical "foreignness" or "foreign idiot" noticed by Stanley (2013, p.209). Such over-dependence on their non-local or native-speaker identity in return negatively influences their professional identity formation or their professional career development as language teachers. The efficacy of intercultural adaptation in such classes is thus questioned by Stanley (2011) and she argues that it leads to an awkward situation that the non-local teachers infantilize their students and the students regard their teachers as idiots. She and other scholars therefore call for proper training courses about the learning cultures and language instruction skills for these non-local EFL teachers.

V. Conclusion

This study explored the teacher identity construction of the non-local English-speaking EFL teachers during their intercultural adaptation process by analysing the data of the in-depth interviews with three non-local EFL teachers in one Chinese university. The non-local teachers were found facing three major types of intercultural challenges in the EFL classes in Chinese tertiary education due to the divergences of the learning and teaching styles of the local students and the non-local teachers. The non-local teachers expect for highly interactive and student-centered classes, but the Chinese students are too deferential and teacher-dependent, quiet and reluctant to talk, and mixed in over-sized classes with diverse language proficiency and motivation. Facing such intercultural challenges, the non-local EFL teachers strategically shift their teacher identities and instrumentalize their non-local identity to adapt to their intercultural teaching work and to empower themselves professionally in their language teaching work.

This study contributes to the understanding of the complexity of the identity-making in intercultural adaptation process and provides implications for the adaptive policymaking and training for non-local teachers. Future research should include more participants with gender variety from different university backgrounds to present a more holistic and ecological view of the intercultural adaptation process of non-local EFL teachers. And more work also needs to be done on how cultural and contextual factors like power dynamics between teachers and students influence the teacher identity construction process within and outside the classrooms.

References

[1] Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and teacher education*, *20*(2), 107-128.

[2] Beijaard D, Verloop N, Vermunt J D. Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and teacher education*, 2000, *16*(7): 749-764.

[3] Benson, P. (2012). Learning to teach across borders: mainland Chinese student English teachers in Hong Kong schools. *Language Teaching Research*, *16*(16), 483-499.

[4] Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.

[5] Chappell, P. (2014). *Group work in the English language curriculum: Sociocultural and ecological perspectives on second language classroom learning*. Springer.

[6] Cheung, Y. L. (2014). Teacher identity in ELT/TESOL: A research review. In *Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research* (pp. 175-185). Routledge.

[7] Chinese Ministry of Education. (2018). *Number of Academic Qualifications of Full-time and Part-time Teachers in HEIs* http://www.moe.gov.cn/s78/A03/moe_560/jytjsj_2017/qg/201808/t20180808_344765.html (accessed on June 18 of 2018)

[8] Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. L. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research*. Sage.

[9] Duff, P. A., & Uchida, Y. (1997). The negotiation of teachers' sociocultural identities and practices in postsecondary EFL classrooms. *TESOL Quarterly*, *31*(3), 451-486.

[10] Farrell, T. S. (2003). Learning to teach English language during the first year: Personal influences and challenges. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *19*(1), 95-111.

[11] Farrell, T. S. (2011). Exploring the professional role identities of experienced ESL teachers through reflective practice. *System*, *39*(1), 54-62.

[12] Holliday, A. (2013). *Intercultural Communication and Ideology*. Sage.

[13] Hu, J. & Ma, Y. (2018). Conversation analysis of foreign teachers' identity construction. *Academic Journal of Haerbin University*, *39*(9), 87-91.

[14] Huang, Z. (2018). *Native and Non-Native English Speaking Teachers in China*. Springer Singapore.

[15] Gee, J. P. (2000). Chapter 3: Identity as an analytic lens for research in education. *Review of research in education*, *25*(1), 99-125.

[16] Gil, J., & Adamson, B. (2011). The English language in mainland China: A sociolinguistic profile. *English language education*

across Greater China, *(1)*, 23-45.
[17] Gill, S. (2007). Overseas students' intercultural adaptation as intercultural learning: A transformative framework. *Compare*, *37*(2), 167-183.
[18] Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (2006). Changing practices in Chinese cultures of learning. *Language Culture & Curriculum, 19*(1), 5-20.
[19] Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Sage.
[20] Le Ha, P., & Van Que, P. (2006). Vietnamese educational morality and the discursive construction of English language teacher identity. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, *1*(2), 136-151.
[21] Liu, J. (2001). Confessions of a non-native English-speaking professional. *CATESOL Journal*, *13*(1), 53-67.
[22] Lu L, & Dong, J. (2015). The effect of cultural stereotype on the teaching efficiency of foreign language teachers. *Foreign Language Research*, *(5)*, 57-60.
[23] Martel, J., & Wang, A. (2014). Language teacher identity. *The Routledge handbook of educational linguistics*, Routledge.
[24] Menard-Warwick, J. U. L. I. A. (2008). The cultural and intercultural identities of transnational English teachers: Two case studies from the Americas. *TESOL quarterly*, *42*(4), 617-640.
[25] Moussu, L., & Llurda, E. (2008). Non-native English-speaking English language teachers: History and research. *Language teaching*, *41*(3), 315-348.
[26] Park, G. (2012). "I am never afraid of being recognized as an NNES": one teacher's journey in claiming and embracing her nonnative-speaker identity. *Tesol Quarterly*, *46*(1), 127-151.
[27] Pennington, M. C., & Richards, J. C. (2016). Teacher identity in language teaching: Integrating personal, contextual, and professional factors. *RELC journal*, *47*(1), 5-23.
[28] Rao, Z., & Yuan, H. (2016). Employing native-English-speaking teachers in China: Benefits, problems and solutions. *English Today*, *32*(04), 12-18.
[29] Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative inquiry in TESOL*. Springer.
[30] Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.
[31] Rodgers, C. R., & Scott, K. H. (2008). The development of the personal self and professional identity in learning to teach. *Handbook of research on teacher education*, 732.
[32] Shim, J. M. (2019). Towards a more nuance understanding of white teachers of English learners: Increasing capacity and capabilities. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *10*(1), 1-10.
[33] Stanley, P. (2011). Meeting in the middle? Intercultural adaptation in tertiary oral English in China. In *Researching Chinese Learners* (pp. 93-118). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
[34] Stanley, P. (2013). *A critical ethnography of 'Westerners' teaching English in China: Shanghaied in Shanghai*. Routledge.
[35] Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Procedures and techniques for developing grounded theory.* Thousand Oaks.
[36] Tran, L. T., & Nguyen, N. T. (2015). Re-imagining teachers' identity and professionalism under the condition of international education. *Teachers and Teaching*, *21*(8), 958-973.
[37] Trent, J. (2010). From rigid dichotomy to measured contingency. Hong Kong preservice teachers' discursive construction of identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(4), 906-913.
[38] Tsui, A. B. (2007). Complexities of identity formation: A narrative inquiry of an EFL teacher. *Tesol Quarterly*, *41*(4), 657-680.
[39] 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.
[40] Wang, L. (2011). Difference of students perception on classroom teaching efficiency between native speaking English teachers and Chinese speaking English teachers. *Chinese and Foreign Educational Research*. *2011*(4), 1-4.
[41] Wells, K. (2011). *Narrative inquiry*. Pocket Guides to Social Work R.
[42] Wolff, M. (2009). *Teaching EFL in china: what every foreign teacher should know before they go!* Nova Science Publishers.
[43] Yang, P. (2018). Developing TESOL teacher intercultural identity: An intercultural communication competence approach. *TESOL Journal*, *9*(3), 525-541.
[44] Zhou, Y., Jindal-Snape, D., Topping, K., & Todman, J. (2008). Theoretical models of culture shock and adaptation in international students in higher education. *Studies in higher education*, *33*(1), 63-75.

Li Yi is a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages at Sun Yat-sen University. Her research interests include discourse studies, intercultural communication, and health communication. She has published several research articles in the prestigious peer-reviewed journals.

Ling Meng (PhD) is a researcher in the School of Foreign Studies at South China Normal University. Her research interests include health communication and second language teacher education and development. She has published more than ten journal articles in the leading Chinese peer-reviewed journals like Foreign Languages in China, Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, and Foreign Languages Research. Dr. Meng's email: forever.ml@163.com

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1066-1072, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.20

The Concept of Death in John Donne's Poetry and The Holly Quran: A Comparative Study

Mohammed I. Mahameed
Department of English Language and literature, Middle East University, Jordan

Emad A. Abuhammam
The Ministry of Education, Jordan

Amjed A. Abu Hammam
The Ministry of Education, Jordan

***Abstract*—This study is a comparative descriptive investigation of the representation of death in the Holy Quran and the poetry of the English poet John Donne. It focuses on the concept of death as a real and ultimate truth. The study considers death as a thematic contemplation that every Man is worried about. Death in the Holy Quran and Donne's poetry has been previously studied from different individual viewpoints, but none has adopted it comparatively from a thematic perspective. This study also adopts many echelons of the religious themes presented by these works in the treatment of death such as the truth of death, submission and forgiveness, and resurrection in both Islamic and Christian religions. The study signifies the similarities and differences in the discussion and analysis part. It concludes that despite the cultural, religious beliefs, and time and place differences, the Holy Quran and Donne's poetry share some thematic and religious factors that lead towards religious perception of death including evidences of the reality of death, mortality of people, and the resurrection after death.**

***Index Terms*—comparative study, death, John Donne, poetry, the Holy Quran**

I. Introduction

Death is a confusing and mysterious truth and a profound personal matter for all persons in the universe. Death has been considered as the natural phenomenon of the human life cycle. It is known as the common end of all creatures, so it also fears people because it is an ending that takes our loved and valuable ones away from us. Because death is unacceptable yet inevitable, death has been greatly questioned. Literature and the Holy books have been attempting to answer some questions about death and its impact on all human beings and their lives. Death is shown as the hidden promise of starting new life in some religions, while it can be considered as the real end and a destruction of bodies.

This study compares the poetic lines of describing death in the English literary tradition, especially that of John Donne (1572- 1631 CE) poetry on one hand, and the Holy Quran verses on the other. The study also examines the representation of death in Islam based on analyzing some Holy Quranic verses that tackle the topic of death as a religious theme.

This analysis provides beneficial information on the concept of death in Eastern and Western cultures. The study enhances the reader's understanding of death poems and the Holly Quran verses. Particularly, English readers would gain more knowledge of how the Holy Quran presents the concepts of death based on the Islamic view point, especially in the Eastern culture. On the other hand, the study enriches the Arabic libraries by analyzing Donne's understanding of death concept in the Western culture and literature. This study is a descriptive analytical study that compares the poetry of John Donne and the Holy Quran qualitatively. The study compares between them underneath the standpoint of the literary research. The data are taken from the collected poems and the Holy Quranic Verses that share the same ideas. Data analysis process was applied by data content analysis method of the selected poems and verses using important religious principles. Descriptive analysis is used to demonstrate the meanings, images, themes, and conceptions based on comparative analysis to provide the stylistic and thematic similarities and differences between the selected poems and the Holy Verses from different chapters. The study will rely on Talal Itani's translation of the Holy Quran which was published in 2015. This book was accepted to be true to the originality of the Holy Quran. John Donne's Poems are selected primarily from "John Donne Poems" book which was published in 2012 by The World's Poetry archive.

This study addressed the following questions:

1- How is death presented in the Holy Quran and John Donne's poetry?
2- What are the main religious and spiritual themes mentioned in the Holy Quran and Donne's poetry?
3- To what extent do we believe that Donne's poetry and the Holy Quran answer many questions about death?

II. Literature Review

Death has been presented in different human religions and thoughts since ancient times. In the Islamic conceptions, death is not shown as the absolute end of life or a real annihilation of all creatures. It is the beginning of another life that becomes after death. Death is a common natural phenomenon that can be suddenly happened to all people around the world. The Holy Quran states that death catches up people wherever they are, as quoted in Al-Nisa chapter, verse 78:

> Wherever you may be, death will catch up with you,
> even if you were in fortified towers. When a good fortune
> comes their way, they say, “This is from Allah.” But
> when a misfor tune befalls them, they say, “This is from
> you.” Say, “All is from Allah.” So what is the
> matter with these people, that they hardly understand a thing?
> (Atani, 2015, p. 31)

This verse shows the Islamic belief that death can be as the destiny of all people wherever they live or move. It is the power of finishing any human’s mortal life.

Khalifa (1973) comments on this Quranic verse that “All human beings are going to move from this mortal life into another eternal life after their death”. (p. 8) [Our Translation]. He states that all people will face their destiny in which death is considered as one of their Godly plans. The verse also concludes that all good and evil things are made by Allah and each individual should believe in his ability and power of creating everything. Moreover, death is meant the separation of the body and the soul. It is the transformation from the former life to the next one, the spirit descends to the sky to dwell there through eternity. This is what AmatulHafeez Alvi (2021) emphasizes in a comparative study between John Donne and the Arabic poet Abul-Alaa Al-Ma’arri. Alvi states that Islamic belief “confirms death, life in the grave and life in the hereafter either in Paradise Jannah or Hell Jahannam according to the deeds and degree of piety (Iman)” (p. 21).

Islam teaches that the most fundamental objective of this life and Man’s creation is to worship Allah only. Islam also teaches that life on Earth is “nothing but a probation for us and to determine each person's eventual domicile, be it Hell (Jahannam) or Heaven (Jannah) which will be eternal and everlasting” (Alvi et al., 2021, p.21). The eternal life of Man after death is immortal and temporally constant, Men can enjoy their existence in Heaven (Jannah) expressing that their condition as a bliss from Allah due to their good deeds during their mortal lives on Earth.

In literature, some poets tackled many questions about the reality and truth of the concept of death around the world. The English poet John Donne is considered as the Metaphysical poet who presents different myths, images, and conceptions about death. While Metaphysical poetry is first mentioned by the literary English critic and poet Samuel Jackson in his book “Lives of The Most Eminent English Poets”. Metaphysical poetry refers to some common characteristics of a group of poems. It shares similar styles, images, paradoxes, and myths, it is highly intellectualized, uses strange imagery and extremely complicated thoughts. AlBadri (2021) argues that Metaphysical poetry “often discusses religious topics and concerns, which represent a significant aspect of spiritual poetry. It is perhaps that the most known aspect is that Metaphysical poetry involved large doses of wit. Although the poets were examining real questions about the existence of God or whether a human would possibly perceive the world” (p.304). The poets took those questions with humor. Metaphysical poetry examines the relationship between logical and rational concepts on the one hand and imagination or intuition on the other. Metaphysical poets have ambiguous structures and styles due to their knowledge and intellect. AlBadri (2021) states that “the poets of metaphysical poetry were a known group, who used the mentioned features and characteristics, they were educated men, and to show their education was their entire endeavor. As they neither duplicated nature nor life, neither copied matter nor presented aspects of intellect” (P. 304). This form of poetry was also used to expressing individual concerns, personal imaginations, imageries, and logical arguments. The English poet John Donne is regarded as the founder of Metaphysical poetry. Death has been a constant idea for him that he profoundly wrote a poem without indicating to it. Donne has passed through many tragedies in his life. He lost four of his family members in front of him including his father, uncles, and brothers. He has observed different religious concepts in the church of England, especially during the Queen Elizabeth age. He went through financial crises and health issues and got ill and alienated often.

These conditions played a real role in shaping his philosophy about life and death. Donne started to conclude the idea of death through his poems mystically and untraditionally. He looked for the pragmatic concepts and ideas of death, he deeply believed in the second life after death, so he was not afraid of death and invited people to live happily and hopefully. Fomeshi (2013) argues that "Death Be Not Proud" is a sonnet that varies significantly from typical sonnets. It is not one of love and romance; it can be said that Donne is romanticizing the idea of death” (P.78). So, this sonnet reflects his understanding of death as a dying creature and controlled by God. Sugg (2007) refers to “Donne‘s almost scientific curiosity about the process by which the human soul will be liberated, re-embodied, and taken into the eternal, crystalline purity and bliss of that heaven which, for many Christians, was the real world, and real life (p. 192).This notion is profoundly depicted in his sermons, elegies, love songs, and sonnets. Fomehshi (2013) examines the concept of death in Donne’s poetry in comparison with that of the Iranian poet Sohrab Sepehri from a comparative perspective. The findings of the study present that both John Donne and Sohrab Sepehri consider death as a notion of their poetic creation due to similar factors, such as “the depression and cynicism of spirit; and regarding life as a cheap possession. Both poets witnessed turbulent period in the history of England and Iran” (Alvi et al., 2021, p.24). Life and death are under the control of God so death will only come to people when it is fated by God. Donne always concludes that life after death is a glorious one which will be beyond the weakest impact of death. Dickson (2007) investigates John Donne's poems with death as a philosophical, literary, imaginative, and emotional topic, and examines its presence in his composition (p.1). He also states that Donne haunted his poetry from the idea of morality examining some major ways of exploring intense and frantic emotions. Donne examines the nature of faith, the sense of individuality and the secret of the existence.

III. Discussion and Analysis

The afore mentioned discussion brings out many resemblances and equivalent meaning of Death which is a real truth. A keen examination of the death related to the poems and verses, clearly presents that both Donne’s poetry and The Holy Quran have gone through logical sequential phases that lead to specific insight about death. This can similarly be shown through a thorough evidence based on the descriptive equivalent method.

The investigation of analyzing the religious and spiritual themes, images, and metaphors in the Holy Quran and Donne’s poetry starts with focusing on death as a truth and a religious belief. These beliefs, each Man should believe in. According to Donne’s representation of death, he confesses that it can be the real end of the humankind and their mortal life. This mortal life is followed by another eternal life. In “Death be not Proud”, the speaker shows death as a gigantic and scary action that happens suddenly to all people through personifying death in the first line of the poem:

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,

The whole poem has two contradictory views about death. In the first-four lines, the speaker depicts death as “Mighty” thing that makes him afraid and frustrated. So, we find him wonders about his death and ultimate fate.

Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be

The speaker moves to another image of death. It is depicted as “poor” and dying creature like the speaker himself. However, death can kill him and other noble men, kings, and desperate men:

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

Metaphorically said, the speaker shows that our death is a sleeping for short time. This sleeping is followed by eternal life. Death is shown as one of the horrible truths that has often been questioned, denied, and escaped. John Donne goes against the stream and admits that death is a factual reality. He compares it to a slave and chances, in which he asserts that death is a fate that will come as per destined in the same poem.

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,

Similarly, The Holy Quran asserts the reality of death and informs that all people are going to die. This fate is certain and universal. This is what the following verse from Al-Nisa chapter, verse (78) states:

أَيْنَمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِككُّمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ ۗ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَإِن تُصِبْهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا
هَٰذِهِ مِنْ عِندِكَ ۚ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ
اللَّهِ ۖ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَمَالِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا

Wherever you may be, death will catch up with you, even if
you were in fortified towers. When a good fortune comes their
way, they say, “This is from Allah.” But when a misfortune befalls
them, they say, “This is from you.” Say, “All is from Allah.” So
what is the matter with these people, that they hardly understand a thing?
(Itani, 2015, p.31)

Based on the last verse from the Holy Quran, it asserts the idea that death is destined for all people in the world. It is the real truth which is controlled by God. Death cannot be denied, because it is Godly destiny. No one escapes from death. Ibn-Katheer (2000) is one of the most Islamic interpreters of the Holy Quran, he states that this verse “asserts that all people will die even if they settle in high towers and no one will survive from death” [Our Translation p. 507]. Parallel to the Holy Quran, Donne presents the same idea that death meets all people suddenly everywhere, he says in the Holy Sonnets 1:

I run to death, and Death meets me as fast,
And all my pleasures are like yesterday.
I dare not move my dim eyes any way;
Despair behind, and Death before doth cast

This is a deep sense of real belief that all creatures are fated by death. Likewise, the Holy Quran emphasizes the same idea related to the reality of death. It is an ultimate reality related to the human's soul in his/her final stage of life, as shown in Al-Emran chapter, verse (185):

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَآئِقَةُ ٱلْمَوْتِۗ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِۖ
فَمَن زُحْزِحَ عَنِ ٱلنَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ ٱلْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَۗ وَمَا ٱلْحَيَوٰةُ
ٱلدُّنْيَآ إِلَّا مَتَٰعُ ٱلْغُرُورِ

Every soul will have a taste of death, and
you will receive your recompense on the Day
of Resurrection. Whoever is swayed from the
Fire, and admitted to Paradise, has won. The
life of this world is merely enjoyment of delusion.
(Itani, 2015, p. 26)

Metaphorically said, every soul will experience death and it will be formed as an end to Men's sins. It realizes that such a life is not worth to be lived. Al-Qrtobi (1964) interprets this verse as it has the idea of "glorifying God, he will not die. Everything will taste and feel death even angles and jinn. The Almighty God will remain alive alone" (p. 297). This verse reforms as a Godly condolence to all people for keeping all souls dead at the last day of this mortal life. In another place, John Donne addresses the reality of death in his "The Paradox" as all people die using a metaphor for claiming that there is a relationship between love and death. He expresses that both love and death are spiritual and emotional feelings that all people touch and feel. He states that love also can be killed and finished by death.

We die but once, and who loved last did I
He that saith, twice, doth lie

The central idea of the poem is religion. Donne sees his creator as a central to his world, and he has no real reason to escape the divine concepts in his world. The poem seems to be physically attracted, but it is spiritual unity as a form of combining religion into people's lives. One of his best concepts expressed through this poem is seeing death as the end of all Men's sins. Donne also considers loving someone as much a religious experience rather than a physical action.

At any loves but he;
I cannot say I loved, for who can say
He was kill'd yesterday
Love with excess of heat, more young than old,
Death kills with too much cold;
We die but once, and who loved last did die,

Donne comments that death "Would not have him merely seize me, and only declare me to be dead, but win me and overcome me" (Gosse, 1899, p.191). He states that dying without first having been seduced by one's own death and flirted with it is an opportunity to experience its beauty and pleasure. Donne claims that soul should enjoy the first meeting between it and death:

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee, much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

Donne is against the stream in showing pleasure with the moment of death coming. He states that death brings pleasure and rest. This rest is prepared to the "best men" to remain in tranquility and peace forever after death. A similar theme is presented in the Holy Quran in chapter Al-Waqi'a, verse (88-91):

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّةُ نَعِيمٍ
فَسَلَامٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ

But if he is one of those brought near,
Then happiness, and flowers, and Garden
of Delights.
And if he is one of those on the Right.
Then, "Peace upon you," from those on the
Right. (Itani, 2015, p. 208)

Based on this Holy verse, it is very clear that people who are "near" as shown in the verse, in which the word "near" refers to the people who do good deeds and they are good believers in God and working to their eternal life after death by avoiding sins committing during their lives. These people will feel pleasure and tranquility as if they are in a "Garden of delights". His/her soul will be delivered peacefully without feeling of any pains. These good believers are promised to be in Heaven (Jannah) after death. They have been described by the word "Right" which refers to the good people who do good deeds, and they will be awarded by Heaven after death.

As for the unbelievers of God they will regret after death as The Holy Quran states. Death is a milestone and the first preparation for Heaven or Hell. The unbelievers of God will feel the pains of death and their souls will be delivered hardly. The Holy Quran pairs primarily the punishment in the Hell (Jahannam) after death with being unbeliever of the existence of God. These unbeliever and sinful souls will feel the harshness of death unless they repent to God before they die. Based on the Islamic belief which is derived from The Holy Quran, repentance is the temporary opportunity of people to return to the right belief and admitting the existence of God firstly. Repentance is used in both Donne's poetry and The Holy Quran verses. It is shown as the chance to get rid of sins and renouncing religion in both religions Islam and Christianity. The Holy Quran explains the importance of repentance before death in chapter Al-Nisa, verse (146):

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا
دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

Except those who repent, and reform, and hold fast
to Allah, and dedicate their religion to Allah alone.
These are with the believers; and Allah will give the
believers a great reward.
(Itani, 2015, p. 35)

This verse shows the significance of repentance before death and how it can be the only way to gain the Heaven (Jannah). Repentance is Godly blessed, especially when the unbeliever repents before his/her death even for a short time. In the Islamic reflection, repentance overcomes the sins when Man feels the existence of God. One of the most fundamental principles of the religious repentance in Islam is to admit God through the idea of Divine monotheism that confesses the existence of God and he is the only creator of Men, Earth, planets, animals, Nature, and even the small pieces on the Earth's surface. In this way repentance can also facilitate the way of the human's death and soul leaving away from the body. Repentance is also considered as a key of gaining Heaven and being blessed. In The Holy Quran returning to God through Tawba (Repentance) means avoiding sins and doing good deeds. These repentant people will be in the Heaven at the Resurrection Day at the last day of this mortal life as shown in Maryam chapter, verse (60):

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئً

Except for those who repent, and believe, and act righteously.
These will enter Paradise, and will not be wronged in the least.
(Itani, 2015, p. 113)

This claim is also presented in other verses along the all chapters of The Holy Quran. In other place, pairing the entering of Heaven after death with repentance and doing good deeds during Man's life. This is clearly shown in Al-Tahreem chapter, verse (8):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يُكَفِّرَ
عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَيُدْخِلَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يَوْمَ لَا
يُخْزِي اللَّهُ النَّبِيَّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَه نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَى بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ
وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتْمِمْ لَنَا نُورَنَا وَاغْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

O you who believe! Repent to Allah with
sincere repentance. Perhaps your Lord will
remit your sins, and admit you into gardens
beneath which rivers flow, on the Day when
Allah will not disappoint the Prophet and
those who believed with him. Their light
streaming before them, and to their right,
they will say, "Our Lord, complete our light
for us, and forgive us; You are capable of all
things. (Itani, 2015, p. 218)

There is an obvious invitation to all people who commit sins and deny the existence of God to repent and return through a "sincere repentance". This means that who intends to return to God, he/she should begin by believing in God's power and existence. According to this verse, those who believe in these religious principles will gain the Heaven (Jannah). God promises these repentant people by (Jannah) as an award after death due to their belief in God and his existence, power, capability, and forgiveness.

Similarly, Donne depicts many images of how God forgives people and how they gain the Heaven (Jannah). In "A Hymn to God the Father", Donne asks forgiveness from God. He portrays his situation as being sinful Man who feels his God's mercy:

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
Which was my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive that sin, through which I run,
And do run still, though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

This repentant speaker repeats his asking of God to forgive him. This speaker blames himself to be sinful. The repetition of the idea of forgiveness is shown in the first and third lines of the poem. The speaker moves to confess that he is regretful person who deplores his sins "And do run still, though still I do deplore?", this emphasizes the essential principle of repentance in both Islamic and Christian religions. In both religions to be repentant, Man should believe in his God's existence first and his power upon everything. The only donor of forgiveness is God, so he decides the final path of Man in his eternal life after death. In the second stanza, the speaker continues his asking of forgiving him on his sin. The speaker wonders if his God forgives him or not "Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun", he believes in his God's mercy and compassion.

In the last stanza, the speaker admits his great sin. His sin is fear, the speaker concludes that he is afraid that God will not forgive his sins before his death. He refers to his wondering that he dies sinful. This means he will not gain the Heaven promised by God to all people who do good deeds in their lives.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
But swear by thyself, that at my death thy Son
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore;
And, having done that, thou hast done;
I fear no more.

The speaker presents his situation to be dead before his God forgives him. He is afraid of dying on the "shore" before his forgiveness. In the last four stanzas, the speaker asks God if his son Jesus will be able to shine on him "now" as he has done "therefore" or until now, "But swear by thyself, that at my death thy Son".

Jesus's presence is a symbol of his God's complete forgiveness. By the presence of Jesus, the speaker states that he does not fear anymore. With Jesus there to reassure and develop him, his sins are no longer committed. He is completely forgiven.

Relating glorious men and prophets in both Christianity and Islam to the idea of forgiveness before death is spiritually significant. Their presence gives a feeling of tranquility and pleasure, as shown in the previous poem by Donne. In the Islamic perception, The Holy Quran presents a similar feeling of the presence of prophet Mohammad as symbol of tranquility and peace when he leaves Macca with his friend Abu Baker Al-Sideeq escaping from people who plan to kill them in Al-Tawba chapter, verse (40):

إِلَّا تَنصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ
إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا ۖ فَأَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ ۗ
وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

If you do not help him, Allah has already
helped him, when those who disbelieved expelled him,
and he was the second of two in the cave. He said to his
friend, "Do not worry, Allah is with us." And Allah made
His tranquility descend upon him, and supported
him with forces you did not see, and made the
word of those who disbelieved the lowest,
while the Word of Allah is the Highest. Allah
is Mighty and Wise.
(Itani, 2015, p. 68)

The prophet's presence refers to the feeling of victory and peace in the whole verse. It is similar to the presence of Jesus as a symbol of tranquility and forgiveness in Christianity. The Holy Quran also states that prophet Mohammad will die as all people through different verses of the Holy Book. Prophet Mohammad is presented as dead and ordinary person physically, but spiritually he is presented as religious and the man of virtues sent from God. He will also die as all ordinary people. This statement is clearly explained in Az-Zumur Chapter, verse (30-31):

إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُمْ مَيِّتُونَ ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ تَخْتَصِمُونَ

You will die, and they will die
Then, on the Day of Resurrection, you will
be quarrelling before your Lord
(Itani, 2015, p.176)

This verse asserts the reality of death as being a real truth of all people around the world. Death finishes all Men's lives including prophets, noble men, and glorious people. The previous verse also asserts the idea of resurrection after death followed by eternal life in Heaven (Jannah) or Hell (Jahannam). This is what Donne also asserts in his Holy Sonnet "Batter my Heart, Three-Person'd God, for you". The speaker emphasizes on the idea of resurrection and the God's power to revive all people after death "That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend/Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new".

Resurrection is a deep belief for both who believe in God and his power to revive people after death in the Islamic and Christian religions. While people are committing sins during their lives, repentance is the Godly opportunity to the sinful people to avoid entering the Hell (Jahannam) by returning to God and doing good deeds.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through reading the Holy Quran and John Donne’s poetry, the concept of life and death is deeply described and discussed in most of the Holy Verses and the poems. Their approach to death was not archetypal approach based on fearing death in most verses and poems. They delved deeper in the philosophic and spiritual features of death and declared it as an agent that returns creatures back to God, and that is exactly the perception of death in a metaphysical view. The Holy Quran verses and Donne’s poetry of death are presented as not emotional flow or inadvertent sentimental expressions, but they are full-fledged verses in which the ideas and words are proficiently presented and the language has been selected and controlled to generate spiritual concepts and themes of the concept of death. The stylistic and thematic structures that the study has investigated are presented as religious constructions of thought, which is treated by using different figures of speech, such as personifications, imageries, metaphors, symbolism, and allusion that have basically tackled the logical expressions in discussing the concept of death. These literary devices used to convey the meaning of death as an ultimate truth based on explaining death as a religious theme in both The Holy Quran and Donne’s poetry.

REFERENCES

[1] Albadri, M. (2021). The Metaphysical School of Poetry of the Seventeenth Century. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications (IJSRP), 11*(5), 2250-3153 http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.11.05.2021.p11336

[2] Al-Qurtobi, M. (Ed(s).). (1964). *The collection of the holy Quran’s instructions* (ed.). Cairo: The Egyptian Library

[3] Alvi, A., Alvi, R. (2021). Mystical Representation of Death in the Poetry of John Donne and Abul-Alaa Al-Ma’arri: A Comparative Study. *Eralingua: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Asing dan Sastra*, *5*(1), 19-35

[4] Dickson, A. (2017). *I am every dead thing: John Donne and death*. Retrieved Apr 12 from https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/i-am-every-dead-thing-john-donne- and-death

[5] Fomeshi, Behnam. (2013). *The Concept of Death in John Donne and Sohrab Sepehri: A Comparative Study*. Shiraz University, 15(2), 77-84

[6] Gosse, E. (1899). *The life and letters of John Donne, dean of St.Pauls*. London & New York: W. Heinemann

[7] Ibn-Katheer I. (Ed.). (2015). *The Holy Quran interpretation* (sec ed.). Beirut: Dar Ibn Hazm

[8] Itani, T. (2015). *Quran English translation clear, pure, easy to read modern English.* Clear Quran, Beirut

[9] Khalifa, M. (1973). *The Isthmus*. Dar alitesam, Beirut

[10] Poemhunter. (2012). *John Donne poems.* Poemhunter.com, The World's Poetry Archive

[11] Sugg, R. (2007). *John Donne: Critical issues*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan

Mohammed I. Mahameed: is an Associate Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Middle East University, Jordan, where he teaches a variety of courses in English Literature. His research interests are mainly concerned with the cultural studies subjects of British Literature. He has published multiple articles in reputed journals. He was awarded his Ph.D. from Mumbai University, in 1999.

Emad A. Abuhammam: currently is a Teacher of English Language in the Ministry of Education-Jordan. He completed his MA in English Literature from Mutah University- Karak, Jordan/2021, and a Bachelor degree in English Language and Literature from Tafila Technical University- Tafila, Jordan/2016. Emad is interested in Comparative Literature studies in poetry.

Amjed A. Abu Hammam: currently is a Teacher of English Language in the Ministry of Education-Jordan. He completed his MA in English Language and Literature from Isra University- Amman, Jordan/2022, and a Bachelor degree in English Language and Literature from Mutah University- Karak, Jordan/2007. Amjed is interested in British modern drama and poetry studies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1073-1078, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.21

On C-E Translation Strategies of Classic Quotations in the Informative Text*

Junhua Ren
School of Humanities, Tiangong University, China;
Tianjin Foreign Studies University, China

Lai Qi
School of Humanities, Tiangong University, China

***Abstract*—The study on the translation strategies of the classic quotations in the informative text from Chinese to English can help to create the discourse system that promotes the communication between China and other countries. Analyzing the features of the classic quotations in the informative text, this paper finds that these classic quotations are diversified and the translators of the quotations are not only faithful to the original text but also regardful of the receptor's understanding. Therefore, the translators perfectly balance the relationship between foreignization and domestication, the two opposite translation strategies.**

***Index Terms*—classic quotation, informative text, foreignization, domestication**

I. Introduction

The German functionalist Katharina Reiss (2000) classifies the diverse texts into three major types which are the informative text, the expressive text and the operative text. She claims the informative text is content-centered, while the rest two are form-centered and behavior-centered respectively (Liu, 2019). According to her classification, political texts are informative ones. Since political texts are pervasive in everyone's daily life, this study focuses on them as a typical type of the informative text. Moreover, in the recent years, it is easy to find the Chinese classic quotations are frequently used in political texts. Many scholars have started to study the classic quotations in political texts. Ling (2015) believes that quoting expressions from Chinese classic works is a unique feature of Chinese political texts. Actually, Chinese scholars have carried out the following studies on the classic quotations in political texts from different perspectives: from the aesthetic perspective, Ling (2015, 2016, 2017) points out that the writers of political texts quote lines from classic works to clarify the current affairs; from the study of political culture, scholars support the contemporary values of classic quotations in political texts because they argue that these quotations are used to explain the new concepts of the governance (Ye, 2014, 2015; Hu & Li, 2016; Zhou, 2016); from the perspective of translation, Li (2017) applies the concept of "recontextualization" to analyze the translation of eight classic quotations adopted in a political text.

From the above analysis, it is clear that there is much room to improve the study of classic quotations used in political texts. Firstly, the recent studies have only analyzed the classic quotations in political speeches, one type of political texts. Due to the limited examples of these quotations, these studies cannot reflect all the features of classic quotations in political texts. Secondly, there are few studies on the English translation of classic quotations in political texts. Moreover, these studies have failed to study Chinese classic quotations through a full analysis of the concrete context of the discourse. Therefore, the above previous studies are not insightful enough to help to build the discourse system which aims at improving the communication between China and other countries.

This study focuses on the different types of political texts including speeches, documents and reports which are delivered online in the recent five years (2017-2021) and the corpus for the study covers 50 political texts. The aim of the study is to observe the process of translating classic works and offer insights for the translation of cited expressions from classic works. Therefore, the current study is expected to facilitate the readers of the world to understand traditional Chinese culture.

II. Features of Chinese Classic Quotations in Political Texts

Different scholars have different opinions for the definition of Chinese classic works. Wang (2003) defines the classics of Chinese literature, philosophy, history and art as ancient Chinese classic works. Based on the definition, this paper sorts out the expressions cited from Chinese classic works in the corpus for the study and it finds that the classic quotations in the 50 political texts share the following features: long span of time, high frequency, diverse genres and

* This paper is a phased achievement of the research project funded by Philosophy and Social Sciences Association of Tianjin, No. TJWW18-011 (The Translation Study of Chinese Discourse in *Xi Jinping the Governance of China*).

creativity.

A. Long Span of Time

The writers or speakers of the political texts quote expressions from Chinese classic works which usually cover a long span of time. The quotations are usually from the classics of the pre-Qin period to modern times. These classic quotations can facilitate readers' understanding of the content of the political texts.

B. High Frequency

The frequency of classic quotations in the political texts is very high. It is found that there are altogether 52 classic quotations in the 50 political texts. It means that one text includes at least one classic quotation averagely. The quotations with such a high frequency make the political texts readable and interesting.

C. Diverse Genres

The classic quotations in the 50 political texts are from different genres of Chinese classic works like prose works, poems, novels, inscriptions and historical records etc. The diverse genres show political texts often embed traditional Chinese culture in the texts (Ye, 2014). This paper finds that the writers or speakers of the political texts prefer to quote classic expressions from some prose works written by the philosophers of the pre-Qin period who support Confucianism, Taoism and Legalism and so on. Doubtlessly, these classic works, like *The Analects of Confucius (Lun Yu)*, *The Book of Rites (Li Ji)* and *Mencius (Mengzi)*, represent traditional Chinese culture. Since these cited expressions reflect the Chinese tradition and culture, they can raise the receptors' interest and help them to have a further understanding of the texts. The following table shows the distribution of the genres in the corpus.

TABLE 1
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DIVERSE GENRES IN THE 50 POLITICAL TEXTS

Genre	Prose Works			Poem	Novel	Inscription	Historical Record
	Confucianism	Taoism	Legalism				
Amount	15	9	7	9	3	2	5
Percentage	30%	18%	14%	18%	6%	4%	10%

D. Creativity

This study finds that the writers or speakers of the political texts often make creative but suitable changes for the quoted classic expressions in accordance with the new contexts. These creative changes will help to achieve the integration of the traditional culture and the modern culture.

Due to the above diverse features of the classic quotations in the 50 political texts, a single translation strategy will not work for these quotations. The translators of the political texts have to consider various factors in the process of translating, make right decisions and adopt suitable translation strategies. Then it is possible for them to offer acceptable translated quotations.

III. ENGLISH TRANSLATION STRATEGIES OF CLASSIC QUOTATIONS IN POLITICAL TEXTS

The process of translating Chinese classic works into English is like a journey for the translators through which they need to overcome enormous obstacles of time, space, language and culture (Li & Ye, 2016). Jakobson (2000, p.114) classifies translation into "intralingual translation, interlingual translation and intersemiotic translation". Huang (2012) believes that the translation of classic works usually goes through two processes: intralingual translation and interlingual translation. Accordingly, the English translation of the classic quotations should also involve two processes: intralingual and interlingual translation.

The translation of the classic quotations is more complicated than that of the general classic works because the translators should understand not only the original meanings of the quoted expressions from the classic works but also the new interpretations of the quotations in the concrete contexts of the texts. Therefore, the translators of the political texts should meet the high requirement which means they should have a high level of proficiency in English and traditional Chinese culture. Moreover, they should have a full understanding of the original texts.

Based on the features of the classic quotations in the political texts, this paper analyzes the translation strategies of these quotations. It is found that in the process of translating, the translators take into account multiple factors such as the original meanings of the expressions in the classic works, the meanings of the classic quotations in the contexts of the political texts and the receptors' understanding. Based on the above factors, the translators adopt different translation strategies to be faithful to the authors of the classic works, the writers or speakers who quote the expressions from the classic works and the receptors.

Schleiermacher puts forward two options for translators in translation: letting readers approach the author and vice versa. The American translation theorist Venuti develops the two options into two translation strategies which are foreignization and domestication (Zhao, 2017). It is clear that the English translators of the political texts should be faithful to the authors of the classic works, the writers or speakers who quote these expressions from the classic works and the receptors in the process of translating. Ultimately the translators perfectly balance the tension between foreignization and domestication, so they skillfully adopt the two strategies in their translation.

A. Foreignization

The translators' loyalty to the authors of the classic works is realized by foreignization which is represented in the good retention of the original style of the classic quotations, such as metaphors, rhymes and syntactic structures. The strategy of foreignization can help the receptors approach the traditional Chinese culture.

Since people have similar cognitive experience of the world, many metaphoric images of the classic quotations in the studied original texts can be retained in the target text through literal translation. Examples are followed:

Example (1) Source：不义而富且贵，于我如浮云

Target：Fortune and riches obtained through unjust means are like floating clouds for me.

Example (2) Source：交得其道，千里同好，固于胶漆，坚于金石

Target：A partnership forged with the right approach defies geographical distance; it is thicker than glue and stronger than metal and stone.

In the first example, the writer of the original text quotes the expression from "*The Analects of Confucius (Lun Yu)*". In this quotation, "浮云" is referred to clouds floating in the sky, which is often used to depict something that is not worthy of concern in Chinese. In "*The Analects of Confucius (Lun Yu)*", Confucius compares the glory and wealth obtained by improper means to the cloud, and he believes that wealth would not be valuable if it is not obtained by morality. "浮云" is translated as "*floating cloud*" and the metaphoric image of the quotation from the classic is kept in the target text. In the second example, "胶漆" and "金石"are used to describe the close friendship in Chinese culture. After reading and understanding the original text, the translator adopts literal translation to deal with "固于胶漆，坚于金石" which is translated as "*thicker than glue and stronger than metal and stone*". This translation helps to maintain the metaphoric image in English.

Due to the literal translation, the metaphoric images of the quotations are perfectly kept in the target texts, while the free translation is adopted to transfer the rhythm of the quotations to the target texts. Examples are analyzed in the following:

Example (3) Source: 奢靡之始，危亡之渐

Target: hedonism and extravagance lead to decline and demise

In the above example, "危亡" carries the feature of alliteration in Chinese and the translator uses free translation to translate this expression as "*decline and demise*" which saves alliteration in English.

In the corpus, it is found that the writers or speakers of the original texts prefer to quote lines from Chinese classical poems. Actually, Chinese scholars have different opinions on the translatability and untranslatability of Chinese poems. Wang (2015) claims that Chinese poems are translatable for the equality of Signified in languages and similarity of cultures. Being faithful to the meaning and style of the quoted lines from Chinese poems, the translators of the 50 political texts keep the original rhyme of the cited poems through free translation and the translated lines are helpful for the receptors to understand Chinese poems and the writer's intentions of his or her quotations. There is an example:

Example (4) Source: 朱门酒肉臭，路有冻死骨

Target: The rich wine and dine, the poor starve and die.

In the target text "*dine*" and "*die*" carry the features of alliteration and vowel rhyme. And it is obvious that the target text is in the form of a poem which is close to the original style. The choice of words in the translation is faithful to the meaning and the writer's intention of the quotation.

The classic quotations in the 50 texts own the feature of brevity of ancient Chinese both in meaning and syntactic structure. Being faithful to the meanings and styles of the classic quotations, the translators do not follow English syntactic structure in the following examples. And moreover, the translated lines reproduce the meaning of emphasis conveyed in Chinese but without making any confusion for the receptors, like the following examples:

Example (5) Source: 博学之，审问之，慎思之，明辨之，笃行之

Target: learn extensively, inquire earnestly, think profoundly, discriminate clearly and practice sincerely

Example (6) Source: 穷则变，变则通，通则久

Target: Limitations lead to change; changes lead to solutions; solutions lead to development.

Example (7) Source: 视而使之明，听而使之聪，思而使之正

Target: Observation fosters clear understanding; listening fosters deeper comprehension; thinking fosters sound judgment.

B. Domestication

Yan Fu, a famous Chinese thinker, educator and translator, offers a criterion for a good translation. His criterion can be generalized as "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance". Accordingly, an acceptable translation should be not only faithful to the original content and style, but also smooth for reading. Therefore, translations based on this criterion can achieve the ultimate goal of communication in the target culture. On the one hand, the translators of the 50 political texts adopt foreignization in their translation to be faithful to the original style and the intentions of quotations. On the other hand, they also use domestication to take account of the receptors' smooth reading and balance the differences between languages and cultures.

English and Chinese are quite different languages. English is a hypotactic language which concerns the logical relations between clauses. Therefore, the syntactic structure of English looks like the "Russian doll", a layer by layer, which means conjunctions and pronouns are used to realize the complicated structures of English. On the contrary, Chinese is a paratactic language which does not usually depend on logical conjunctions to bind clauses together and so the whole picture of the language, Chinese, looks like bamboos with knots (Cao & Tang, 2017). Since meanings in Chinese can be achieved without the constraints of forms, conjunctions and pronouns are allowed to be omitted while the meanings will not be destroyed. Due to the differences between English and Chinese, the translators of the 50 political texts adopt domestication in translation, which is realized by different translation methods, such as amplification and simplification. Examples are followed:

Example (8) Source: 从善如登，从恶如崩

Target: Virtue uplifts, *while* vice debases.

Example (9) Source: 顺木之天，以致其性

Target: *We* should respect a tree's nature, *and* let it grow freely.

In example (8), the translator adds "*while*", a conjunction, to foreground the contradiction between "从善" and "从恶". The added conjunction is the requirement of the rule of English syntactic structure and it promotes the receptors to understand the original meaning effortlessly. In example (9), the translator adds two elements: a conjunction and a pronoun. The added conjunction is "*and*" which links the two clauses together and the added pronoun is "*we*" which makes the agent of the clause clear. The above added conjunction and pronoun meet the need of English syntactic structure and so they help to smooth the reading of the receptors.

Except for rhetoric effect, English readers have low tolerance for repetition. However, repetition is frequently used for emphasis in Chinese. Therefore, the translators of the 50 political texts adopt simplification to avoid repetition and try to satisfy the receptors. An example is cited in Example (10):

Example (10) Source: 分则力散，专则力全

Target: Strength is weakened once divided.

In the above example, the translator only deals with the first clause of the source text and omits the second one which is actually a repetition of the previous. The simplification adopted by the translator makes the target text brief and acceptable.

Compared with the Chinese readers, the intended readers of the target texts are in the low context of culture and they are not familiar with Chinese culture. Hence the translators of the political texts employ amplification and free translation to help the intended readers overcome the obstacles of different cultures. These translation methods are helpful for readers to understand the classic quotations in the texts, such as the following examples:

Example (11) Source: 思皇多士，此生王国。王国克生，维周之桢；济济多士，文王以宁

Target: *As described in the Book of Songs*, King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty respected competent people, who hence flocked to him, so his country became strong and prosperous.

Example (12) Source: 四维不张，国乃灭亡

Target: *propriety, righteousness, honesty and a sense of shame*--- the four anchors of our moral foundation, and a question of life and death for the country

In example (11), the translator adopts amplification (realized by *"as described in the Book of Songs"*) to offer the origin of the classic quotation which can promote the intended readers' understanding of the original meaning of the citation and the intention of the quotation. Amplification used for offering the origins of the classic quotations is pervasive in the studied 50 political texts. More examples are like "*in the Book of Lord Shang (Shang Jun Shu) it is written*", "*as described by Zheng Xie*", "*this is what Confucius meant when he said*", "*Wang Fu of the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220) said*", "*Confucius once said*", "*when Hai Rui said that*", "*as Mencius said*" etc. Some examples are found to offer just general explanations for the origins but without specifying from which classics the quotations are, like "*as an old Chinese saying goes*", "*as a saying goes*", "*an ancient proverb goes*", "*as we often say in China*", "*as our ancestors said*", "*a Chinese adage reads*", " *as a Chinese poem goes*", "*as a Tang verse goes*" etc. Besides amplification, free translation is also adopted in example (11), which simplifies the content of the original expression and helps English readers understand the virtue and dedication of King Wen of the Zhou Dynasty. In example (12), "四维" is from "*Guanzi*", an academic classic of the pre-Qin period and "四"in the expression implies "礼、义、廉、耻"which are impossible for the receptors to access. Therefore, the translator clarifies the meaning of "四维" by adding the specific meaning of "四"as "*propriety, righteousness, honesty, a sense of shame*" and then the meaning of the expression is transparent for the English readers.

The expressions conveying unique Chinese culture are usually embedded in classic quotations. In order to help the English readers approach and understand Chinese culture, the translators of the political texts also employ free translation. Examples are analyzed in the following:

Example (13) Source: 自古雄才多磨难，从来*纨绔*少伟男

Target: A hard life breeds great talents, whereas *an easy life* is not the way to cultivate great men.

Example (14) Source: 富者累巨万，贫者食*糟糠*

Target: …… and eradicate *the huge gap* between the rich and poor

In the above examples, the two words, "纨绔"and "糟糠", are two expressions representing unique Chinese culture. The first one is from "*The Book of Han*", a book mainly on the history of the Western Han Dynasty. And the word ("纨绔") originally refers to the trousers made of silk and then it evolves to mean the elegant clothes of the children living in the rich families. The translator translates it as "*an easy life*" to describe the life of the rich. So, it is clear the translator uses a free translation to facilitate English readers' understanding of the classic quotation. The second expression "糟糠" is quoted from "*The Book of Wei*" , a book recording the history of the Northern Wei Dynasty, and the word refers to the coarse food of the poor. The translator also employs a free translation ("*the huge gap*") to describe the obvious distance between the rich and the poor.

Domestication can also be achieved by borrowing English idioms or sayings which are familiar for the receptors. Therefore, the translators of the political texts studied in this paper borrow some idioms or sayings in their translation. Through this way, the target texts can enhance the receptors' familiarity with the content of the original texts.

Example (15) Source: 秉纲而目自张，执本而末自从

Target: Once the key link is grasped, everything else falls into place; once *the horse is before the cart*, the cart will follow.

Example (16) Source: 单则易折，众则难摧

Target: United we stand, divided we fall.

In example (15), "本" and "末" are two words to convey the dialectic thought of traditional Chinese philosophy. In the process of translation, the translator loans an English idiom ("*put the cart before the horse*") and changes it into "*the horse is before the cart*" to meet the context of the original text. The loaned idiom brings familiarity for the English readers. In example (16), the translator borrows a saying from "*Aesop's Fables*" which is well known for the western readers and so there are no obstacles for English readers to understand the meaning of the quotation.

IV. Conclusion

As a type of the informative text, political texts usually employ some classic quotations to emphasize or clarify the writers or speakers' opinions. These quotations are from Chinese classic works. Therefore, the study on the English translation of the classic quotations can promote a deep understanding of the historical and cultural roots of the texts. This paper analyzes the classic quotations in the selected 50 political texts delivered in the recent five years (2017-2021) and finds these quotations share the features of long span of time, high frequency, diverse genres and creativity. These features and the complex of translating classic quotations make it impossible for the translators of the texts to adopt just one single translation strategy to solve the problems of translation. After analyzing the translation of the classic quotations in the corpus, the paper finds that the translators are faithful to the authors of the classic works, the writers or speakers who adopt these classic quotations and the intended readers in the process of translating. It is obvious that the translators perfectly balance the relationship between two opposite translation strategies: foreignization and domestication. The study on English translation strategies of the classic quotations is hoped to inspire the research of translating cited expressions from classic works. And moreover, the study can help to promote the discourse system for the effective communication between China and other countries.

References

[1] Cao, L.M. & Tang, Y.F. (2017). China's Discourse in English Translations of Chinese Classics: A Case Study of Pearl S. Buck's Translation of Shuihu Zhuan. *Foreign Language Education*, *4*, 89-92.

[2] Hu, Y. X. & Li, H. J. (2016). On the Contemporary Values of Chinese Classic Quotations. J*iangxi Social Sciences*, 1, 195-198.

[3] Huang, G. W. (2012). A Unique Feature of Translating Ancient Chinese Works: From Intralingual Translation to Interlingual Translation. *Foreign Languages in China*, *6*, 64-71.

[4] Jakobson, R. (2000). On Linguistic Aspects of Translation. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (first ed. pp113-118). London and New York. Routledge.

[5] Li, J. (2017). On the "Recontextualization" of Classic Quotation Translation. *Shanghai Journal of Translators*, *4*, 62-67.

[6] Li, Z. S. & Ye, H.T. (2016). English Translation of Chinese Classics Should Pursue Faithful Equivalence: Taking English Version of "*Gnomic Verses about Water and Tree*" as an Example. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, *3*, 107-112.

[7] Ling, J. Y. (2015). On the Style of Political Texts. *Hundred Schools in Arts*, *1*, 21-37.

[8] Ling, J. Y. (2016). Re-study of the Style of Political Texts. *Hundred Schools in Arts*, *2*, 12-16.

[9] Ling, J. Y. (2017). Manage the Contemporary with Ancient Tao. *Hundred Schools in Arts*, *1*, 9-13.

[10] Liu, J.P. (2019). *A General History of Western Translation Theory*. Wuhan. Wuhan University Press.

[11] Reiss, K. (2000) Type, Kind and Individuality of Text: Decision making in translation. In L. Venuti (Ed.), *The Translation Studies Reader* (first ed. pp160-171). London and New York. Routledge.

[12] Wang, F. (2015). *A Comprehensive Study on the English Translation of Classical Tang Poetry*. Beijing. China Social Sciences Press.
[13] Wang, H. Y. (2003) Exploration of Teaching and Research Rules of Translation Practice and Theory of Ancient Chinese Classics. *Chinese Translators Journal*, *3*, 48-49.
[14] Ye, Z. C. (2014). Contemplating the “Origin”: The Sources of Governance Thought in History and Ancient Books. *Frontiers*, *1*, 48-58.
[15] Ye, Z. C. (2015). Main Thoughts on Governance in the Historical References. *Frontiers*, *4*, 4-11.
[16] Zhao, X. Y. (2017) Translation Strategies of Central Committee Literature in the New Era. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, *3*, 89-93.
[17] Zhou, H.T. (2016). On the Classic Quotations in Political Texts. *Leadership Science*, *4*, 55-58.

Junhua Ren is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Tianjin Foreign Studies University, China. She is also a lecture at Tiangong University, China. She received her Master degree of Foreign Linguistics and Applied Linguistics from Beihua University (China) in 2005. Her research interests include translation studies and systemic-functional grammar.

Lai Qi is a Ph.D. candidate at Tianjin Normal University, China and he has worked at Tiangong University since 2005 after graduation from Communication University of China with his Master degree of Journalism. His research interest covers cross-cultural communication and traditional Chinese culture and philosophy.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1079-1088, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.22

The Introductory Sentence in Literature Research Articles Published in High-Impact vs. Predatory Journals

Mohammad S. Alanazi*
Department of English Language & Literature, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Muteb A. Alqarni
Department of English Language, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The current study discusses the stylistic properties of the introductory sentence with which scholars begin their introduction in the literature field. The study draws upon a dataset of 624 introductory sentences, half of which are collected from high-impact Web of Science indexed journals and the other half are drawn from presumably predatory journals. The study shows that the introductory sentence written by authors of high-impact journals is a work-based sentence with a high number of references whereas that composed by authors of presumably predatory journals is a reference-less author-based sentence. Although Swales (1990, 2004) argues that less experienced writers may begin their introductions with Move 2/3-type sentences, the study shows that there is no difference between the two sets of scholars in terms of the usage of Move 2/3. However, authors of high-impact journals tend to describe their study, state their purpose, indicate research gaps and raise questions in their Move-2/3 sentences whereas authors of presumably predatory journals prefer definitional clarifications the most. The study also reveals that the introductory sentence produced by authors of presumably predatory journals is shorter in word count, full of repetitions and grammatical/punctuation errors and sometimes presented as a full paragraph.**

***Index Terms*—academic writing, cross-cultural communication, contrastive rhetoric, English**

I. Introduction

In the past decades, a large number of studies have explored the rhetoric and stylistic features of different sections of research articles (RAs) written in different languages (e.g. Swales, 1990 for English; Fredrickson & Swales, 1994 for Swedish; Ahmed, 1997 for Malay; Zorzo, 2017 for Spanish among others)[1]. In these works, every component of RAs is independently analyzed: introductions (e.g. Samraj, 2002), methodology (e.g. Brett, 1994), results (e.g. Lim, 2010), discussion (e.g. Yang & Allison, 2003) and conclusions (e.g. Stamatović & Vesna, 2015). These analyses show that the RA is an academic genre that follows rules and conventions.

For instance, Swales (1990, 2004) puts forward *Create A Research Space* (CARS) model which proposes that academics follow three moves (1, 2, 3) when they compose their RA introductions (for more discussion on CARS model, see section 3). According to CARS model, the academic author opens his/her introduction with Move 1, where he/she writes general topic sentences that make a review of the past literature and announce the importance of the paper to the field. The author then takes Move 2 and generates sentences that identify the research limitations in the previous literature. The final component of the introduction is constructed following Move 3, where the author produces sentences that describe their study, express their purpose, address their research questions, and/or outline the organization of their whole article. These three moves have been found common in the RA introductions in different fields such as EFL (Chu, 1966), computer sciences (Anthony, 1999), social sciences (Lewin et al., 2001), physical sciences (Gross et al., 2002) and biology (Samraj, 2002).

Contrary to the previous works which focus on the RA introduction as a whole, the current study takes a micro-view and investigates the rhetoric and stylistic properties of the introductory sentence (IS) that appears immediately below the heading 'introduction' in the literature RAs. Because the previous scholars had to analyze all the paragraphs within introductions, they encountered a tedious analytical task that confined them to small corpora. For instance, in dissertation or book-sized manuscripts, Swales (1981), Najjar (1990) and Jogthong (2001) only managed to analyze 48, 48 and 40 full introductions respectively. To overcome these limitations, our current study takes advantage of the short length of the IS and draws upon a larger dataset consisting of 624 ISs. Half (i.e. 312) of these ISs are composed by

---

* First and Corresponding Author: Mohammad S. Alanazi (Email: msalanzi@imamu.edu.sa). Second and Contributing Author: Muteb A. Alqarni (Email: moteebalqarni@kku.edu.sa).

[1] The abbreviations used in this article are as follows: HIJ(s) = High-Impact Journal(s); IS(s): Introductory Sentence(s); PPJ(s) = Presumably Predatory Journal(s); RA(s) = Research Article(s); WOS = Web of Science.

professional scholars who publish their RAs in High-Impact Journals (HIJs) indexed in Web of Science (WOS), whereas the other half are drafted by scholars who publish their works in Presumably Predatory Journals (PPJs).

Given that "nearly all academic writers admit to having more difficulty with getting started on a piece of academic writing than they have with its continuation" (Swales, 1990, p. 137), the objective of this study is twofold: descriptive and pedagogical. On the descriptive part, the study aims to highlight the differences in the properties of the IS between two sets of scholars publishing in high-impact vs low-impact journals. On the pedagogical part, the study intends to instruct beginners about the art of IS writing in RAs, disclosing the features they should consider in their IS so that it becomes similar in quality to the one written by professional academics.

The remainder of the paper will be organized as follows. Section (II) will outline the methodology of the study and the definition of the IS, whereas section (III) will lay out the CARS model within which the analysis will be couched. The results of the study will be presented in section (IV) whereas the closing remarks will be given in section (V).

II. Methodology

To our ends, we downloaded random 624 English-written RAs published between 2010 and 2020 in the literature field. Half of these RAs (i.e. 312) are published in 3 PPJs. These 3 PPJs are *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature* (i.e. 110 RAs), *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies* (i.e. 110 RAs), and *Journal of English Language and Literature* (i.e. 92 RAs). Although these 3 journals might not be predatory in essence, we simply consider them as such for being reported in the predatory journal list proposed by Prince Sultan University Research and Initiative Center (see https://innovation.psu.edu.sa/ric-v1/predatory.php).

The other half of RAs are gleaned from 3 HIJs which are indexed in WOS database and which are different in terms of 2020-2021 impact factor: *Journal of Literary Studies* (i.e. 110 RAs, impact factor: 0.132, Taylor & Francis), *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* (i.e. 110 RAs, impact factor: 0.190, SAGE), *Early American Literature* (i.e. 92 RAs, impact factor: 0.247, University of North Carolina Press).

Following the definition of a sentence proposed by www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, we define the term "IS" in this study as a set of words (i) that expresses a statement or a question, (ii) that starts in uppercase and end with a period (.), a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!), and (iii) that appears immediately below the heading 'Introduction'. Because some introductions begin with a subheading, the IS that appears below the subheading is the one collected.

III. CARS Model

In the early 1990s, Swales (1990) advances CARS model as an approach to capture the rhetoric and stylistic structure of RA introductions. According to CARS Model, authors follow three moves when they write their introductions: (i) *Establishing a territory* (Move 1), (ii) *Establishing a niche* (Move 2) and (iii) *Occupying the niche* (Move 3). When an author composes his/her introduction, he/she begins with Move 1 (i.e. Establishing a territory) generating sentences that (i) express central claims as in (1), present a general topic statement as in (2) and/or summarize the literature as in (3).

(1) In the past years, <u>there is a growing interest in</u> … (Central Claim)

(2) <u>Teachers should develop new relations with their students</u>. (Topic statement)

(3) <u>Previous studies demonstrate that</u> … (Brie, 1988) (Literature review)

In 2004, however, Swales (2004, p. 230, Figure 7.4) revisited his model, removing the three steps given above from Move 1, arguing that there is only one step under Move 1: *Topic generalizations of increasing specificity*. This step involves obligatory citations as shown in (4).

(4) In the past decades, researchers noticed … (<u>Brie, 1980</u>) (Topic generalizations)

After Move 1, Swales (1990) argues that the author turns to Move 2 (i.e. Establishing a niche) and drafts sentences that (i) are *counter claims* addressing the limitations in the past works as in (5), (ii) *indicate research gaps* as in (6), (iii) *raise questions* as in (7) and/or (iv) *present statements that continue the tradition* by replicating previous works as in (8).

(5) However, <u>there are limitations in these studies</u>... (Counter claim)

(6) <u>No work has assigned attention to</u>… (Gap statement)

(7) <u>One question that needs to be raised is</u>.... (Raised question)

(8) In fact, these studies <u>need to be reconsidered</u>… (Continuing traditions)

Swale (2004), however, reduces all the above four steps of Move 2 into two steps: (i) *research gap statements* as in (6) above and (ii) *presenting positive justification* as in (9) below (cf. Samraj, 2002, p. 15). The latter means that the author justifies his/her work immediately after he/she indicates the research gap. These two steps, according to Swales (2004, p. 230), may contain 'optional' citations.

(9) <u>One reason to</u> explore these facts is that ... (Presenting positive justification)

After Move 2, the author, according to Swales (1990), turns to Move 3 (i.e Occupying the niche), presenting sentences that (i) *announce the purpose of the study* as in (10), (ii) *describe the study* as in (11), (iii) *discuss the findings* as in (12) and/or (iv) *present the structure of the article* as in (13).

(10) <u>The main objective of this article is</u> to examine …. (Purpose of the study)

(11) <u>The current article investigates/explores</u> …. (Description of the study)

(12) The current findings <u>demonstrate/show that</u> … (Presenting findings)

(13) The structure of the paper is as follows. Section I… (Structure of the paper)

Although Swales (2004) did not revise the steps given above for Move 3, he added some more. He argues that the author, at Move 3, may also compose statements that (v) *pose questions* as in (14), (vi) *present definitions* as in (15), (vii) *review methods* as in (16) and/or (viii) *state the importance of the research* as in (17). Swales (2004) points out that all Move-3 statements may contain 'optional' citations.

(14) One question that remains unaddressed is … (Raised questions)

(15) The term 'anthropology' can be defined as …… (Definitional Statements)

(16) In summary, these methods involve ….. (Summary of methods)

(17) The current study highlights the importance of ….. (Value of the research)

In light of these moves, and given that Move 2 and 3 always follow Move 1, we predict that all the ISs in our corpus are of Move-1 type. This prediction is in line with Swales' (1990) argument that rules out the possibility that RA introductions may begin with Move 2 or 3 sentences. If this unpredictable scenario takes place, Swales (1990) claims that the RAs may be grant-related or may be "associated with less experienced writers" (p. 165). In light of these conventions, we predict that authors who publish their RAs in PPJs are more likely to write their IS following Move 2/3.

IV. Findings and Discussion

In section (A), we will explore the rhetoric features of the IS in both datasets in light of the CARS model. In section (B), we will present other stylistic differences that separate the two sets of ISs in both corpora further.

A. The Rhetorical Properties of the IS in HIJs and PPJs

Since Swales (2004) argues that citations are obligatory under Move 1, but optional under Move 2 and 3, let us start by exploring ISs that are referenced in both databases. We find that 113 (36%) ISs out of the whole HIJ corpus (i.e. 312 ISs) are referenced as shown in (18) and (19) whereas only 33 (11%) of the 312 ISs in the PPJ one are supported with citations. The majority (279, 89%) of the ISs in the PPJ dataset are not referenced as shown in (20) and (21).

(18) HIJ: Henry James, if Desmond MacCarthy is to be believed, could "stand a great deal of gold" (Edel 1985: 646); it would appear that he could stand a good quantity of brocade, as well.

(19) HIJ: Catherine Belsey states that "for psychoanalysis, dreams recall a desire that is present in the memory, whether or not it was ever realized" (2008: 97).

(20) PPJ: Courage makes a man different from the others.

(21) PPJ: The history of feminism in India is commonly divided into three phases.

It should also be noted that 48 of these 113 referenced ISs in the HIJ corpus include direct quotations as shown in (22) and (23) in comparison to only 13 quote-including cases from the 33 referenced ISs in the PPJ database, e.g. (24) and (25).

(22) HIJ: Early in Hannah Webster Foster's 1797 novel The Coquette, the heroine, Eliza Wharton, writes to her friend Lucy Freeman that she wishes "for no other connection than that of friendship" (6).

(23) HIJ: Summing up the significance of Hannah Webster Foster's popular seduction novel The Coquette (1797) in 2006, Laura Korobkin proclaimed: "What is at stake, finally, in fielding competing interpretations of The Coquette, is the meaning for Foster—and for us as well—of her central term, 'freedom'" (99).

(24) PPJ: "The mind is its own place", says John Milton, "and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven" (Paradise Lost, Book I, 255).

(25) PPJ: In the nineteenth-century Britain, the father's role is best defined by Nelson, "authority, guidance and financial support." (McKnight 2011, p.155)

Recall that the 113 HIJ ISs and the 33 PPJ ISs discussed above represent the number of referenced ISs. Given that the IS may contain more than one reference, we find that the number of references in the two corpora varies. In fact, we find 140 references in the HIJ corpus in comparison to 34 ones in the PPJ one. In other words, 93 ISs (82%) in the HIJ corpus consist of single citations, but 20 (18%) ISs thereof contain 2 references or more as in (26) and (27) below. As for the 33 referenced ISs in the PPJ corpus, they are all single-cited as in (24) and (25) above, with the exception of one IS that has two references as shown in (28).

(26) HIJ: This article urges us to draw on archival texts in order to augment the colonial library (see Desai, 2001; Mbembe 2002; Stoler 2009).

(27) HIJ: In recent years, there has been a steady stream of scholarly work on how media discourses on "oppressed" and "downtrodden" Muslim women have been mobilized as boundary markers between "us" and "them" in the global "War on Terror" and a convenient justification of its policies, both foreign and domestic (Abu-Lughod, 2013; Morey and Yaqin, 2011; Whitlock, 2010).

(28) PPJ: Myths, generally defined as a traditional story or legend, offering an explanation of religious or supernatural phenomena such as the gods, heroes, the many forces of nature (Current Literary terms 1979:190), are still widely interpreted in conflicting ways (Levi-Strauss 1963: 206-208): as collective dreams, as the outcome of a kind of aesthetic play, or a basis of ritual.

As far as the recency of references is concerned, and given that the collected RAs are published between 2010 and 2020, we find that 78 (56%) out of the 140 citations in the HIJ ISs are references dated from 2000 or above as shown in

(26) and (27) above, whereas only 10 (29%) out of the 34 references in the PPJ ISs are from 2000-above. In other words, most of the PPJ ISs (i.e. 24, 71%) are 1999 or below as shown in (28) above.

To summarize, the first distinction between the ISs in the two corpora follows form the fact that authors in HIJs reference one third (36%) of their 312 ISs: 20 (18%) of these referenced ISs contain two or more references, 48 (42%) are quoted, and half (56%) of these citations are dated from 2000 and above. By contrast, PPJ scholars reference only one tenth (i.e. 11%, 33) out of their 312 ISs, 4% (13) of which are direct quotes, with only one IS containing two references and with only 10 (29%) references are from 2000 or above.

(a). Move 1-Type ISs in HIJs and PPJs

As predicted by Swales' (1990, 2004) CARS model, the majority of the ISs in the two datasets represent Move 1: 273 (88%) ISs of the HIJ corpus and 269 (86%) ISs of the PPJ one are all Move-1 sentences as shown in (29) throughout (32). In other words, there is no difference between the two groups of authors in terms of their preference of Move 1 sentences.

(29) HIJ: Literary criticism may be nearing the most significant dispositional shift since the advent of New Historicism some thirty years ago.

(30) HIJ: Our field has always had a vexed relationship to aesthetics.

(31) PPJ: Fictional literature is often described as the most popular genre of social criticism.

(32) PPJ: Sometimes fiction can teach us truth that is seldom expressed with clarity in ordinary time.

While Swales (2004) argues that there is only one step under Move 1 which is 'topic generalization of increasing specificity', we find that these Move-1 sentences can take different insinuations in terms of stylistics. The first distinction between the two sets of authors follows from the fact that PPJ writers focus in their IS on providing information about the authors they are addressing their works (i.e. an author-based sentence) while the HIJ academics address both the authors as well as their works in the IS (i.e. a work-based sentence). For instance, 50 (19%) of the 269 Move-1 sentences in the PPJ corpus aim to familiarize the readership with a short introduction about the literary figure under study (i.e. novelist, poet, short story teller, playwright etc) as in (33) throughout (36).

(33) PPJ: Rasipuram Krishna Swami Narayan is a versatile writer and one of the foremost novelists of Indian Writing in English.

(34) PPJ: Manju Kapur is one of the most acclaimed women writers of the contemporary era in India.

(35) PPJ: Ngugi Wa Thiong'o is 20th Century Kenyan writer.

(36) PPJ: Dattani is a leading professional Indian playwright and for him theatre is an art.

Although one may argue that the PPJ authors do this because most of the literary figures they explore are from India and they are less known to the world, we find all these names in the above examples are known enough and listed with full information in Wikipedia pages. Moreover, PPJ authors follow the same practice even with eminent figures known in the literature field as shown in the ISs below.

(37) PPJ: Gabriel Garcia Marquez, born on 6th March 1928 in Aracataca, a small town in Northern Colombia, is one of the best-known writer of our time who has emerged from the Third World.

(38) PPJ: Gustave Flaubert was one of the most influential writers of the modern fiction.

(39) PPJ: John Barth is an eminent practitioner and theoretician of postmodern fiction.

(40) PPJ: Roland Barthes (1915-80) is considered one of the prominent French literary critics who is an emblem of the turning point from structuralism to poststructuralist.

In contrast, these brief introductions about authors are found only three times (1%) in the 273 Move-1 sentences in the HIJ dataset as shown in the cases below.

(41) HIJ: Betty Roland (1903–1996) is perhaps best known as a career dramatist for stage and radio in Australia and the United Kingdom.

(42) HIJ: In the early days Matar was regarded as a British Libyan or Anglo-Arab writer.

(43) HIJ: Juliana Spahr (1966-) was born in Chillicothe, Ohio, and currently resides in Berkeley, California.

In fact, HIJ scholars are concerned in their ISs about addressing and analyzing the literary works (i.e. work-based sentences). If they do so, they follow the works under study with dates of publications and bring up the names of the authors who published them as shown in the following examples, be they novels/novelists (77 times, 28%), poems/poets (12 times, 4%), essays/essayists (12, 4%), plays/playwrights (7, 3%), movies/producers (6, 2%) and short stories/short story tellers (2, 0.7%).

(44) HIJ, Novel: At a key moment in the middle of The Algerine Captive (1797), Royall Tyler sends his American narrator, Updike Underhill, to Africa aboard The Sympathy.

(45) HIJ, Poem: In this article, I consider two fairly recent English poems by Van Niekerk: "Mud school" (2013) and "Fallist art (in memory of Bongani Mayosi)" (2018).

(46) HIJ, Essay: In an essay titled "Reading The Satanic Verses", published in 1989, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak cites Roland Barthes' well-known formulation "The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author" (qtd. in Spivak, 1993: 217).

(47) HIJ, Play: Beasty Girl: The Secret Life of Errol Flynn, a one-woman show written by Australian playwright Scott Rankin, was performed by Paula Arundell when it was staged at Tasmania's Ten Days on the Island festival in April 2003.

(48) HIJ, Movie: Whilst it is now an axiomatic fact that the real story that the screenplay of Le Carré's The Constant Gardener (2005) retells is about the actual events surrounding the unethical "trialling" of lethal drugs by a pharmaceutical company in Nigeria, allegory in this film makes us see the resultant deaths as part of continental genocide by the same clinical or allied means.

(49) HIJ, Short story: It may seem unusual to revisit "The Hitchhiking Game", one of seven short stories which make up Laughable Loves, a largely unknown anthology by Milan Kundera, first published in Czech as Smensne Lasky (1968), and subsequently revised and translated2 into various languages.

The above stylistic preference takes place in 116 (42%) out of the 273 Move-1 ISs in the HIJ corpus. In comparison, the same tendency appears only in 74 (28%) of the 269 Move-1 ISs as shown in the following examples, be they novels/novelists (31 times, 12%), poems/poets (23, 9%), plays/playwrights (18, 7%), and short stories/short story tellers (1, 0.3%) and movies/producers (1, 0.3%).

(50) PPJ, Novel: In "The Pakistani Bride", Sidhwa pictures the lives of women who are the inhabitants of harsh mountainous region.

(51) PPJ, Short story: A struggle for dominance is outlined in the first few paragraphs of Flannery O'Connor's "A Good Man Is Hard to Find" and to locate what, or whom, dominates the thematic mood of the text would give indication of a frame bordering the tale, a tendency hovering over it, or a subtext at its foundation.

(52) PPJ, Play: With The Zoo Story, Albee is credited with changing the course of American Theatre History.

(53) PPJ, Poem: "La Belle Dame sans Merci" is one of Keats's most superb and memorable poems.

(54) PPJ, Movie: In an attempt to explore the issue of alternative sexuality, Deepa Mehta's film Fire becomes an artistic expression of objective violence and ethics of the Real.

Note from the examples above that, although PPJ authors follow the same practice, they do not supplement the works they are addressing with dates of publications, in comparison to the ISs written by HIJ authors, see e.g. (44) throughout (49). Another important remarks follows from the fact that novels are discussed by HIJ authors 77 times in comparison to only 31 times by PPJ ones, whereas poems and plays are analyzed by PPJ authors 23 and 18 times respectively in comparison to 12 and 7 times by HIJ ones. We assume that these preferences of genres may be attributed to the fact that PPJ authors prefer short texts (i.e poems/plays) for analysis whereas HIJ authors take the risk in exploring long texts such as novels.

Other works that HIJ authors also shed light upon are the critic theory books written by professional critics in the literature field. This tendency is manifested in 27 (10%) out of the 273 HIJ Move-1 sentences in (55) and (56) in comparison to only one case from the PPJ corpus in (57).

(55) HIJ: A provocative difference one notices on the cover of the two editions of Henry Louis Gates's groundbreaking book The Signifying Monkey is the change in the subtitle from "A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism" to "A Theory of African American Literary Criticism," a change that the book helped to enact.

(56) HIJ: While it has been twenty-three years since Paul Gilroy published The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness (1993), it remains a touchstone in studies of the African diaspora.

(57) PHJ: In Islandology: Geography, Rhetoric, Politics (2014), Marc Shell cautions that geographic determinism is "intellectually questionable and politically dangerous" (239).

Another behavior attested among the HIJ authors is that they interact with the news stories and the media events published in magazines and newspapers in general. This behavior has been found 11 times (4%) in the HIJ corpus as shown in (58) and (59) with no occurrence in the PPJs.

(58) HIJ: On 13 September 2001, two days after the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York, a group of British men desecrated a mosque in Exeter, England by dumping pigs' heads outside and smearing blood on the walls (Woolcock, 2002: n.p.).

(59) HIJ: In the days, weeks, and months following the 7 July 2005 terror attacks on the London transport network — an event quickly cast as "London's 9/11" and conceived as all the more sinister following the revelation that the perpetrators were British — the media became saturated with images first of the wreckage and the victims, and subsequently of the bombers and their homes in the West Yorkshire city of Leeds and its suburb, Beeston.

Another distinctive property among HIJ authors is that they narrate their personal stories in 9 (3%) cases of their 273 Move-1 sentences as shown in (60) throughout (63), with no similar practice among the PPJ writers.

(60) HIJ: As a PhD student studying early American literature and ecocriticism at the University of Arizona in the early 2000s, I had the good fortune to work as research assistant to Annette Kolodny for several years.

(61) HIJ: On 4 July 2013, I attended a one-day, in-house conference hosted by the English Department of the University of Pretoria with the express purpose of interfacing with some African scholars in order to gain insights into prevailing attitudes to Conrad generally and to Heart of Darkness specifically.

(62) HIJ: In 2011, in a graduate creative writing workshop, I wrote a sonnet in the voice of Madison Hemings, one of Sally Hemings's sons.

(63) HIJ: I was in graduate school in 2003 when my adviser, Shelley Fisher Fishkin, told me to be on the lookout for a new book by Annette Kolodny that would shift our thinking about the origins of American literature and the ways in which we narrate "first contact" between indigenous peoples of the Americas and European outsiders.

Another characteristic among the HIJ authors is that they address the research landscape within which the authors' articles can be situated as shown in (64) and (65) from the HIJ corpus. This characteristic manifests itself in 25 (9%) of the Move-1 sentences in the HIJ corpus but only in 8 (3%) cases from the PPJ Move-1 sentences, e.g. (66) and (67).

(64) HIJ: In recent years, there has been a steady stream of scholarly work on how media discourses on "oppressed" and "downtrodden" Muslim women have been mobilized as boundary markers between "us" and "them" in the global "War on Terror" and a convenient justification of its policies, both foreign and domestic (Abu-Lughod, 2013; Morey & Yaqin, 2011; Whitlock, 2010).

(65) HIJ: The question of exhuming and reburying victims of political massacres is a thorny subject in post-conflict societies (Ferrandiz & Robben 2015; Robben 2015).

(66) PPJ: The last twenty years have been clearly marked by an explosion of work in literary and cultural theory, providing a strong basis for further research on the relationship between literature, language and education.

(67) PPJ: Today, literary-critical theory has become an essential component of literary studies.

The remaining Move 1-sentences in both groups can be classified as 'general statements'. These general statements in the examples below are more common among the PPJ authors (i.e. 136 times, 50%) than their HIJ counterparts (i.e. 82 cases, 30%).

(68) PPJ: We hear the words 'right' and 'wrong' several times a day in our lives.

(69) PPJ: One point is crystal clear in life; life is not a bed of roses.

(70) PPJ: Gender in the contemporary epoch resonates as the most generic term.

(71) HIJ: Early American literature is as dry as it is dusty, arcane as it is archival.

(72) HIJ: Children are, for obvious reasons, generally ranked among society's most vulnerable members.

(73) HIJ: The early national period of the United States was far from utopian.

In sum, and as far as Move 1 is concerned, PPJ authors tend to compose half of their ISs as very general statements than their HIJ counterparts. However, 19% of PPJ authors prefer to acquaint their readership with a short biography about the writers they intend to address their works in their ISs, producing author-centered sentences, and explore more short texts such as plays and poems. In contrast, 42% of HIJ authors tend to begin their introduction with more focus on the literary works they want to analyze, producing work-centered ISs, and shed more light on longer texts such as novels. When HIJ authors present work-based sentences, they add dates of publications to the works being addressed, in comparison to their PPJ fellows who neglect publication dates. As distinctive characteristics in the HIJ Move-1 ISs, HIJ authors tend to discuss theoretical critic books, personal narratives and news stories more than PPJ writers do.

(b). Move 2 & 3-Type ISs in HIJs and PPJs

Although Swales (1990, 2004) eliminates the possibility that introductions may begin with Move2/3 sentences, and if so, these introductions may be associated with less experienced writers, our data shows that both groups, PPJ and HIJ authors, equally make use of Move 2/3-type sentences. Unlike PPJ authors who do not show any usage of Move 2, HIJ academics present 4 of their 312 ISs as Move-2 sentences. As far as Move 3 is concerned, PPJ authors present 43 of their 312 ISs as Move-3 sentences (14%) whereas their HIJ counterparts do the same in 35 of their ISs (13%).

Starting with Move 2, and although Move 2 can be represented as (i) a research gap statement or (ii) a positive justification (see section III), our study finds that all the four Move-2 ISs from the HIJ corpus refer to research gaps as exemplified below.

(74) HIJ: Despite the continued proliferation of scholarship on Samuel Selvon's body of work, there are still important aspects of his writing that remain unexamined.

(75) HIJ: When thinking about the place that small literatures such as the literature written in Afrikaans occupy …, it is difficult not to be daunted by the smallness and marginality of this literature against the vast backdrop of the world.

(76) HIJ: Although many critical studies conducted more recently support arguments in favour of the merit of Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights, many critics still fail to fully acknowledge the representation and examination of core nineteenth-century issues in the narrative.

(77) HIJ: Despite the expansion or demolition of the canon, too much emphasis in survey courses is still placed on … texts, a practice that has tended to exclude works written for the early American stage.

As far as Move 3 is concerned, we find, in both corpora, ISs that express: (i) study purpose, (ii) study description, (iii) questions and (iv) definitional clarifications. In contrast to one PPJ author who expresses the purpose of the study once in the whole PPJ corpus as in (78), HIJ authors do so three times as in (79) throughout (81).

(78) PPJ: The objective of this paper is to focus on the structurally defined roles of the marginalized people in India since time immemorial by making a literary analysis of few works by Indian authors redefining the role of karma in colonial society and gradually highlighting the nationalistic approach in India.

(79) HIJ: This article aims to contribute to a consideration of how global processes can provide us with a site of practices to critique the restraints of national identity politics.

(80) HIJ: This article has a dual purpose.

(81) HIJ: The purpose of this article is to examine my role as translator in navigating between the Scylla of faithfulness to a source culture and the Charybdis of the demand for conformity imposed by the target culture.

As for the description of the study (step 2), we find that HIJ authors describe their study 25 (71%) times of their 35 Move-3 sentences as in (82) and (83). The same step has been found 21 times (49%) of the 43 Move-3 statements composed by PPJ writers, e.g. (84) and (85).

(82) HIJ: <u>This article looks at</u> Zimbabwean whiteness in the context of loss, dispossession, victimisation and the need to belong.

(83) HIJ: <u>This article will explore</u> the links between fantasy writing and postmodernist revisionist historicism in the work of a relatively neglected contemporary Italian novelist, Michele Mari.

(84) PPJ: <u>The present study attempts to shed light on</u> the statements of two great authors and also to examine their beliefs and ideas in the light of Spivakian postcolonial feminism.

(85) PPJ: <u>This article explores</u> how Ngugi wa Thiong'o's postcolonial novel Petals of Blood addresses the Issues of struggle and socialism within the matrix of class.

Regarding raised questions, our study shows that HIJ authors pose questions 8 times (23%) as shown in (86) throughout (88) as opposed to three times (7%) by their PPJ counterparts.

(86) HIJ: <u>What</u> is the subject of aesthetics doing to early American literary studies?

(87) HIJ: <u>What</u> are the origins of the American novel?

(88) HIJ: <u>How</u> can we live?

(89) PPJ: <u>What</u> is the identity of Blacks in America?

(90) PPJ: <u>Why</u> do characters are not willing to remember the past?

(91) PPJ: <u>Who's</u> Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

For definitional clarifications, the scale is switched. PPJ authors seem to define terms in 23 (53%) of their 43 Move-3 ISs as in (92) and (93), in comparison to only six definitional cases (17%) by HIJ academics, e.g. (94) and (95).

(92) PPJ: In the nineteenth-century Britain, <u>the father's role is best defined</u> by Nelson, "authority, guidance and financial support." (McKnight 2011, p.155)

(93) PPJ: <u>'Diaspora' is a term</u> derived from Greek word 'diaspeirein' which means 'to disperse' or 'to scatter' (OED).

(94) HIJ: <u>The postmodern is</u> an epoch that is characterised by uncertainty about any final truth claims and provides an array of choices between a polyphony of different voices.

(95) HIJ: <u>Revisionism means</u> we ask new questions of old texts, explore old texts in new ways, or recover texts that were unimportant to an old paradigm but have different significance under the new.

In short, the two corpora in our study do not support the predictions made by Swales (1990, 2004) that the initial positions in introductions should be reserved for Move-1 sentences. Although Swales (1990) argues that beginning an introduction with a Move-2/3 sentence "may be associated with less experienced writers" (p. 165), both groups of authors use either Move 2 or 3 in their ISs (PPJ: 14% vs. HIJ: 13%). In other words, the current study shows that starting RA introductions with Move-2/3 sentences does not bear on the professionalism of the authors, and the quality of the RAs.

However, it seems that HIJ authors prefer to indicate research gaps in their ISs (i.e, Move 2, 4 times) with no occurrence of the same move in PPJ corpus. They also seem to state their purpose of their research (9%), describe their study (71%) or raise questions (23%) more than their PPJ counterparts who prefer definitional clarifications the most (53%).

B. Other Stylistic and Textual Properties of the IS

In this section, we will separate the two sets of ISs further by exploring other distinctions such as the word count of the IS (section a), the frequency of the parts of speech in the IS (section b), the grammatical and punctuation errors in the IS (section c) and the presentation of the IS as a full paragraph (section d).

(a). The Word Count of the IS

Generally speaking, the total of words in the HIJ corpus (i.e. 9841 words) is bigger than that of the PPJ dataset (i.e. 7460), indicating that the ISs in the HIJ database are longer than those in the PPJ one. In fact, the mean of the IS word count in the HIJs is 31.5 words (with std deviation: 15.06916) in contrast to only 23.9 words (with std deviation: 12.70318) in the PPJ ISs. The shortest IS in both datasets, however, consists of three words as shown in (96) and (97). However, the longest ISs in HIJ and PPJ corpora are 87 and 104 word long respectively as shown in (98) and (99).

(96) HIJ: What is disability?

(97) PPJ: Literature mirrors life.

(98) HIJ: When one is asked what they know about South Sudan, one will certainly recall that, South Sudan is the perhaps the newest country on the African continent which has failed to put together a meaningful and effective administration and is embroiled in senseless ethnic war between government soldiers loyal to President Salva Kiir who hails from the largest ethnic group, the Dinka, and some rebel forces who are on the side of former vice president, Riek Machar, who is from the second largest ethnic group, the Nuer.

(99) PPJ: We live at a time when people around the world are urged by many varied forces to leave their homeland to start a living in a new region leaving most of their belongings behind; what does not remain in the mother land and immigrates along with them to the new land is the sense of belongingness to home which is attached to the soul of every migrant individual, a sense that is instigated mostly by the nostalgic memories of the people and

places who/that address those memories and intensify the desire for home, hence occupational, political or cultural issues, ethnic conflicts, sheer boredom, etc.

(b). The Frequency of the Parts of Speech in the IS

Using the website (https://parts-of-speech.info/) for word classification and the website (http://www.writewords.org.uk/word_count.asp) for word frequency, we find that both groups of authors do not differ in terms of their usage of parts of speech. However, it seems that PPJ writers use more verbs, adjectives, conjunctions and determiners whereas HIJ authors use more nouns and numbers (i.e. citations).

TABLE 1
THE FREQUENCY OF THE PARTS OF SPEECH IN THE IS IN PPJ AND HIJ DATASETS

	PPJ: 7460 WORDS	HIJs: 9841 WORDs
Verbs	976 (13%)	1209 (12%)
Nouns	2598 (35%)	3526 (36%)
Adjectives	829 (11%)	1015 (10%)
Adverbs	247 (3%)	339 (3%)
Preposition	1148 (15%)	1548 (15%)
Conjunctions	307 (4%)	330 (3%)
Determiners	951 (13%)	1163 (12%)
Pronouns	196 (3%)	309 (3%)
Numbers	174 (2%)	401 (5%)

Although both sets of scholars use adverbs at an equal frequency, PPJ writers tend to use more unique adverbs before verbs as illustrated in the examples below. This usage has been found four times in the PPJ corpus with no similar occurrence in the HIJ dataset.

(100) PPJ: Women and nature are indispensible parts of the works of Alice Walker and she has empathetically written about them.

(101) PPJ: Toni Morrison, a foremost contemporary novelist, narrates the African-American experience and commendably succeeds in creating a clear view on the ‘penetrating view of black motherhood'.

(102) PPJ: The reports of slaves pristinely came into sight in the United States in 1703; however, those …

(103) PPJ: Sashi Deshpande in her book ‘That Long Silence’ not only forthrightly articulates a thematic and technical maturity but also effectively communicates an intentionally apprehended Feminine Sensibility.

Moreover, PPJ writers are found to repeat their words in a redundant way 8 times as shown in the following examples, with no similar behavior from the HIJ authors.

(104) PPJ: Literature is the only branch of studies that can deal with any other branch of studies.

(105) PPJ: Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai is a prolific writer and a fast writer.

(106) PPJ: World literature and world languages are something that concerns our spirit, it is not something meant for specialist, and it is something that affects our soul.

(107) PPJ: To choose, to choose freely, to choose willingly, to choose with absolute will, to choose with deliberation, to choose for immediate gratification, to choose for ‘eternal validity’(Choice 831) , to choose for one’s own self, to choose for other than one’s own self, to simultaneously choose for one’s own self and others, to choose from choices made by others than one’s own self and to choose not to choose at all are the choices offered to man since he is constantly confronted with the dilemma of being and non-being, and meaninglessness and meaningfulness.

As far as the most repeated key words in the IS in both groups, we find that PPJ authors prefer general words in their ISs such as *literature* (PPJ: 40 times, HIJ: 23), *Life/lives* (PPJ: 23, HIJ: 13), *writer(s)* (29, 19), *twentieth* (9, 5), *century/centuries* (30, 15), *human* (13, 7), *is* (162, 99) *born* (10, 1), *called* (9, 3), *defined* (7, 0), *considered* (6, 0). By contrast, HIJ authors tend to use more specific words that serve their research agenda such as *article* (HIJ: 27 vs. PPJ: 3), *published* (17, 11), *year(s)* (26, 10), *recent* (10 vs. 0), *study* (23, 12), *analysis* (10, 2), *now* (7, 3), *central* (5, 0), *main* (5, 1), *signifying* (6, 1), *entitled* (5, 0), *will* (10, 2), *argue* (4, 1), *suggest* (4, 1) among others.

Furthermore, PPJ writers tend to use very promotional words in their ISs such as *most* (24, 10), *especially* (5, 2), *many* (10, 7) whereas HIJ authors use more neutral words such as *may* (6, 1), *might*, (6, 1), and *generally* (4, 2). Due to the variance in the interest and the domain of the study, PPJ authors are found to use more words such as *women/woman* (41 vs. 13), *feminism* (5 vs. 1), *movement* (5 vs. 2), *India/Indian/Indians* (21 vs. 6), whereas HIJ use more words such as *Africa* (27 vs. 1), *African* (33, 8), *American* (25, 13), *British* (13, 8), *white* (12, 1), *global* (7, 1) etc.

(c). Grammatical and Punctuation Errors in the IS

Given that PPJs are more likely to receive low-quality RAs, we expect more grammatical and punctuation errors in the PPJ ISs. In fact, we find 7 grammatical mistakes in the PPJ database, with no errors in the HIJ corpus. Consider the grammatical errors below from the PPJ corpus.

(108) PPJ: Women right to celebrate their womanhood; they sing women’s dream and speak their bodies.

(109) PPJ: The postmodern era and its immediate outcome in relativity of values has made contemporary critics such as Slavoj Žižek look at different aspects of such concepts as violence, both mentally and physically.

(110) PPJ: The treatment and role women the play as portrayed in The Poor Christ of Bomba (Beti & Moore, 1971) can be seen from twofold oppression, of the colonialism and native culture, as called by Gutierrez as "intolerable" (xxii).

(111) PPJ: Indian English Literary Studies and Indian Literature in Translation play a vital role to create a new awareness amongst the masses about the position of women.

We also find that PPJ authors use improper punctuation marks four times as shown in the following cases. No mistakes in punctuation marks are recorded in the HIJ database.

(112) PPJ: Manipulation is one of the notions that can be categorized in the class of discursive power abuse, it is one of the most important concepts that belongs to the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

(113) PPJ: Meaning of "Meaning in life" , is not a logical Quote but When the topic of the meaning of life comes up, people often pose one of two questions: "So, what is the meaning of life?" and "What are you talking about?".

(114) PPJ: August Wilson, one of the leading African-American playwrights spoke for the racially discriminated and socially abused Blacks through his plays.

(115) PPJ: As the title of this research indicates, it deals with two areas of study, the first is a critical analysis of the discourse of the Invisible Man novel and the second one examines this kind of analysis from the view point of Bakhtin.

In sum, and as expected from RAs being published in PPJs, our study finds that 11 (4%) of the 312 PPJ ISs violate grammatical and punctuation rules.

(d). The Presentation of the IS as a Full Paragraph

Although a paragraph is defined as a block of text that (i) contains a number of sentences and (ii) is separate from other paragraphs by a line, we find that four PPJ authors (1.2%) cannot distinguish sentences from paragraphs, presenting their IS as a full paragraph as shown in the following two examples. Examples (78) and (114) above are also presented as full paragraphs in the RAs collected from PPJs.

(116) PPJ: Nayantara Sahgal's novels remind one of the Gandhian ideals, not merely because they were instrumental agents in restoring freedom to India, but because today their relevance is increasingly felt due to violence erupting everywhere.

(117) PPJ: Kachchh, a nondescript piece of real estate, is now famous for tourist spots and widely known for its wild asses, culture, arts and crafts, mud work, Kutchi dresses and brine-soaked badlands outside Gujarat.

In other words, after PPJ writers compose their IS, they move to the second line beginning a new paragraph, leaving a bad impression over their entire works from the very beginning.

V. Conclusion

The present study provides insightful suggestions to the authors who aim to publish in a WOS indexed journal. It demonstrates that HIJ professional academics generate an IS different from that written by less experienced PPJ authors. Taking the IS composed by HIJ authors as a representative, the findings show that professional literature academics make their IS fairly longer (i.e, 31 words as a mean). The IS written by professional writers contains references and it tends to be more work-based (i.e. focusing on the works under study) than being author-based (i.e. giving short introductions about literary writers). This IS composed by HIJ academics is also clear of typos, grammatical and punctuation mistakes neither is it presented as a full paragraph.

Our results also show that both groups of authors equally start with Move-1 sentences. While Swales (1990, 2004) suggests that introductions should not start Move 2/3 sentences, arguing that this may be related to less experienced writers, we find that parallel minorities of both groups still use Move 2/3 ISs, indicating that starting with Move 2/3 does not bear much on the quality of the paper or the professionalism of the authors.

In light of these suggestions on the craft of the IS, it should be noted that writing an impressive IS does not guarantee that the sentences to follow will be as perfect. However, we assume that starting with an impressive IS may help the authors in their prose and academic progression, and may but not necessarily persuade editor-in-chiefs and reviewers in HIJs to consider the author's paper as a manuscript that should be given a chance to be read.

Acknowledgements

Mohammad S. Alanazi and Muteb A. Alqarni would like to express their gratitude to Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia) and King Khalid University (Abha, Saudi Arabia) for providing administrative and technical support to this research.

References

[1] Ahmad, U. (1997). Research article introductions in Malay: Rhetoric in an emerging research community. In A. Duszak (Ed.), *Culture and styles of academic discourse*, (pp. 273-303). Mouton de Gruyter.

[2] Anthony, L. (1999). Writing research article introductions in software engineering: How accurate is the standard model? *IEEE Transactions of Professional Communication*, *42*(1), 38–46.

[3] Brett, P. (1994). A genre analysis of the Results section of sociology articles. *English for Specific Purposes, 13*(1), 47–60.
[4] Chu, B. (1996). *Introductions in state-of-the-art, argumentative, and teaching tips TESL journal articles: Three possible sub-genres of introduction?* City University of Hong Kong.
[5] Fredrickson, K., & Swales, J. (1994). Competition and discourse community: Introductions from Nysvenka Studier. In B. Gunnarsson, P. Linell, & B. Nordberg (Eds.), *Text and talk in professional contexts* (pp. 9-22). ASLA.
[6] Gross, A., Harmon, J., & Reidy, M. (2002). *Communicating science: The scientific article from the 17th century to the present*. Oxford University Press.
[7] Jogthong, C. (2001). *Research article introductions in Thai: Genre analysis of academic writing* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. West Virginia University.
[8] Lewin, B., Fine, J., & Young, L. (2005). *Expository discourse: A genre-based approach to social science research texts*. Continuum.
[9] Lim, J. (2010). Commenting on research results in applied linguistics and education: A comparative genre-based investigation. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*(4): 280–294.
[10] Najjar, H. (1990). *Arabic as a research language: The case of the agricultural sciences* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Michigan.
[11] Samraj, B. (2002). Introductions in research articles: Variations across disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes, 21*(1): 1–18.
[12] Stamatović, M., & Vesna, B. (2015). *The rhetorical structure of conclusions in linguistic academic articles published in national and international journals* [Unpublished manuscript]. Retrieved November 16, 2021, from: https://bit.ly/3nko0jm.
[13] Swales, J. (1981). *Aspects of article introductions*. Aston University Press.
[14] Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
[15] Swales, J. (2004). *Research genres: Exploration and application*. Cambridge University Press.
[16] Taylor, G., & Chen, T. (1991). Linguistic, cultural, and subcultural issues in contrastive discourse analysis: Anglo-American and Chinese scientific texts. *Applied Linguistics, 12*(3), 319–336.
[17] Zorzo, D., Ciglič, B., & Alonso, G. (2017). Intercultural rhetoric and academic writing: contrastive analysis of research articles' introductions written in Spanish by Slovene researchers. *Journal for Foreign Languages, 9*(1), 83–106.

Mohammad S. Alanazi is an assistant professor of translation studies at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University. He got his MA from University of Florida (syntax & morphology) and his PhD from Kent State University (translation and interpretation studies). He is currently serving as the Director General of King Abdullah Institute for Translation and Arabization.

Muteb A. Alqarni is an associate professor of Linguistics at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia. He got his MA from Ball State University (phonetics & phonology) and his PhD from University of Florida (syntax and morphology). His research interests include syntax, morphology, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and pragmatics.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1089-1096, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.23

A Case Study of College Students' EFL Learning Experiences on Mobile Phone Applications

Chunbao Huang
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Science and Technology, Three Gorges University, Yichang, Hubei, China

***Abstract*—Mobile English learning (MEL) has become increasingly popular for its diverse advantages especially since the global COVID-19 pandemic. While a lot of studies have confirmed effectiveness of the mobile approach to learning English in a pedagogical context, there is very limited research that focuses on how students' MEL experiences vary depending on their individual habits and behaviors out of class. This study is aimed to explore college students' experiences of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) on mobile phone terminals. To this end, the study was conducted with a sample of 359 undergraduate students from 5 different grades by looking into their time spent after class in learning English on mobile phone applications (MPA), their practice preferences in MEL, the number of MPA used and their views on the helpfulness of EFL learning on MPA. The quantitative results derived provide a relatively comprehensive knowledge of the present situation of MEL in a higher education context. Statistically significant findings of the study are hopefully to offer insights for both policymakers and instructors in higher institutions to understand and promote MEL from more scientific and multi-dimensional perspectives.**

***Index Terms*—mobile English learning, undergraduates, mobile phone applications, EFL, gender differences**

I. Introduction

The past two decades have witnessed a booming growth of mobile learning (m-learning) in all levels of education across the globe brought about by technology. Thanks to the mobility and connectivity, the use of portable devices such as mobile phones is beginning to have an impact on how learning takes place in many disciplines and contexts, including language learning (Hulme, 2009). M-learning has a great advantage over traditional learning as learning process and management can be done online and accessible at anytime and from anywhere (Anshari et al., 2017). M-learning on portable devices such as laptops, tablets and smartphones (mobile phones) have dramatically redefined the process of learning by making learning ubiquitous through instant connectivity to the Internet.

With the advent of the 5th generation mobile communication technology, m-learning on smartphones is now taking place in an unprecedented manner. A mobile phone is such an integrated and handy computer with traditional phone functions that it has become a daily necessity. As mobile phones become an integral part of modern life worldwide, learning by mobile phones is also on the rise. Language users in higher education increasingly use out-of-class self-directed learning facilitated by mobile technology (Lai et al., 2022).

According to the latest statistical report released by China Internet Network Information Centre (CINIC), while the Internet is now deeply integrated into people's daily life, mobile phones have become the most widely accepted terminal for people to access the Internet in China (CINIC, 2022). Among over 1.03 billion Chinese Internet users, 99.7% of them get the connection with their mobile phones, followed by 35% with desktop computers, 33% with laptops and 27.4% tablets (CINIC, 2022), which may suggest a tendency of studying online nationwide as well. In fact, mobile phones are indeed a pervasive device for students in higher educational institutes. Apart from the basic needs such as social networking and mobile payment, students can find many reasons to use their mobile phones both in and out of class. In many universities for example, students are required to use their mobile phones to sign in for the course and participate in various learning activities in class. Instructors are also prone to mobile devices such as smartphones for grading and tracking students' assignments or collaborative learning in real time. In this case, students have to remain connected and access information and knowledge online through mobile phones inside and outside the classroom.

Although m-learning has become increasingly popular in schools, colleges and universities across the globe in recent years, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of studies focus on language teaching and learning contexts, MEL in particular. MEL seems to make learning English easier and more fascinating to students. With user-friendly design, diverse learning resources with multi-interactive experience and high compatibility across operating systems, various English learning applications (app) have found their positions in students' mobile devices, smartphones in particular. Even those who were not keen on English cannot help but turn to the apps and begin to take a fresh look at learning the language. Many students are impressed by the immersive learning experience provided by rich and real audio-visual materials in mobile apps. The popularity of MEL is not only attributed to a better learner experience compared with the traditional mode of English learning, but also the effectiveness of learning. The use of mobile phones and their apps could generate positive effects on learning English as a foreign language, especially in the development of learners' vocabulary and their increased motivation to study (Klímová, 2018; Lin, 2014; Yudhiantara & Nasir, 2017).

However, while most studies speak highly of MEL, some researchers tend to make the assessment from a different perspective and argue that the effectiveness of MEL has been overstated. For example, Kuznekoff and Titsworth (2013) found that students who were not using their mobile phones could write down considerably more information in their notes, were able to recall more details from the lecture and had much better grades than those who were actively using their mobile phones. This is in accordance with the finding by Fried (2008) that students who spent considerable amount of time using electronic devices such as mobile phones decreased in self-reported understanding of course material and the overall course performance. Incorporating mobile phones in the learning process needs to counter the misuse of activities in class (Anshari et al., 2017). Frequently, students are not self-disciplined in MEL as required and they may use their mobile devices for pleasure purposes other than learning. Besides, instant messages from social media, sudden phone calls or app popups, etc. can be great disturbance in the process of MEL as well. What' more, the quality of learning materials online may not be desirable and even unreliable for pedagogical purposes (Shen, 2016; Yang, 2020). Overall, these scholars tend to see mobile devices used by students for English learning as interference rather than assistance. To them, students' use of mobile devices (phones) has taken learning far away from its original purpose and even out of control.

In addition, in order to discourage m-learning, there are studies that try to examine the negative effects of smartphone radiation on students. According to Zhong et al. (2013), there is a significant connection between mobile phone radiation and students' memory capacity for learning. In other words, the more radiation students receive from mobile phones, the less capacity of memory they will be equipped with for learning. The radiation from mobile learning also poses threat to students' sensory system, causing visual and hearing impairments (Li et al., 2017) for example. Generally, all electronic products are probably endowed with radiation, the damage of which is closely related to how long people are exposed to them. Long exposure to mobile phones has given rise to another problem with regard to m-learning: students' reliance on mobile phones or smartphone addiction, which is immensely associated with sleep quality. According to Schweitzer et al. (2017), students with considerable screen time of mobile phones face greater difficulty falling asleep at night and are also more likely to have sleeping disorders. Students' obsession with mobile phones would also result in their reduction of interpersonal skills and quality physical interactions (Kosnik & Dharamshi, 2016).

Despite the negative voices arising from time to time in MEL, the majority of studies tend to believe that learning English with smart apps on portable devices, mobile phones in particular, is becoming a trend across the world, especially for students and instructors in higher institutions. A large number of studies in China have examined and confirmed the popularity and effects of learning English through MPA for college students in different learning contexts such as vocabulary (Cui, 2018; Qiao, 2020), listening (Li et al., 2017; Zhang, 2020), speaking (Liu et al., 2021; Pei, 2019), writing (Geng, 2021; Hu & Zhang, 2014), reading (He, 2018; Wang & Jiang, 2021), translation (Luo, 2018; Zhu, 2014) etc.. Most of the studies tend to shed light on MEL with smartphones from a pedagogical perspective, where students more than often are engaged in MEL under pressure from the course and supervision from instructors. In this case, those junior and senior students in college who have freed from the required English course program (Ministry of Education, 2020) are usually neglected in such research. In fact, however, many students without the course requirement are still learning English on their own for different purposes. What' more, even for those, freshmen for example, who have received most research attention with regard to MEL on smartphones, there are so far few studies that focus on how students' MEL experiences vary depending on their individual habits and behaviors, especially out of class. Therefore, there is a need to understand how students, in a more natural condition, are learning English through MPA from a comprehensive perspective by taking students of all year levels into account.

II. Design and Methodology

A. Objective of the Study

This study aims to explore the present situation of college students' English learning experiences on mobile phone applications. Specifically, it tries to find out the answers to three research questions (RQ) as follows:

RQ1: What are the characteristics of college students' MEL on MPA?

RQ2: What are students' attitudes towards their MEL experiences on MPA?

RQ3: Do gender differences make a difference in students' MEL experiences?

B. Methods

In order to reach a relatively full coverage of samples, a stratified sampling method was adopted in the survey to target students in different grades from a Chinese university. 500 questionnaires were distributed with the support of the Student Union of the university with each grade 100 copies. The questionnaire consisted of 7 questions with multiple-choice options concerning variables in students' MEL on mobile phones such as the number of English learning apps they used, time spent in learning English per week on the apps, learning preferences, and their views on the effectiveness of learning English on mobile phones in addition to their genders and grades. Since there was no significant difference in students' time spent on MEL in the classroom, this study focused on their time allocated for learning English per week on smartphone apps out of class.

C. Participants and Data Collection

The survey was conducted from November 7 to December 5, 2021. A total of 377 undergraduate students from 5 grades were involved in the study, in which 11 incomplete or non-conforming samples were excluded and 7 samples who reported not having smartphone apps for MEL were considered invalid given the purpose of the study. Finally, 359 valid samples with 187 (52.1%) female students and 172 (47.9%) male ones, included 89 freshen, 81 sophomores, 74 juniors, 62 seniors and 53 fifth medical graders. A quantitative approach with comparison was applied to data analysis in the study.

III. RESULTS

Statistical results derived were presented in accordance with the research questions of this study.

A. Characteristics of College Students' MEL on MPA

The characteristics of students' MEL experiences on MPA were mainly explored in three dimensions as follows: the number of MEL apps used, time invested out of class in MEL and their MEL preferences on MPA.

(a). The Number of MPA Used by Students in MEL

As to how many apps they used to learn English on their smartphones, 38.4% undergraduate students reported 3, followed by 26.5% who reported 2, 14.8% using 4 and 7.8% more than 4. Meanwhile, there were 12.5% students who said they deployed only one app in learning English on their mobile phones. As is shown in Figure 1, most undergraduate students would use 2-3 apps when learning English on their mobile phones.

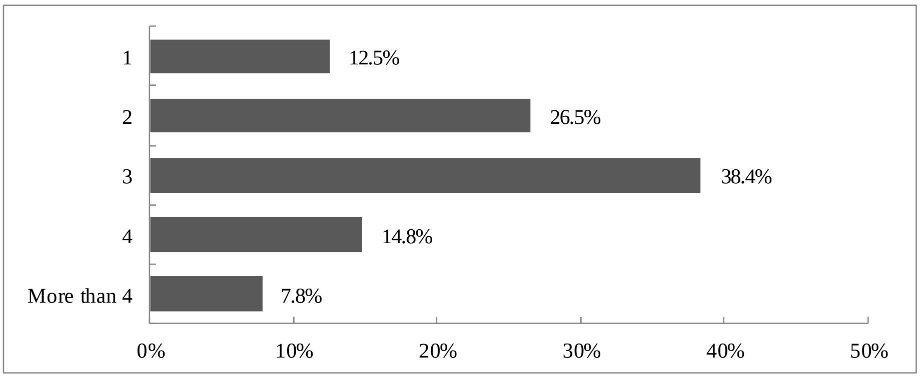


Figure 1 The Number of MPA Used for MEL by Students (N=359)

(b). Students' Time Spent on MEL

Figure 2 shows that most undergraduate students (64.6%) tended to spend less than 3 hours (H) on a weekly basis in learning English through mobile phones after class, in which 25.3% students reported investing less than 1 hour in MEL every week. Students who spent 1-3 hours (39.3%) per week on MEL outside class were almost three times as many as those who would spend 3-5 hours (13.6%). Besides, 12.3% students reported spending 5-7 hours per week in learning English on smartphones after class while only 9.5% said they would invest more than 7 hours a week doing so.

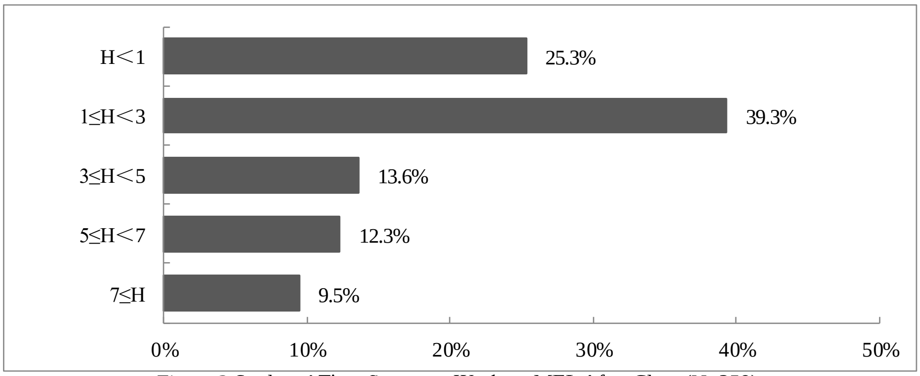


Figure 2 Students' Time Spent per Week on MEL After Class (N=359)

(c). Students' Practice Preferences in MEL

When it came to their practice preferences in MEL on MPA, students were required to choose no more than 3 options among the 6: listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation and vocabulary. Figure 3 reveals that vocabulary learning was seen as a top priority for the majority of undergraduate students (82.2%) when learning English on mobile phones. Listening (68.5%) was the second most favorite practice in MEL, followed by translation (40.9%). However, as is shown in Figure 3, writing (9.7%) was reported to be the least popular learning activity among students on mobile phones, followed by reading (21.4%) and speaking (28.1%).

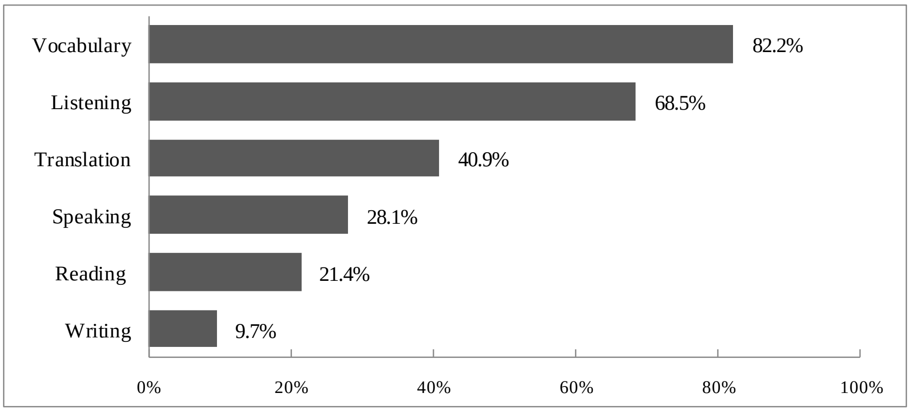


Figure 3 Students' MEL Preferences on MPA (N=359)

B. Students' Attitudes towards MEL on MPA

Students' attitudes towards their experience of MEL on smartphones were indicated by their 5 levels of agreement with the statement that MEL on MPA is helpful. Figure 4 shows that most undergraduate students (80.5%) were positive about learning English on mobile phones. However, almost 1 in 7 students (14.2%) did not believe that MEL on MPA was helpful. Besides, a few students (5.3%) felt difficult to assess whether MEL on smartphones was helpful or not.

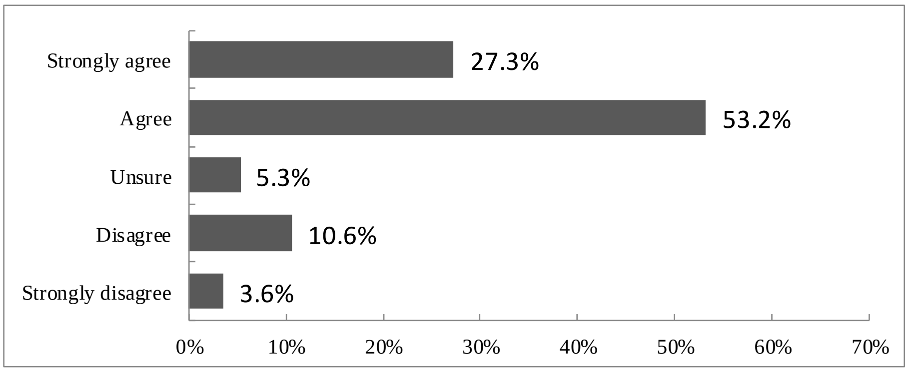


Figure 4 Students' Views on Helpfulness of MEL on MPA (N=359)

C. MEL With Gender Differences

Students' MEL on MPA with regard to their genders was examined and analyzed by 4 variables as follows.

(a). Time Commitment

When it came to the time involved in MEL on MPA with genders, Figure 5 shows that overall, female (F) students tended to invest more hours than their male counterparts in learning English on mobile phones. This was particularly evidenced by the fact that students who spent less than 1 hour per week on MEL were 29.6% male (M) students compared with 21.4% female ones, while those who would spend 3-5 hours were 9.3% males in contrast to 17.6% of their counterparts. Nonetheless, there were no significant differences between male and female students who spent either 1-3 hours or more than 5 hours a week in learning the language on their mobile phones.

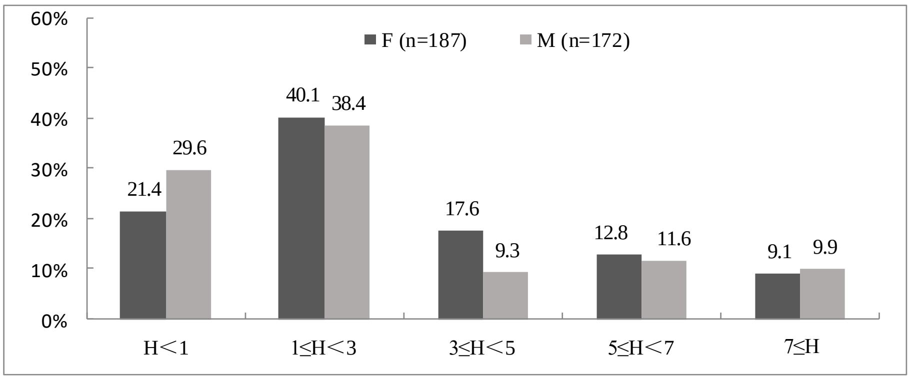


Figure 5 Gender Differences on Time Spent in MEL per Week

(b). The Number of MEL Apps

Although generally speaking, students favored 2-3 apps when learning English on mobile phones, (revealed in Figure 1), male students were more likely to use diverse smartphone apps in MEL than female ones according to Figure 6. For example, students with more than 3 apps in MEL were 29.7% from the male group but 16% from the female group. There were also considerably more female students (15.7%) who reported using only one English learning app compared to male students (9.6%).

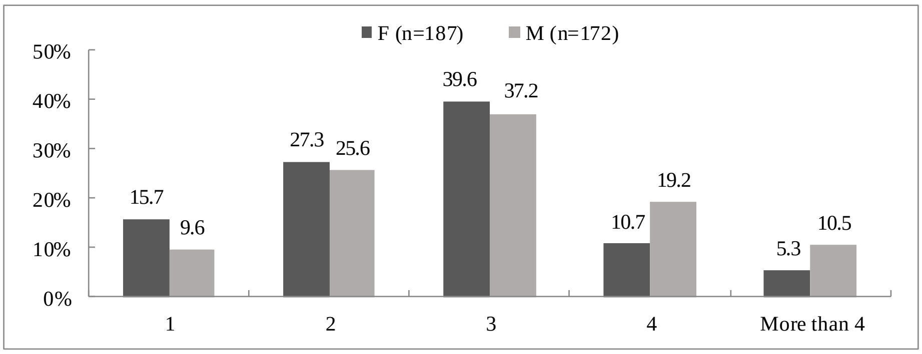


Figure 6 Gender Differences on the Number of MPA Used

(c). Practice Preferences

Figure 7 indicates that no significant gender differences were found with regard to students' most (vocabulary) and least (writing) favorite practice in MEL on MPA. But it was found that female students seemed to put more emphasis on speaking and reading than their male counterparts, while male students tended to attach more importance to translation and listening.

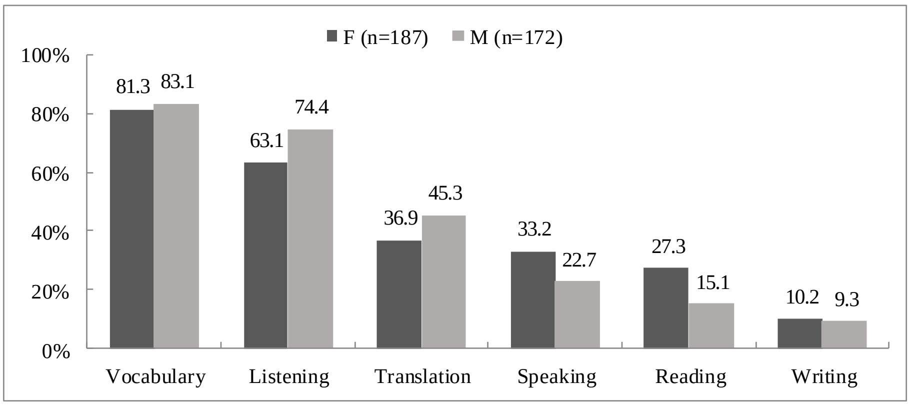


Figure 7 Gender Differences on MEL Preferences

(d). Views on Helpfulness

Figure 8 reveals that while both male and female students held a positive attitude towards MEL on MPA, female students were more likely to agree to the helpfulness of MEL on smartphones. As can be seen from Figure 8, there were 33.7% female students who “strongly agree” that learning English via MPA was helpful, a lot more than 20.3% male ones who thought alike. Meanwhile, there were also more male students (16.5%) who did not believe in the helpfulness of MEL on MPA in contrast to their counterparts (12.1%).

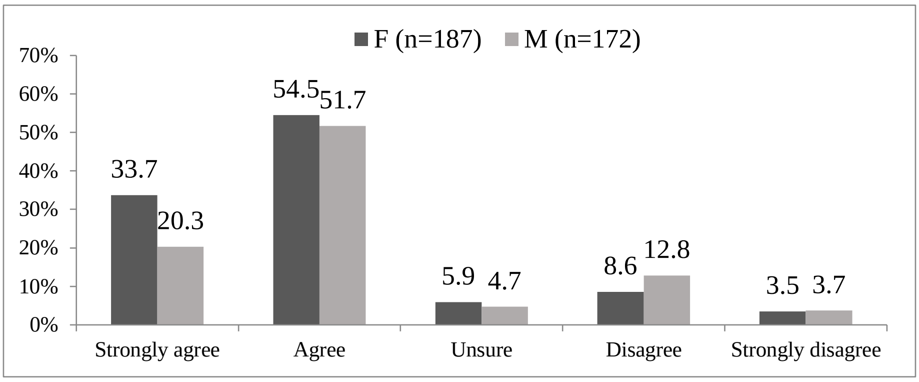


Figure 8 Gender Differences on Attitudes to MEL on MPA

IV. Discussion

One of the major findings derived from the study is students’ limited time invested in MEL out of class, regardless of gender differences. For most college students, there is no dramatic difference in learning English inside the classroom given the shared learning environment with the limited course period every week (Ministry of Education, 2020), which implies that a lot of learning activities have to take place after class based on students’ self-autonomy. Therefore, students’ time involved in learning English outside the classroom would make a remarkable difference as to how well they would end up with the course and even how proficient they could be in the language. However, as was revealed in the study, more than 60% undergraduate students invested less than 3 hours on a weekly basis in learning English on mobile phones out of class. More surprisingly though, 29% students said that they spent less than 1 hour per week on MEL after class, which means that, on the average, these students spent approximately 8 minutes every day in learning the language on MPA. The amount of time is possibly enough for some fragmented learning, skimming a passage or dashing off some vocabulary for example, but it is less likely to make a deeper and more effective learning happen.

Certainly, chance is still there that students might have moved their English learning activities somewhere else, on other devices like laptops, tablets, etc. or by traditional means such as studying non-electronically in the library for example. But the chance seems pretty slim in consideration of the growing trend of MEL on more portable devices together with the statistical facts revealed in this study that 98.1% (359 out of 366) undergraduate students have been learning English through MPA and that 80.5% of them believe in the effectiveness of such MEL experiences. Therefore, students’ insufficient time commitment to MEL could be attributed to their inefficiency of time management in studies or incapability to find the balance between academic and non-academic activities in university. However, another fact worth noting is that junior and senior undergraduate students may have a tendency to invest less time in learning English compared with the first and second-year graders because there is no required English curriculum for them. As much as student-centered learning environments have often been highlighted in education, policymakers and instructors should not take it for granted that students would always make the most of their time and learning resources when it comes to MEL. Therefore, instructors and policymakers in higher institutions may play a more critical role than were assumed in students’ sustainable and effective MEL both in and out of class.

When it comes to English practice preferences on mobile apps, both male and female students were focused considerably on vocabulary learning, which implies that vocabulary plays a fundamental role in EFL learning even for college students. Listening and speaking should have been bonded together in learning practice given that the design in both curriculums and mobile apps usually comply with the blending mode of developing the two language abilities simultaneously. Students’ preference for listening in MEL may result from the fact that compared with speaking, listening practice seems a lot more natural and spontaneous. It can be easier when learners even have no urgent needs of comprehension. However, when practicing speaking, students have to open their mouth with the needs to speak the language logically and appropriately, which would undoubtedly put them under pressure. Besides, students who favor listening practice in MEL may be fascinated with the diverse video resources which would facilitate their hearing incidentally even for recreational purposes.

Theoretically, both writing and translation are time-consuming yet significant learning activities for they serve as critical means to put what students have acquired into practice. Surprisingly however, the two activities met with different preferences by most students. Writing became the least favorite practice in MEL while translation was one of the three most popular activities next to listening (see Figure 3). Apart from time commitment, writing or translating practice on portable devices, mobile phones in particular, can be demanding for the user-unfriendly experience brought about by the limited but interactive interface for written language output. Therefore, given students' time involved in MEL in addition to user experience, the practice claimed to be translation was less likely to take place at a textural level, but most probably carried out at lexical or sentential levels, which was actually more of a practice on vocabulary. Reading is one of the most reliable sources of language input, which unfortunately however, most students seemed to have ignored. When reading, learners can build up their vocabulary incidentally yet effectively (Chen, 2017; Laufer, 2011). Therefore, while undergraduate students attach great importance to vocabulary in MEL, they didn't feel like an incidental approach through reading activities.

When it comes to the helpfulness of MEL on MPA, a relatively positive correlation, regardless of gender differences, is found between students' number of MEL apps and their views on helpfulness. In other words, overall, the more apps students use for learning English, the more they agree that MEL is helpful. Those who used only 1 smartphone app in MEL were more likely to disapprove of the helpfulness of MEL. Instead, students with 4 apps were more likely to say that EML was effective. More MEL apps imply potentially more learning experiences, which does not necessarily predict the success of MEL, but students with more apps are entrusted with more credibility to tell through their rich experiences how useful a certain EML app might be. Nevertheless, the positive association of students' views on MEL with the number of apps used is not absolute, which is confirmed by the fact that students with more than 4 apps were a little more likely to get confused about the helpfulness of MEL and some even held a negative attitude. Therefore, with regard to how many apps can best serve the purpose of MEL for undergraduate students, the answer is not supposed to be the more the better. Besides, there is no significant connection found between students' views on helpfulness of MEL and their time engaged. Students may have a stronger voice in telling how helpful MPA would be, more obviously however, it is not only how much time students spend in MEL but also how effectively they spend the time that matter.

V. Conclusion and Limitations

The present study sampled 359 undergraduate students from 5 grades in a Chinese university by exploring their learning habits and behaviors of MEL on MPA. The study has confirmed the overwhelming popularity of MEL on MPA in higher educational institutes in China. Quantitative results show that when learning English on MPA, undergraduate students generally use 2-3 apps and vocabulary acquisition is their top priority whereas writing is the most ignored learning practice. It is also found that while most students believe in the helpfulness of MEL on MPA, they tend to invest less than 3 hours on a weekly basis in learning the language. Meanwhile, gender differences are also reflected in students' MEL habits and behaviors. Statistical findings of this study provide a relatively comprehensive understanding of the current MEL situation in higher education contexts, which is hopefully enlightening for language instructors, policymakers and app developers as well to play a better role in the ubiquitous m-learning environment.

There are some limitations despite the statistically significant findings of the study. First of all, while the study covered undergraduate students with all year levels, it sampled only a small portion of different graders, less than 10% in each except the 5th grade to be more specific. Therefore, the results derived might not be a truly typical representation of all undergraduates in the university. If samples had been more sufficiently covered, the statistical findings could have been more scientific. Meanwhile, although the study covered students from all year levels, it failed to look into students' MEL experiences from a grade perspective. This could be significant given the potentially diverse data derived. In addition, the present study explored only 4 variables pertaining to students' MEL experiences. Many other factors that would shape students' MEL experiences need to be examined. For example, it is unknown what challenges students are confronted with in MEL on MPA, and whether peer or instructor influence could make a difference and how. Finally, the survey in this study was conducted in a rather traditional way with printed questionnaires, which added to the cost of the study in addition to environmental impact. Actually, this was also a potential factor that contributed to the relatively small sample size of the study. Future studies in this field could target a much larger size of samples and focus on other elements concerning MEL by taking a more eco-friendly approach such as e-questionnaires. However, the case study still offered some insights into college students' real MEL experiences by providing limited but statistically significant findings from a macro perspective.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank all the respondents in the study and the Student Union of College of Science and Technology, China Three Gorges University.

References

[1] Anshari, M., Almunawar, M. N., Shahrill, M., Wicaksono, D. K., & Huda, M. (2017). Smartphones usage in the classrooms: Learning aid or interference? *Education and Information Technologies, 22*(6), 3063-3079. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-017-9572-7

[2] Chen, F. (2017). A comparative study of the effects of intentional vocabulary learning and incidental vocabulary learning. *Journal of Qiqihar University (Philosophy & Social Science Edition), 46*(3), 182-185.

https://doi.org/10.13971/j.cnki.cn23-1435/c.2017.03.054
[3] China Internet Network Information Centre. (2022). *The 49th statistical report on Internet development in China.* Retrieved February 25, 2022, from https://www.cnnic.cn/hlwfzyj/hlwxzbg/hlwtjbg/202202/t20220225_71727.htm
[4] Cui, Y. H. (2018). Effects of mobile vocabulary APPs on English vocabulary learning: An empirical study. *Journal of Taiyuan Urban Vocational College, 20*(07), 118-120. https://doi.org/10.16227/j.cnki.tycs.2018.0550
[5] Fried, C. B. (2008). In-class laptop use and its effects on student learning. *Computers & Education, 50*(3), 906–914. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2006.09.006
[6] Geng, X. N. (2021). Research on measures to improve college students' English writing ability based on mobile learning platform. *Journal of Kaifeng Vocational College of Culture & Art, 41*(7), 95-96. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2096-7853.2021.07.042
[7] He, W. H. (2018). A practical study on college students' English reading improvement by smart phones. *Journal of Jilin Teachers Institute of Engineering and Technology, 34*(4), 58-60. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1009-9042.2018.04.020
[8] Hu, C. J, & Zhang, Y. C. (2014). A Study of college English writing feedback system based on M-learning. *Modern Educational Technology, 24*(7), 71-78. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1009-8097.2014.07.010
[9] Hulme, A. (2009).Will mobile learning change language learning?. *ReCALL, 21*(2), 157-165. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344009000202
[10] Klímová, B. (2018). Mobile phones and/or smartphones and their apps for teaching English as a foreign language. *Education and Information Technologies, 23*(3), 1091-1099. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-017-9655-5
[11] Kosnik, C., & Dharamshi, P. (2016). *Intertwining digital technology and literacy methods courses*. SensePublishers.
[12] Kuznekoff, J., & Titsworth, S. (2013). The impact of mobile phone usage on student learning. *Communication Education, 62*(3), 233-252. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634523.2013.767917
[13] Lai, Y., Saab, N., & Admiraal, W. (2022). Learning strategies in self-directed language learning using mobile technology in higher education: A systematic scoping review. *Education and Information Technologies* (prepublish). https://doi.org/10.1007/S10639-022-10945-5
[14] Laufer, B. (2011). Incidental vocabulary acquisition: The effects of task type, word occurrence and their combination. *Language Teaching Research, 15* (4), 391-411. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168811412019
[15] Li, L. P., Hu, Q. Y., & Xiao, H. F. (2017). Research on English listening teaching based on mobile learning. *Journal of Hunan University of Science and Engineering, 38*(12), 125-126. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1673-2219.2017.12.044
[16] Li, Y., Li, Y. M., Wang, X. K., & Xu, T. S. (2017). The influence of micro-media on college students from the perspective of health. *New Media Research, 3*(7), 46-47. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-7597.2017.07.021
[17] Lin, M. (2014) A review of mobile language vocabulary learning with cell phone. *Journal of Ningbo Polytechnic, 18*(4), 30-34. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-2153.2014.04.008
[18] Liu, L. F., Ren, J. J., & Yi, L. Y. (2021). Survey of mobile learning of English major students: Taking oral English learning mobile phone Apps as an example. *Heilongjiang Science, 12*(5), 76-77. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1674-8646.2021.05.028
[19] Luo, Y. J. (2018). The application of mobile learning to extracurricular translation learning of college English: From the perspective of distributed cognition. *Journal of Hubei Open Vocational College, 31*(18), 170-171. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-5918.2018.18.074
[20] Ministry of Education of People's Republic of China. (2020). *Guidelines on college English education*. Higher Education Press.
[21] Pei, J. W. (2019). Improving the efficiency of college Students' English listening and speaking through mobile APPs. *Contemporary Education Research and Teaching Practice, 7*(15), 32-33. https://doi.org/10.16534/j.cnki.cn13-9000/g.2019.1675
[22] Qiao, X. L. (2020). A study on English vocabulary teaching based on mobile learning community. *Journal of Beijing City University, 22*(6), 37-45. https://doi.org/10.16132/j.cnki.cn11-5388/z.2020.06.006
[23] Schweizer, A., Berchtold, B., Barrense-Dias, Y., Akre, C., & Suris, J. C. (2017). Adolescents with a smartphone sleep less than their peers. *European Journal of Pediatrics, 176*(1), 131-136. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00431-016-2823-6
[24] Shen, X. (2016). *Research and practice on the cultivation of college student' English reading ability based on mobile learning*. [Master's thesis]. Guangxi Normal University. https://doi.org/10.7666/d.Y3080442
[25] Wang, X. J., & Jiang, W. T. (2021). A survey of college students' English reading strategies under mobile learning environment. *Journal of Taiyuan Urban Vocational College, 23*(6), 89-91. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1673-0046.2021.06.030
[26] Yang, J. M. (2020). On college students' English reading mobile learning based on online intelligent platform. *Journal of Huainan Vocational & Technical College, 20*(1), 89-90. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-4733.2020.01.036
[27] Yudhiantara, R., & Nasir, I. A. (2017).Toward mobile-assisted language learning (MALL): Reaping mobile phone benefits in classroom activities. *Register Journal, 10*(1), 12-28. https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v10i1.12-28
[28] Zhang, S. (2020). Application of smartphone APPs in college English teaching. *Information Recording Materials, 21*(10), 116-117. https://doi.org/10.16009/j.cnki.cn13-1295/tq.2020.10.073
[29] Zhong, T., Zhao, R. R., Wang, Y. Q., & Zhang, W. H. (2013). Effects of mobile phone radiation on learning and memory capacity. *Journal of Bio-education, 1*(4), 281-283. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2095-4301.2013.04.009
[30] Zhu, X. H. (2014). Application of M-learning platform in college English translation teaching. *Teacher Education Forum, 27*(11), 89-93. https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2095-5995.2014.11.019

Chunbao Huang is a senior lecturer in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Science and Technology, Three Gorges University. His research focuses on EFL/ESL teaching, acquisition and testing.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1097-1104, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.24

Congratulation Strategies by Jordanians on a Royal Birthday Facebook Status

Yasser Al-Shboul
Department of English Language and Literature, Salt Faculty of Human Sciences, Al-Balqa Applied University, Al-Salt, Jordan

Zeyad Al-Daher
Department of English Language and Literature, Irbid University College, Al-Balqa Applied University, Irbid, Jordan

Othman Aref Al-Dala'ien
Department of English Language and Literature, Salt Faculty of Human Sciences, Al-Balqa Applied University, Al-Salt, Jordan

Tamador Khalaf Abu-Snoubar
Department of English Language and Literature, Salt Faculty of Human Sciences, Al-Balqa Applied University, Al-Salt, Jordan

***Abstract*—The current paper investigates the congratulation speech act among Jordanian Facebook users in terms of patterns and linguistic forms with reference to the congratulation strategies adopted in response to a birthday Facebook status posted on the occasion of the 60th birthday of His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein. The types of positive politeness strategies attested in these congratulatory forms are also tackled in this study. The comments posted by Jordanian Facebook users on this occasion formed the data necessary for the purpose of this study. The data analysis revealed that the dominant congratulation strategy among Jordanian Facebookers is Illocutionary force indicating device, and the use of proverbs and sayings is the least used strategy. As for the strategies of politeness in the congratulatory forms among Jordanian Facebook users, the data analysis revealed that the dominant strategies are giving gifts to the listener and in-group identity marker (usage of address forms); exaggerate and seek agreement (safe topic) strategies are the least used ones. These results were discussed in light of the theory of speech act (Austin, 1962) and the theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The religious beliefs, cultural values, and social norms of the Facebook users appeared to be influential with respect to these politeness and congratulation strategies. The study also touches upon several aspects related to the pragmatic competence of Jordanian Facebook users.**

***Index Terms*—congratulation, Facebook, Jordanians, politeness strategies, speech act**

I. Introduction

Communication has a significant role in our daily life. People cannot share information or knowledge without communication. Communication simply facilitates the process of expressing ideas, opinions, needs, thoughts, and feelings; it thus plays a vital role in developing and enhancing social relationships as well as increasing the effectiveness of life (Mahajan, 2015).

Communication can be verbal or non-verbal. People normally express their thoughts using spoken words in verbal communication. By contrast, using symbols, eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures are all possible manifestations of non-verbal communication. Nevertheless, communication can occur in direct interactions or indirect (i.e., virtual/online) ones, irrespective of if it is verbal or not.

The various speech acts (i.e., refusal, advice, apology, condolences, request, congratulation) are considered important components of communication in any language and can thus be expressed in face-to-face interaction or through online media, most notably Facebook. It is very common nowadays to resort to Facebook while expressing condolences or commiseration to others in sorrowful occasions. Similarly, congratulations in happy occasions (e.g., the birth of a new baby, birthday anniversaries, getting award, graduation, job promotion, obtaining an academic degree, inter alia) is a widespread online practice nowadays.

While some people are motivated and enthusiastic to express congratulations to others in their pleasant occasions, others face difficulties in doing so (Elwood, 2004). However, people are usually required to express their congratulation or commiseration to others. Not expressing congratulations to others in their pleasant occasions can be understood wrongly and might be taken as a sign of jealousy (Al-Hour, 2019).

People involved in interactions commonly express their happiness and emotions through different ways in such delightful occasions. Congratulating others can be expressed verbally or non-verbally through body language and symbols. The choice of either strategy can be affected by the interlocutors' cultural and linguistic background, religion, gender, age, social class, among other sociocultural issues. For example, one of the congratulation strategies in marriage customs in the Arab World is giving the bride money, a strategy that is not followed in other cultures (Al-Hour, 2019). It remains to be said that people are required to avoid communication breakdowns and to be aware of what, when, and how to express congratulations.

A noticeable increase in the use of internet in general and social media in particular among Jordanians can be easily recognized during the last decade. The present study investigates the congratulation strategies adopted by Jordanian Facebook users. More specifically, this study analyses the patterns and linguistic forms of congratulatory expressions used by Jordanians while commenting on a birthday Facebook status posted on the occasion of the 60^{th} birthday of His Majesty (HM, henceforward) King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein. It also aims to highlight the types of positive politeness strategy used in these comments.

Uncovering speech acts on a popular social medium such as Facebook has initiated the purpose of this study. The researchers believe that it would be exciting to collect and analyse data posted on Facebook to get better understanding of the pragmatic competence of Jordanian Facebook users as well as of the trends and patterns used to express congratulation in the Jordanian context.

The significance of this study stems from different factors. For example, it highlights how Jordanian Facebook users realize the speech act of congratulation, which in turn fosters our understanding of intracultural as well as cross-cultural differences in this regard. This study also uncovers several aspects related to the pragmatic competence of Jordanian Facebookers. Moreover, this study can familiarize teachers with how to teach students to congratulate others appropriately, which will in turn improve students' communicative competence and help them avoid communication breakdowns. Finally, this study diverges from previous research in the Jordanian context in terms of data collection. The only study identified in the literature on congratulation speech act in Jordan, namely, Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016), focused on EFL students' congratulatory forms employing a Discourse Completion Test (DCT). Nonetheless, the current study depends on naturally occurring data as it is concerned with comments posted on Facebook, hence a contribution to the literature in the field of speech act in general and congratulation in particular, especially in the Jordanian context. Accordingly, the present study purports to answer the following two research questions:

1) What are the congratulation strategies used by Jordanian Facebook users responding to a birthday Facebook status?

2) What are the main types of positive politeness strategies in the congratulations of Jordanian Facebook users responding to a birthday Facebook status?

II. Theoretical Background

This research is couched within two well-known theoretical frameworks: The theory of speech act (Austin, 1962) and the theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The next two subsections are dedicated for these two notions.

A. The Speech Act of Congratulations

This subsection addresses the congratulations speech act focusing on its definition and classification as proposed by different scholars such as Austin (1962), Searle (1979), Searle and Vanderveken (1985), Wierzbicka (1987).

In an attempt to analyse the relationship between utterances and performance, Austin (1962) introduced the theory of speech act in his influential book "How to do things with words"; later on, Searle (1979) expanded the theory. The two philosophers propose that language is frequently used to perform acts and do things in addition to its primary functions of informing and describing things. Since then, the notion that actions performed via utterances became to be known as speech acts.

According to Austin (1962), there are three types of speech act: (i) Locutionary, (ii) Illocutionary, and (iii) Perlocutionary. Whereas the Locutionary act refers to the actual act of uttering (e.g., "Please do the dishes"), the Illocutionary act represents the social function of the utterance; uttering the locution "Please do the dishes", for example, the speaker requests the hearer to wash the dishes. Perlocutionary act, by contrast, refers to what results on the hearer due to the utterance; uttering the locution "Please do the dishes" would lead the hearer to wash the dishes.

Congratulation was approached by several scholars within the speech act framework. Austin (1962), for example, classifies congratulation as a behabitive act. Austin perceives congratulation as a performative utterance that includes a first-person singular pronoun and a performative verb (e.g., "I congratulate you"). Searle (1979) classifies congratulation as an expressive act proposing that it is governed by four rules: (a) propositional content rule which involves an event/act associated with the listener; (b) preparatory rule which involves an event in the listener's interest and believed by the speaker to be in the listener's interest; (c) sincerity rule which represents the speaker's pleasance of the event; and (d) essential rule which implies the recognition of a pleasure expression at the event.

According to Searle and Vanderveken (1985), the congratulation act is related to the hearer, and the hearer is not responsible for the act involved. It would be just some item of good fortune. Wierzbicka (1987), by contrast, insists that the hearer is to somehow responsible for at least the "happy event"; the speaker, when offering congratulations, tells the hearer how (s)he feels because of the good event.

The concept of politeness is taken up in the next subsection with reference to the theory of politeness by Brown and Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983).

B. Congratulation in the Politeness Theory

Leech (1983) considers the congratulation speech act (as well as greeting, offering, inviting and thanking) essentially polite and classifies it as a pleasant illocutionary function. This means that the social function of congratulation as well as other speech acts subsumed under this class meets the illocutionary goal. Leech (1983) believes that when the speaker offers congratulation to the listener, he/she adheres to the listener's positive face.

The influential theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) is widely assumed in politeness research. Their theory is mainly built upon Goffman's (1967) "face" notion. When people interact with each other, their feelings are usually associated with either positive or negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987). While the negative face is connected to one's desire "not to be imposed on", positive face is related to one's desire "to be liked of/approved of".

The negative or positive face of the hearer (H) or the speaker (S) is susceptible to face-threatening act. For example, the speech act of criticism and refusal tend to threat the H's positive face, while the speech act of promises, orders, and requests tend to threat the H's negative face. Likewise, the speech act of apology most likely threats the S's positive face, while making excuse tends to threat the S's negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The congratulation speech act, which is the focus of this study, is connected to the addressee's positive face desires and is, as a result, perceived as a positive strategy of politeness. Brown and Levinson (1987, p. 101) indicate that positive politeness can be "a kind of metaphorical extension of intimacy" or "a kind of social accelerator" in which a speaker indicates his/her desire to "come closer" to a hearer.

Politeness strategies involved in the different forms of speech acts like refusal (Al-Shboul & Maros 2020; Beebe et al., 1990), apology (Al-Khaza'leh, 2018; Blum-Kulka et al., 1989), and request (Amer et al., 2020; Blum-Kulka & House, 1989) have been extensively examined in the literature. However, the speech act of congratulation has received little attention compared to the aforementioned speech acts (Elwood, 2004; Trujill, 2011; Jahangard et al., 2016; Alameen, 2017; Al-Hour, 2019; Irahim & Bakar, 2019; Setyorini, 2020). Only one study tackling the speech act of congratulation among Jordanians has been identified in the literature, namely, Al-Shboul and Huwari's (2016) study which examined Jordanian EFL postgraduate students' congratulation strategies using DCT. To the researchers' best knowledge, no studies were carried out to examine congratulation strategies by Jordanian Facebookers. The dearth of research in this regard and bridging this gap in the literature are the real motives for conducting this study. The researchers believe that it would be of great importance to investigate how Jordanian Facebookers realize the speech act of congratulation while posting comments on Facebook statuses. This endeavour will add to the existent research in intracultural as well as cross-cultural comparative studies.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the researchers review some studies that are related, directly or indirectly, to the scope of the present study.

Trujillo (2011) examined congratulation strategies as realized in Colombian Spanish building mainly on three politeness models: The politeness strategies of Brown and Levinson (1987), the model of Scollon and Scollon (2001) which was adopted to identify deferential and solidarity politeness, and the model of Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) which was used to classify the congratulation strategies according to the principal head acts and supportive moves. Results revealed that Colombians tended to use positive politeness strategies when they had to offer congratulations and used them with some solidarity strategies such as expressions of gratitude, support, pride and approval. They also tended to offer congratulations in an explicit way. The participants also tended to use fewer request information and direct criticism strategies. As for gender differences, men and women differed in almost 95% of the strategies. Yet, results showed no significant differences between young women and young men or between younger and older people in general when it comes to offering congratulations.

Jahangard et al. (2016) examined the differences of congratulation strategies between Iranian and American Facebook users as reflected in their responses to a birthday status. A total of 60 congratulation notes posted by 60 Iranians and other 60 congratulation notes posted by 60 Americans formed the data of the study. Results revealed that the participants' congratulation notes fit under seven main categories: Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID), Divine Statements, Blessing Wishes, Felling Expressions, Compliments, Endearments, and Poem and Pieces of Literature. While no significant differences between the two groups were found with respect to the patterns of "IFID" and "Blessing Wishes", there were significant differences between Iranian and American Facebook users in the patterns of the five remaining categories.

In the Malaysian context, Irahim and Bakar (2019) investigated the congratulation strategies offered by Malay speakers when they had to write messages on Facebook and Twitter. Data were collected using ethnographic approach by observing posted comments and the usage of non-verbal symbols. The content of these congratulatory comments was then analysed. The findings revealed that Malay speakers used more verbal strategies than non-verbal symbols. The most frequently used expressions were "tahniah" (congratulations) and "Syabas" (well done), which fit under the illocutionary act. Other congratulatory expressions included "Alhamdulillah" and "Terima kasih" (thank you) as well as expression of praise.

In the Indonesian context, Setyorini (2020) examined congratulation strategies offered to Arya Permana by Indonesian Facebook users and identified the politeness strategies used by those Facebook users. The data of the study were naturally occurring collected by observing congratulatory comments posted on a status update on Facebook. The data were analysed following Pishghadam and Moghaddam's (2011) theory which is based on Elwood's (2004) classification of congratulation strategies. The classification of Brown and Levinson (1987) of politeness strategies was adopted for the sake of identifying the strategies of politeness used by the Facebook users. The collected data were found to fit under the following congratulation strategies: complimenting, expressing feeling, blessing wish, divine statement, offering congratulation, and mentioning the occasion. Regarding the politeness strategies, the Indonesian Facebook users tended to use positive politeness strategies and bald-on record.

Building on 19 English participants and 38 Sudanese participants, Alameen (2017) compared the congratulations in British English and Sudanese Arabic. The data were collected using a DCT, and two main variables were examined: the occasions which require offering congratulation and the age of the participants. The findings revealed that there were more occasions that require offering congratulation in the Sudanese context than in the British counterpart. In addition, Sudanese participants tended to use more congratulation strategies than their British counterparts. While the congratulations made by Sudanese tended to be warmer, the ones made by British participants seemed to be brief and straightforward. Regarding age, results showed that the participants' choice of congratulation strategies was influenced by their ages.

Al-Hour (2019) examined the positive politeness strategies and gender differences when offering congratulation in the Palestinian context. The participants were 30 male and 30 female students from the University of Hebron majoring in English and non- English who completed a four-scenario DCT. The findings revealed that the two groups tended to use six congratulation strategies: Expression of Validation, Illocutionary Force Indicating Devise (IFID), Encouragement, Thanking God, Joking, and Offer good wishes. However, (IFID) was found to be the most use strategy in all four situations. It was also found that "Giving gifts to listener" is the most recurrent strategy of politeness.

The congratulation speech act in the Jordanian context was tackled by Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) who asked 30 male Jordanian EFL postgraduate students to respond to a DCT established by Dastjerdi and Nasri (2013). They analysed the obtained data employing the classification of congratulation strategies proposed by Elwood (2004) and the classification of politeness strategies advocated by Brown and Levinson (1987). The results showed that the strategies of congratulation ranked in terms of frequency as follows: (IFID), offer of good wishes, and expression of happiness. It was also found that the participants favoured using "giving gift to listener", "exaggeration", and "in-group identity marker" as strategies of politeness.

The above review suggests that congratulation speech act has been investigated in different Western, Eastern and Arabic contexts. However, only one study was conducted in the Jordanian context (Al-Shboul & Huwari, 2016). Offering congratulations by Jordanian Facebook users has never been addressed in the literature, hence a study in this particular context is needed.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. *Instrument and Procedure*

This study examines the congratulation strategies and positive politeness strategies used by Jordanian Facebook users when commenting on a birthday Facebook status on the 60th birthday occasion of HM King Abdullah II of Jordan. The most common platform on the Jordanian social media, Facebook, was chosen to be the source of the data of the present study (Facebook most popular social media site in Jordan, 2016). A report published by The Jordan Times in 2016 indicated that the majority of Jordanian Internet users (93%) are users of social networks especially Facebook.

A more recent report released by NapoleonCat in December 2020 showed that around 59.6% of Jordan population (6258000 people) have Facebook accounts, of which 57.1% are male users. The majority of these male users ranged between 25–34-year-olds (2070000) (Facebook users in Jordan, 2020).

All this reflect the importance of this social network in the Jordanian society and suggest that it forms a rich source of data. Al-Shboul and Maros (2013) assert that Facebook is attractive to its users because of the different functions it serves, most remarkably the ability to post comments on others' statuses in a wide range of topics such as a birthday Facebook status.

After an extensive search in most popular Facebook pages in Jordan, the researchers adopted three unofficial pages on Facebook as sources of the data. These pages were chosen because they contained the largest number of comments posted on His Majesty 60th birthday status. Over a period of two weeks, the researchers have collected and analysed 2436 comments. It was found that 3012 congratulation expressions met the classification of congratulation strategies advocated by Elwood (2004) and 2619 semantic formulas fit under the politeness strategies taxonym by Brown and Levinson (1987). This indicates that many comments involved more than one congratulation expression and/or politeness strategy.

B. *Data Analysis*

The collected congratulation strategies posted by Jordanian Facebook users were coded and classified using Elwood's (2004) taxonomy; the classifications of Jahangard et al. (2016) and Setyorini (2020) were also adopted. Furthermore, Brown and Levinson's (1987) taxonym was adopted to locate and encode the positive politeness strategies.

Semantic formulas were adopted in the data analysis as this technique is widely used in research on speech act (Beebe & Cummings, 1985; Elwood, 2004). The concept of semantic formula has been defined by Cohen (1996) as “a word, phrase, or sentence that meets a particular semantic criterion or strategy; any one or more of these can be used to perform the act in question” (p. 265). If a Facebook user’s comment, for instance, included the response (e.g., عيد ميلاد سعيد، أتمنى لك الصحة والسعادة، حفظك الله "" ‘Happy birthday, wish you good health and happiness, may Allah bless you’), it can be said that this response involves three units of semantic formulas:

A. (عيد ميلاد سعيد "" ‘Happy birthday’) [IFID]

B. (أتمنى لك الصحة والسعادة "" ‘wish you good health and happiness’) [An offer of good wishes]

C. (حفظك الله"" ‘may Allah bless you’) [Praying for God's blessing and protection for his majesty]

Upon completion of the initial analysis done by the researchers, two independent raters were invited to make a double-check for the data and to ensure that the congratulation expressions fit under the classifications proposed by Elwood (2004) and Brown and Levinson (1987). Those independent raters are two professors of linguistics with expertise in the classification of data in terms of semantic formulas as they have many publications in speech act studies.

After the two independent raters have completed their classification, the researchers found some differences between them regarding the coding schema; accordingly, several discussions were held with them until consensus was established, and, consequently, additional modifications were made. Finally, the researchers have slightly modified Elwood’s (2004) classification of congratulation strategies; minor modifications were also made to the politeness strategies taxonym of Brown and Levinson (1987). These modifications have been made in order to meet the prominent strategies used and omit those that did not occur in the data.

V. Results

The data analysis of the 2436 collected comments revealed that they included 3012 congratulation expressions and 2619 semantic formulas that fit under the positive politeness strategies. The percentages (P) and frequencies (F) of the strategies of congratulation are shown in table 1.

Table 1
The Frequencies (F) And Percentages (P) Of The Strategies Of Congratulation Used By Jordanian Facebook Users

Strategy	**F**	**P**
Illocutionary force indicating device (IFID)	2273	75.46
An offer of good wishes	368	12.22
*Praying for God's blessing and protection for his majesty	207	6.88
Affection expression	51	1.70
Endearments	47	1.56
Expression of happiness (Expression of personal happiness)	41	1.36
*Asking for the royal blessing	17	0.56
Proverbs and sayings	8	0.26
Total	**3012**	**100.00**

*Marks other strategies identified building on the data of the current study.

A quick glance at Table 1 above shows that the (IFID) is the dominant congratulation strategy among Jordanian Facebook users whereas proverbs and sayings represent the least strategy used.

The percentages and frequencies of the positive politeness strategies involved in the congratulation speech act are given in table 2.

Table 2
The Frequencies (F) And Percentages (P) Of The Positive Politeness Strategies Used

Strategy	**F**	**P**
Give gifts to the listener	1405	53.65
In-group identity marker (usage of address forms)	1134	43.30
Exaggerate	61	2.33
Seek agreement (safe topic)	19	0.72
Total	**2619**	**100.00**

Reviewing Table 2 above, it is clear that “give gifts to the listener” and “in-group identity marker (usage of address forms)” are the dominant strategies, while the strategies of “exaggerate” and “seek agreement (safe topic)” are the least used ones. The following section is a detailed discussion of these results in light of the theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) and the theory of speech act (Austin, 1962).

VI. Discussion

The first research question was formulated to classify the congratulation strategies used by Jordanian Facebook users responding to a birthday Facebook status. The data analysis revealed that Jordanian Facebook users tended to use IFID strategy in 75.46% of the comments (n=2273). An example representing this strategy is the use of the comment “ عيد ميلاد سعيد” ‘Happy birthday’. The second most frequently posted strategy is “offering of good wishes” which crystalized in 12.22% of the comments (n=368). An illustrative example of this strategy is the use of the expression "اتمنى لك حياة سعيدة" ‘I wish you a happy life’. The use of praying for God's blessing and protection for his majesty occupied the third rank among the most frequently used strategies. This strategy manifested in 6.88% of the comments (n=207). The use of the expression "حفظك الله" ‘May God bless you’ is an example of this strategy.

Using affection expressions (e.g., "انا احبك" ‘I love you’) ranked fourth among the most frequent strategies (1.70% of the comments; n=51). Endearment’s expressions (e.g., "إطلالة رائعة جلالتك" ‘Good looking your majesty’) ranked fifth; it manifested in about 1.56% of the comments (n=47). Around 1.36% of the comments (n=41) used expressions of happiness (e.g., “انا فخور جدا بجلالتك" ‘I am so proud of your majesty’), while about 0.56% of the comments (n=17) were asking for the royal blessing (e.g., "بدنا مكرمة ملكية براتب شهر إضافي" ‘We need a royal blessing of an extra month's salary’). The least frequent strategy was the used of proverbs and sayings (e.g., "الإبداع هو ما يميز القائد عن التابع " ‘Creativity is what distinguishes a leader from a follower’); this strategy manifested in only 0.26% of the comments (n=8).

These findings are consistent with those of Jahangard et al. (2016), Elwood (2004), Setyorini (2020), Al-Hour (2019), Irahim and Bakar (2019), and Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016). For example, Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) reported that the most common strategy was the IFID (37.7%). Similarly, Al-Hour (2019) found that IFID is the dominant strategy among Palestinians, reporting that 63.3% of the Palestinian participants adopted this strategy when they had to offer congratulations to someone who had a new possession.

The frequency of offering of good wishes among Jordanian Facebookers is also in accordance with Jahangard et al. (2016) who found that both Persians and Americans used it as the second most frequent strategy (78.3% and 68.3% respectively). Commenting with praying for God's blessing and protection for his majesty manifested in 6.88% of the comments. This particular finding reflects the cultural values of Jordanians as well as their religious orientation (being Muslims). According to Islamic teachings, one cannot be a true believer until he/she loves for others what he/she loves for himself/herself. In fact, this Islamic teaching is not restricted to fellow Muslims; it applies to all humanity regardless of their religious backgrounds.

In their study on the speech act of condolences among Jordanians, Al-Shboul and Maros (2013) assert that the use of some strategies is ascribed to the participants’ Islamic background. Since almost 92% of the population of Jordan are Muslims, it is normal that people commonly use certain Islamic expressions in their daily life (Al-Shboul & Maros, 2013). For example, it is a common practice in Jordan to say "Bismillah" (which means "In the name of God”) before starting any activity (e.g., before eating and drinking, before doing work, etc.). Along the same vein, Al-Hour (2019) reports that offering congratulations is seen by Palestinians as a matter of gaining rewards from Allah (God). She added that it is important for Muslims to show appreciation and respect and to strengthen their relations; this could be achieved by offering congratulations and feeling proud of others in their delightful occasions such as graduation. Not expressing congratulations to others in their pleasant occasions can be understood wrongly and might be a sign of jealousy which is denied in the Palestinian culture and increases conflicts (Al-Hour, 2019).

Finally, it remains to be said that Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) found that the participants asked the congratulated addressee to give them some sweets. Jordanian Facebookers in the present study tended to request a similar thing, but this request is mainly associated with his majesty who has the decision to offer such a thing. More specifically, the Facebook users asked for a royal blessing such as an extra salary; such royal blessings are common in public and national occasions such as Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice or the Big Feast) and Eid al-Fitr (The Little Feast).

The second research question was formulated to identify the major strategies of positive politeness that manifested in Jordanian Facebook users’ congratulations while responding to a birthday Facebook status.

The data analysis revealed that the most frequent strategy among Jordanian Facebook users is to give gifts to the listener (e.g., "أطيب التهاني" ‘Congratulations’), which formed 53.65% of the strategies (n=1405). The second most frequent strategy is to comment with in-group identity marker (e.g., "جلالتك" ‘Your majesty’); this strategy crystalized in 43.30% of the comments (n=1134). Also 2.33% of the strategies (n=61) were related to exaggerate expressions (e.g., "انا فعلا بحب جلالتك" ‘I really love your majesty’). Last, the respondents tended to post comments that represent seek agreement (safe topic) strategy (e.g., "عيد ميلاد سعيد, ولكن يجب ان يكون هناك مزيدا من الإصلاحات السياسية " ‘Happy birthday, but there should be more political reforms’); this strategy manifested in only 0.72% of the comments (n=19).

The use of positive politeness strategies by Jordanian Facebook users can be taken as a way for saving the addressee’s positive face desires. It is widely believed that the congratulation speech act is directly related to the hearers’ positive face and could consequently be perceived as a positive strategy of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Some of these findings coincide with Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) who found that the Jordanian EFL learners express their congratulations most frequently by giving gift to the listener (55.2%). However, Jordanian Facebookers in the present study differ in their preference of in-group identity marker strategy compared with those who participated in Al-Shboul and Huwari’s (2016) study. While this strategy is the second most frequent strategy (43.30%) in the present study, it ranked third in Al-Shboul and Huwari’s (2016) study with only (7.1%). This significant disparity in this strategy can be attributed to the types and scenarios involved in the data collection instruments. While Al-Shboul and Huwari (2016) employed DCT to examine congratulation strategies on marriage and birth of a baby occasions, the present study scrutinizes the comments posted on Facebook on the 60th birthday occasion of HM King Abdullah II. Addressing HM without address forms such as “Your Majesty, my beloved king, my dear king” is inappropriate.

Finally, the occurrence of in-group identity marker can also be ascribed to the social values and/or norms of Arabs in general and Jordanians in particular. Al-Shboul (2014) confirms that while Jordanians use the define relationship semantic formula in refusals (e.g., “My dear friend”), Americans do not. Using in-group address forms such as addressing someone by his/her first name and using endearment terms (e.g., darling, honey, dear, angel, sir, beloved) stress the solidarity, reduce the distant, and increase the friendliness between the interlocutors (Brown & Levinson, 1978). According to Hamady (1960), Westerners are less rank conscious compared to Arabs. This appears clearly in the Arabs’ communication style of emphasizing and overstressing their acknowledgement of the higher social status people which is taken as a matter of being more polite and to show more respect to their interlocutors.

VII. Conclusion

The present study investigates the congratulation speech act and the associated strategies of politeness that manifest in the comments of Jordanian Facebookers. The data necessary for the purposes of this study were elicited from the comments posted by Jordanian Facebook users when responding in Arabic to a birthday Facebook status on the 60th birthday occasion of HM King Abdullah II. The findings showed that the (IFID) is the most common congratulation strategy among Jordanian Facebookers, and the use of proverbs and sayings is the least used strategy. As for the strategies of politeness in the congratulatory forms among Jordanian Facebook users, the data analysis revealed that the dominant strategies are giving gifts to the listener and in-group identity marker (usage of address forms); exaggerate and seek agreement (safe topic) strategies are the least used ones. These results were discussed in light of the theory of speech act (Austin, 1962) and the theory of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The results of the study demonstrate some valuable insights in intracultural and cross-cultural research. This study asserts that people from different cultural backgrounds express their congratulations differently. For example, the data analysis revealed that Jordanian Facebookers’ choice of congratulation strategies and positive politeness strategies is influenced by their social norms, cultural values, and religious beliefs.

More research on the congratulation speech act and strategies of politeness among Jordanians is still needed to evaluate, or further validate, the results of this study. It is recommended that this study be replicated in other context to check whether the findings can be generalized or not. It is also recommended that variables like age, social status, and gender be examined to get better understanding of their influence. Furthermore, other data collection instruments such as DCT and role plays are highly recommended in order to elicit additional data about the possible congratulation strategies used by Jordanians. Finally, this study might open an avenue to a new topic that is worth investigation, namely, the pragmatic transfer in the congratulation strategies among Jordanian EFL learners.

Acknowledgments

The author received no financial support for the research and/or authorship of this article, but they are grateful to Ala’a Bani Khalef and Adnan Abumahfouz for helping to code and analyse the data, and to Sabri Al-Shboul for his thoughtful comments on an earlier version of this manuscript.

References

[1] Alameen, M. I. (2017). *Investigating similarities and differences between Sudanese Arabic and British English speech acts of congratulations* [Master’s thesis] Sudan University for Science and Technology.

[2] Al-Hour, I. I. (2019). *The speech act of congratulation in Palestinian society: Positive politeness and gender differences* [Master’s thesis]. Hebron University.

[3] Al-Khaza’leh, B. A. (2018). Influence of social power on perception of speech act of apology by Jordanian second language speakers. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 14*(1), 211-229.

[4] Al-Shboul, Y. (2014). *Pragmatic transfer of refusal strategies in English among Jordanian EFL learners at UKM*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University Kebangsaan Malaysia.

[5] Al- Shboul, Y., & Huwari, I. (2016). Congratulation strategies of Jordanian EFL postgraduate students. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *6*(1), 79-87.

[6] Al-Shboul, Y., & Maros, M. (2013). Condolence strategies by Jordanians to an obituary status update on Facebook. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *13*(3), 151-162.

[7] Al- Shboul, Y., & Maros, M. (2020). The High and low-context communication styles in refusal strategies by Jordanian Arabic and American English speakers. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *28*(3), 2063 – 2080.

[8] Amer, D., Buragohain, D., & Suryani, I. (2020). Politeness strategies in making requests in Jordanian call-centre interactions. *Education and Linguistics Research*, *6*(1), 69-86.

[9] Austin, J. (1962). *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon press.

[10] Beebe, L. M. & Cummings, M. C. (1985). *Speech act performance: A function of the data collection procedure*. Paper presented at the Nineteenth Annual TESOL Conference, New York.

[11] Beebe, L. M. Takahashi, T., & Uliss-Weltz, R. (1990). Pragmatic transfer in ESL refusals. In R. C. Scarcella, E. S. Anderson, and S. D. Krashen (Eds.), *Developing communicative competence in a second language* (pp. 55-94). New York: Newburry House.

[12] Blum-Kulka, S., & House, J. (1989). Cross-cultural and situational variation in requesting behavior. In S. Blum-Kulka, J. House, & G. Kasper (Eds.), *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies* (pp. 123–154). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

[13] Blum-Kulka, S., House, J., & Kasper, G. (1989). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: Requests and apologies*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
[14] Brown, P. & Levinson S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[15] Cohen, A. (1996). Speech act. In S. L. Mckay, & N. H. Horeberger (Eds.). *Sociolinguistics and language teaching* (pp. 393-420). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[16] Dastrjerdi, H. V., & Nasri. N. (2013). A cross-cultural study of speech acts: situational aspects of congratulations in English, Persian and Arabic, *Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching, (1),* 15-22.
[17] Elwood, K. (2004). "Congratulations!": A cross-cultural analysis of responses to another's happy news'. The Cultural Review, *Waseda Commercial Studies Association, (25),* 355-386.
[18] Facebook most popular social media site in Jordan. (2016, July 18). *The Jordan Times*. http://www.jordantimes.com/news/local/facebook-most-popular-social-media-site-jordan-%E2%80%94-report.
[19] Facebook users in Jordan. (2020, December). *NapoleonCat.* https://napoleoncat.com/stats/facebook-users-in-jordan/2020/12
[20] Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual*. New York: Anchor.
[21] Hamady, S. (1960). *Temperament and characters of the Arab*. New York: Twayne Publishers.
[22] Irahim, N. H. M., & Bakar, N. (2019). Congratulatory messages strategy in Facebook and Twitter. Presented at International Conference on Humanities, Malaysia, 2019: European Publisher.
[23] Jahangard, A., Khanlarzade, N., & Latifi, A. (2016). Do Iranians and Americans congratulate their friends differently on their birthdays on Facebook? A case for intercultural studies. *Journal of English Language, Teaching and Learning, (18),* 123-143.
[24] Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics.* London: Addison-Wesley
[25] Mahajan, R. (2015). The key role of communication skills in the life of professionals. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 20*(12), 36-39.
[26] Pishghadam, R., & Moghaddam, M. M. (2011). Towards a contrastive pragmatics analysis of congratulation speech act in Persian and English. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *4*(2), 130-155.
[27] Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning. Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.
[28] Searle, J. R.& Vanderveken, D. (1985). *Foundations of illocutionary logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[29] Setyorini, D. (2020). *Congratulation expressions addressed to Arya Permana given by Facebookers* [Bachelor's project]. Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.
[30] Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. (2001). Discourse and intercultural communication. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, & H. E. Hamilton (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 538-547). Oxford, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
[31] Trujillo, V. E. V. (2011). *Sociopragmatic study of politeness in speech acts congratulating in Colombian Spanish*, [Master's thesis] Arizona State University.
[32] Wierzbicka, A. (1987). *English speech act verbs: A semantic dictionary.* Sydney: Academic Press.

Yasser Al-Shboul is an Assistant Professor in the English Language and Literature Department Al-Balqa Applied University, Salt, Jordan, and holds a Ph.D. of English Language Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University of Malaysia. He is interested in topics related to Sociolinguistics, Sociopragmatics, and Language Acquisition. The ORCID number of the author is https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1085-040X.

Zeyad Al-Daher received his PhD degree in linguistics from the University of Manitoba, Canada in 2017. He is currently assistant professor at Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan where he has been teaching linguistics for five years. His research interests include sociolinguistics, humor, code-switching, politeness theory and syntactic theory. The ORCID number of the author is https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9888-8041.

Othman Aref Al-Dala'ien is an assistant professor of linguistics at Department of English language and literature, Al-Balqa Applied University (BAU), Jordan. He received his PhD degree in linguistics from Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), India in 2016. His area of interest includes Morphology, Morpho-syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics, Semiotics, and Historical linguistics. The ORCID number of the author is https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7653-4728.

Tamador Khalaf Abu-Snoubar is an Assistant Professor at Al-Balqa Applied University/ Salt Faculty of Humanities/ Department of English Language and Literature. She has a Ph.D. in TEFL and an MA in Comparative Literature. Her major fields of interest are English Literature and Teaching English as a Foreign Language. She has published thirteen papers in different journals with 58 citations. The ORCID number of the author is http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2689-8205.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1105-1114, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.25

Military English Teaching in Chinese Military Academies: A Review

Wenjun Zhong
Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office, High-Tech Institute of Xi'an, Xi'an, China

Yuxuan Zhang
Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office, High-Tech Institute of Xi'an, Xi'an, China

Yajing Jin
Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office, High-Tech Institute of Xi'an, Xi'an, China

***Abstract*—Through reviewing studies of military English teaching in the context of Chinese military academies, this paper is aimed at locating both research gaps and weaknesses as well as achievements in an effort to contribute to research and development of military English teaching in Chinese military academies. Seven research topics are identified and the overall situation and problems in topic selection and in research design are then discussed. It is found that over years this field witnesses an increasing number of research projects, indicating a growing recognition of military English teaching in Chinese military academies. However, for topic selection, many topics are too broad and general while students and teachers, technology in teaching, and testing and assessment receive only minimal attention. For research design, plenty of researchers fail to illustrate explicitly their research questions and are thus confusing in terms of their research focuses. While most studies are not empirical and often too subjective, empirical ones usually adopt the quantitative approach and face reliability issue generated from data collection and analysis procedures. Accordingly, the authors tentatively propose some suggestions and future research directions to improve the situation.**

***Index Terms*—review, military English teaching, Chinese military academies, research topic, research design**

I. Introduction

With China's military forces opening up more to the world, they are expected to embrace more communications with militaries from other countries and engage in more international military operations other than wars (MOOTWs) (Zhang, 2010). To carry out international exchanges, apart from military specific expertise, foreign language capacity also matters and is thus regarded as both an important quality for new-type military personnel and a combat capability since without military foreign language capacity, it will be hard to perform military specific tasks and missions in a foreign language context (Li & Zhou, 2019). Military English, as one part of military foreign languages should therefore never be underestimated when cultivating future military forces.

Despite its importance, there are confusions over the definition of military English in China. No distinction has been made between military English for special purposes and military English for general purposes; no agreement has been achieved about whether “military” or “English” should be given more importance to or they should be equally valued when discussing military English; and it has been defined differently in different academic fields (Zhang, 2009). In this study, the authors adopt the definition of military English as English for Special Purposes (ESP) because the focus of this review is on language instruction and a definition within the framework of second language instruction and acquisition serves this goal better. Defining it in this way also meets the need of better cultivating future military forces since it in this sense stresses on the actual usage of military English in a professional context. In other words, when teaching military English one should emphasize language skills and hands-on practices in order to enable cadets to utilize military English with more ease in their future military career (Zhang, 2011).

For most cadets, military academies are the only places where they can receive systematic and formal training in military English. The quality of military English teaching in military academies is therefore of paramount importance. That is why the authors narrow the discussion to military academies.

Previously, Zhang (2009) reflected upon military English teaching and pinned down problems and achievements in this field. However, that review centred on experiences drawn from teaching practices instead of scholarly investigations. While Zhang (2010) made some contributions in this respect, she only gave a small section in her review to military English teaching studies. Besides, no other review has been conducted since 2010 so it is unclear how this research field has developed since then. In this article, strengths and weaknesses of relevant studies were looked through and several future research directions were tentatively proposed.

In the second section, how studies are reviewed in this paper is introduced. It is followed by an overall situation of previous studies in this field. Problems in terms of the research topic selection and research design are then discussed.

Suggestions and some future research directions are provided along with the discussion. The last section concludes this article by summarizing problems, suggestions and future research directions.

Through reviewing previous research, the authors aimed to answer the following three questions:

(1) What is the overall situation of studies of military English teaching in Chinese military academies?

(2) What are the problems in and suggestions for topic selection for studies in military English teaching in Chinese military academies?

(3) What are the problems in and suggestions for research design for studies in military English teaching in Chinese military academies?

II. Research Methods

To ensure studies reviewed were closely related to the military English teaching in Chinese military academies and comprehensive enough, the authors typed in “military English teaching” and “military English instruction” to conduct key word search and topic" search on CNKI, Google Scholar, Researchgate and EBSCOhost and finally selected 161 studies from Jan. 1st, 2009 to Dec. 31th, 2021. All studies were first categorized and then counted according to year of publication, research topic, acceptance by a core journal and general research method (empirical or not). For empirical ones, they were further grouped based on their research approaches (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed). These steps produced an overall situation of research in this field. Studies were then discussed in detail for their topic selection and research design to present both merits and demerits in these two aspects. Accordingly, suggestions and future research directions were proposed.

III. Findings and Discussion

A. Overall Situation

Altogether only 161 studies were found and only nine were accepted by core journals. It shows that there is a dearth of relevant research in this field and the quality of existing ones calls for betterment. As Chart 1 suggested, before 2009 there was barely any research in this field. This was in line with the observation made in Zhang (2009). After 2009, it was clear that the number of relevant research had been gradually climbing, indicating a growing recognition of military English teaching in Chinese military academies. Its number grew most sharply from 2017 to 2018 and peaked in 2020, suggesting that in most recent years, more attention has been paid to research of this field. Although there are some fluctuations, a general upward trend is still clear, indicating that more studies are expected.

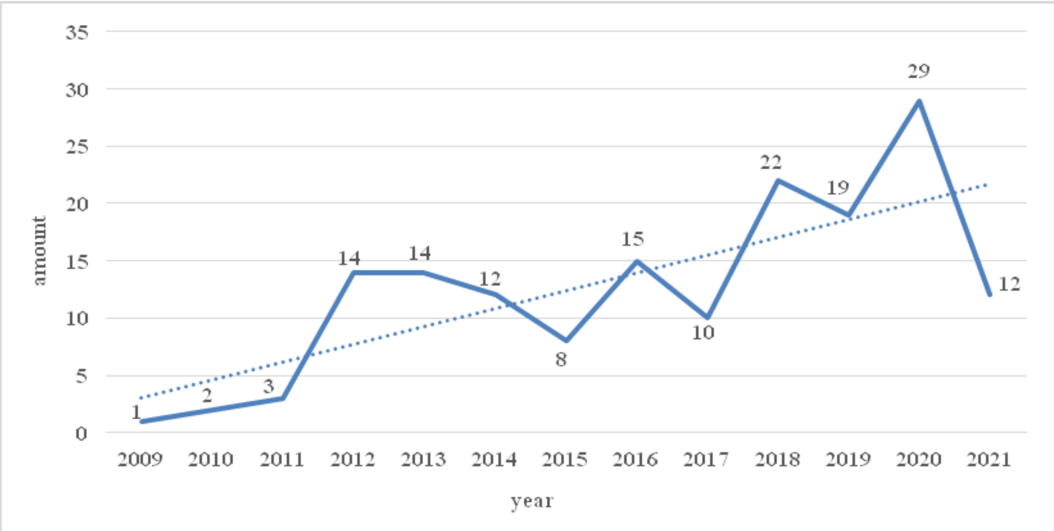


Chart 1 The Number of Research Projects Over Years

As for research topics, apart from two review articles, all together nine research topics were found. Indeed, they have covered all facets of military English teaching. Teaching Content and Textbook were about *what to teach*; Teaching Method and Teaching Mode dealt with *how to teach*; Student and Teacher were related to main *participants* in teaching activities; Technology Application concerned *teaching aids*; Testing was surely part of *testing and assessment* and course development talked about the overall *course design*. The authors thus further categorized these 161 articles in accordance with the aforesaid seven facets in italics in this paragraph in order to make the discussion more logical and easier to follow.

From Chart 2 below, it was obvious that the topic “how to teach" received the most attention by researchers, indicating the major concern in this field. They were followed by studies on “what to teach”. The topic “course development” ranked the third. Together studies on these three topics occupied around 78.3% of all studies. Meanwhile, other three topics were less talked about, especially the topic “testing and assessment” (1.9%). Researchers seemed to be more interested in or were more aware of the importance of the top ranking topics while somewhat ignored other equally crucial facets. This general trend reminds researchers to do more research in less popular topics for the sake of a balanced development of research of military English teaching.

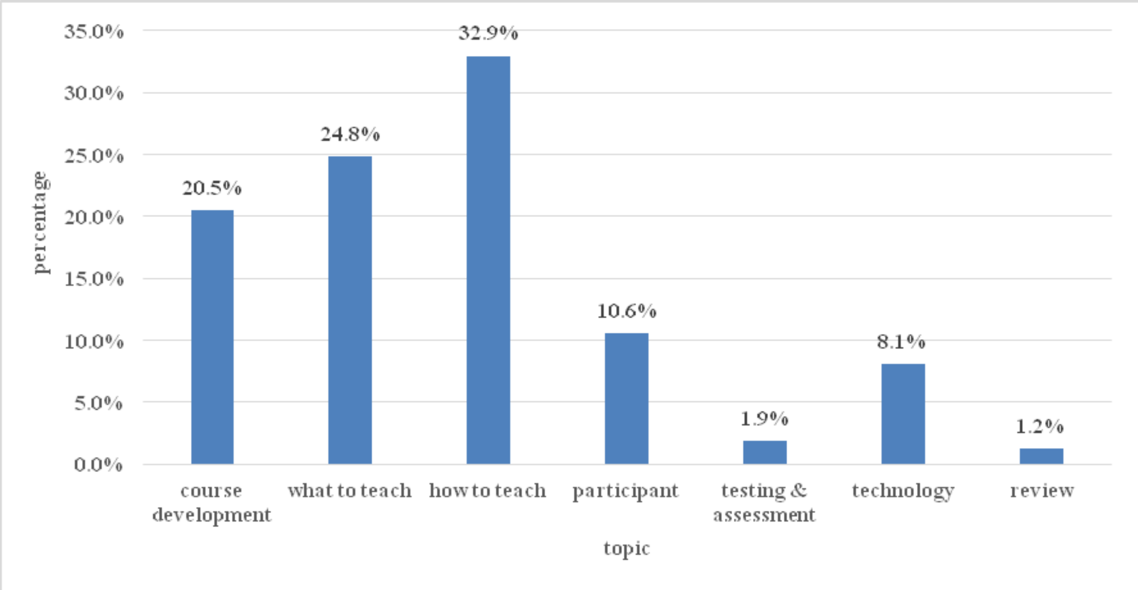


Chart 2 The Percentage of Each Research Topic

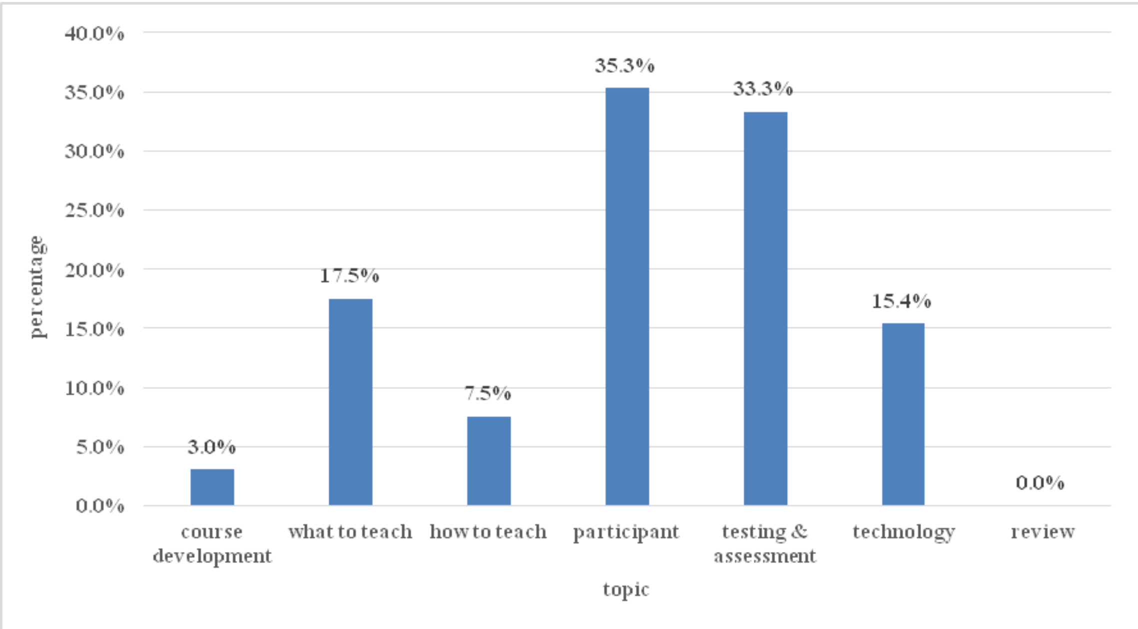


Chart 3 The Percentage of Empirical Research Within Each Research Topic Group

Researches without empirical data had long been criticized as being too subjective or even groundless in academic field. But regrettably, most studies reviewed in this paper were not empirical ones (only 13.0% in total). The authors broke down the 21 empirical studies according to their topics and calculated the percentage of empirical research within each topic and the result was presented in Chart 3. It should be noted that the proportion of empirical studies in “course development" and “how to teach" was relatively small (3.0% and 7.5% respectively) although they were hot topics judging from Chart 2. The remaining 87.0% were either a description of a course design, a reflection on achievements, a summary of problems in military English teaching, a summary of teaching practices and experiences, or one's reflection on a particular theory. Although summaries and reflections alike were to some extent useful in offering a bird's eye view of certain topic, providing practical experiences, or introducing new theories into this field, their findings might become less convincing without scientific empirical data. Future research is therefore advised to equip with empirical data set to provide more solid evidence to their conclusions.

When conducting empirical research, there are two most common broad approaches, quantitative and qualitative (Mackey & Gass, 2005). When employing both, it is a mixed-method research design. They are different from each other in terms of the data type, data elicitation process and data analysis process (Grotjahn, 1987) and each has their own merits and demerits (Mackey & Gass, 2005). As displayed in Chart 4, there was an over-reliance on quantitative research. Although it did not necessarily constitute a problem since the research approach depends on what research aims at and there should be no prejudice against any type of these three research approaches. However, since different research approaches are suitable for different research topics and are aimed at collecting and analysing different types of data, more diverse approaches would help the academia understand a research object from various aspects. Future research is therefore encouraged to adopt a greater variety of suitable research approaches for the purpose of gaining a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the military English teaching.

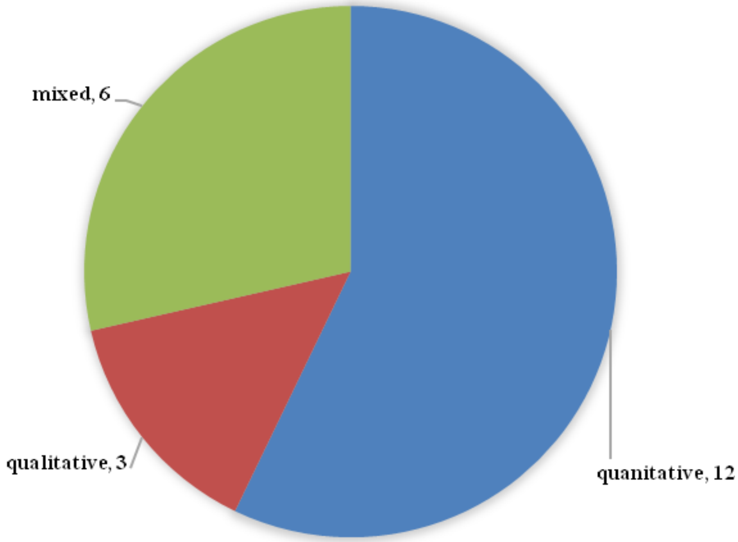


Chart 4 The Amount of Each Research Approach

To sum up, from the overall situation we can see studies in this field have gradually received more and more attention over years. Yet relevant studies are far from enough and the quality is relatively poor. Researchers who have opted empirical research are rare and quantitative approach is generally preferred. Researchers are encouraged to put more emphasis on less explored topics, conduct empirical investigations more and diversify data collection approaches.

B. Problems and Suggestions in Terms of Selecting a Research Topic

(a). Narrowing Down a Research Topic

The first problem is many research topics are too broad and general. This is especially the case with research on “course development". Kou and Zheng (2013) for example took the course development as their research subject and identified problems in textbook, teaching outcome, teaching mode and schedule based on teaching experiences. However, other facets such as theories and principles underpinned the course design, content, pedagogy, assessment, and teacher development which are equally important for consideration in course development were left untouched. As a result, a mismatch between what a study claimed to examine and what it examined emerged. The same problem could also be found in more studies like Zhang (2010), Xu (2014), and Yue and Yang (2018). The authors do not suggest that taking course development as a research topic is not applicable. Instead, if one decides to take the course development as the research subject, one should endeavour to take in as many facets as possible to provide a more comprehensive picture of the course development. However, that is likely to make a study less feasible for many scholars unless enough time, financial resources and manpower are available. Alternatively, one can stick to this broad topic and discussing some facets of it but with full justification of choices of some facets over others. A more practical way is to narrow down the research topic to just one facet of course development at a time and conduct an in-depth investigation of it. It will also be easier, the authors believe, for researchers to be better targeted and avoid empty talks by narrowing down the topic.

(b). Suggestions for Future Research Directions for Less Explored Topics

The second problem, as having been pointed out in the overall situation, is that too little attention has been paid to topics “participants” (10.6%), “technology application” (8.1%), and “testing and assessment” (1.9%). In the following the authors report what have been done under each of the three less investigated topic and provides more possible research directions.

For starters, participants in teaching, scilicet students and teachers.

There is no doubt that students are pivotal for conducting teaching practices since they are what teaching practices designed and carried out for. He and Tian (2017) introduced a cognitive framework of learning strategies and advocated the building of a cognitive framework of military English learning strategy. However, their emphasis is more on the introduction of a theory and it is not clear how that theory can be applied to military English learning and teaching. While Zhou and Wang (2015) and Huang (2018) mainly introduced the concept of need analysis, others advocated that to better satisfy students' demands, more attention should be paid to military vocabulary (Liu & Cai, 2017) and to solving students' problems in learning (Zhang & Ren, 2012). Meanwhile, Liu and Cai (2017) also noticed different types of needs between high-level learners and low-level learners and thus campaigned for more attention to various needs of learners of different language proficiency. These studies merit in the notice of individual differences in learning and in advocating taking these differences into consideration in teaching practices. However, most of them fail to provide any concrete data to support their claims. Apart from students’ needs and their learning strategies, there are many more topics around learners worthy of exploration. What types of errors do students commonly make? What kind of classroom interaction serves the teaching and learning needs best? What about learner's motivation, beliefs and learning styles? What does the developmental pattern in military English acquisition look like? Answering to these questions will surely help scholars and teachers acquire a better understanding of the acquisition process of students and ultimately improve teaching outcomes.

Researches on teachers are far less. Although teacher development has been repeatedly emphasized by many studies such as Xu and Zhang (2013) and Yue and Yang (2018), only four studies paid special attention to it. These studies either focused on the development of specific skills or a broader institutional framework. They concluded that currently teachers responsible for military English teaching generally lacked specified knowledge and therefore called for more training and learning of relevant knowledge so that they would be better qualified in teaching military English (Cai & Liu, 2014; Zhang & Wang, 2016; Cheng, 2019). Wang et al. (2020b) also proposed the building of a better faculty team. However, relevant studies are insufficient and are usually summaries based on personal experiences. Besides, little has been discussed on causes of or solutions to problems identified. As a vibrant research field, teacher development involves far more issues and concerns. Future studies can explore teachers’ beliefs and their influences on teaching or the relationship between beliefs and practices. Different anticipations between teachers and students for teaching, teachers questioning in military English class and teacher's self-esteem in teaching military English all deserve attention.

As for “technology application", researchers simply introduced military English corpuses (Huang et al., 2012; Zhang 2019), speech laboratories (Sun & Zhang, 2013), MOOC (Wang & Li, 2019) and other multimedia tools (Lv, 2021; Wang et al., 2020a) to military English teaching. Only Zhang et al. (2020a, 2020b) went further to examine the effectiveness of online platforms like WeChat. All of them agreed that these tools indeed facilitated their teaching. However, relevant studies are far from enough considering the increasing popularity of high-tech teaching aids like corpuses, smart classrooms, computer assisted language learning (CALL), and mobile assisted language learning (MALL), to name a few. Will these technologies enhance the effectiveness of teaching? How to better integrate these technologies into military English teaching? Which technology is more useful in teaching military English vocabulary? Which technology better facilitates students' military English oral competence and which, their writing performance? What can be obtained in terms of technology application by investigating the attitude of students and teachers toward using smart classrooms? Researchers are advised to diversify their research focuses so as to better understand and utilize the technology in military English teaching.

The last one is “testing and assessment". For any kind of teaching, testing and assessment should never be underestimated since they evaluate teaching practices and provide feedback throughout the teaching process. Nevertheless, there have been a paucity of relevant studies in this field although the necessity of scientific and objective means of assessment and testing has been repeatedly mentioned in articles like L. Zhang (2010), Zhou et al. (2012) and Dai et al. (2018). Portfolio assessment was examined in Hou and Wu (2016) exclusively and proved to improve teaching outcomes. This conclusion agreed with findings in Wan et al. (2020). However, both are simply summaries of their practices. It is therefore unclear whether every procedure of the portfolio assessment examined is objective and reliable enough or whether it is more useful and effective compared with traditional ways of assessment. Kou (2015) took exam papers as the research object and concluded that exam papers were too difficult and there should be more ways to evaluate spoken military English. However, nothing has been mentioned about the validity of the test paper and the content of it seems irrelevant to military English, thus undermining the result of that study. The reliability and validity of a test were investigated in Gao and Huang (2020). By inviting some teachers to participate in the study as raters, factors influencing the reliability and validity were analysed and solutions were put forward. However, it is unclear whether a strong agreement has been reached among raters and if not, whether there have been any steps taken to solve the inconsistency. Therefore, it can be concluded that although these four articles have contributed to certain extent, there are some severe problems in their research design. In addition, there are more fascinating directions for exploration in this respect. One can investigate constructs, namely, traits of a test plans to measure (Davies et al., 1999) so as to avoid threats of construct irrelevance and construct under-representation (Messick, 1989). More studies can also be carried out on the development of a rating scale by exploring selections and weighting of various criteria, descriptors, format, length and usability so that students' performance can be judged on a more objective and scientific basis. Another area of interest is the washback of a test, which refers to influences of a large-scale high-risk test on teaching and learning and acts as an important component of measuring the quality of a test (Qi, 2011). With the advent of English Language Proficiency Test for the Military in China, research on this topic is both inevitable and urgent.

For hot research topics, despite the sheer number of research projects, there can be more possible research directions. Taking the topic “what to teach” as an example. For specific teaching content, some have explored important contents in teaching and agreed that teaching should give special emphasis on military vocabulary (Zhang & Miao, 2011; Wu et al., 2013). It is understandable since military English as ESP necessarily contains a large amount of unique vocabulary (Yan et al., 2010) and they are extremely hard for students to memorize (Yang et al., 2018). But what about other specific teaching contents? Another subtopic of “what to teach” concerns the textbook. Developing a suitable textbook is rather complex since it concerns objectives of a course, needs of both teachers and students, requirements of the society on language usage, and assistance and support for learning (Cunningsworth, 1995). Currently, most studies under this subtopic focused on the language used (Wang et al., 2016), overarching framework (Yin et al., 2019), and topics covered (Wei, 2015; Wang, 2018; Zhang et al., 2019). Few instead took another perspective like the textbook user for exploration. Wang (2011) for instance compared the textbooks at home and abroad and found that currently military English textbooks failed to satisfy students while Liu et al. (2016) recommended introducing cultural knowledge into the textbook. However, another textbook user, the teacher, is overlooked. What are teachers' needs and suggestions for a textbook?

To sum up, researchers are advised to narrow down their research topics while diversify their research focuses so as to generate more understandings of military English teaching.

C. Problems and Suggestions in Terms of Research Design

(a). Lack of Research Questions

At the initial stage, there must be at least one research question in second language research. They are what a study aims to answer and are necessary for any research. However, many previous studies in military English teaching did not have any research questions and some expressed their research questions implicitly or vaguely.

Take Wang and Zhou (2017) as an instance. In that article, no research question was raised or at least reported. From the article’s title, they seemed to centre on the course development. However, readers might find their research topic seemed to be changing all the time, from course development to the outcomes of a mixed teaching mode, and to students' satisfaction toward the course as a whole. Without specific and well-targeted research questions, it is difficult for readers to figure out what an article is truly about and for authors to concentrate on what he or she aims to expound. Of course, there are several studies such as Wang (2011), Li and Chen (2019) and Zhang et al. (2020a, 2020b) that have outperformed others in this respect. Future studies are thus advised to dig out specific research questions either from teaching practices or from reading previous research before designing and conducting a research.

(b). Specific Problems in Research Methods

1. Lack of Empirical Data

There was a rather similar writing pattern in most studies reviewed: problems were presented first and suggestions were given afterwards while nearly all problems and suggestions were generated from researchers’ personal practices. It was very common to come across expressions such as “according to our teaching practices”, “based on my experiences over these years”, “I'll discuss my feelings and thoughts about”, or “our practices are very successful and we are certain they will improve the teaching outcomes". For example, Wang et al. (2020a) introduced activities including mini-lectures, game and Model United Nations when discussing pedagogy while He and Fan (2019) tentatively advised starting the military English course right from the first year in college. They all claimed their proposals were or would be effective and beneficial while no empirical data were provided to support their conclusions. This is rather subjective and dubious since anyone can claim his or her conclusion is correct without any evidence. Future research should therefore try to avoid simply summarizing teaching practices or sharing personal thoughts without empirical data.

2. The Problem of Reliability

The major problem of reviewed empirical studies is reliability.

For researches that employ a survey or a questionnaire, none except Zhang et al. (2020a, 2020b) examined the reliability of the survey itself by Cronbach's α, thus casting doubts on the instrument used and findings produced. Further studies should at least provide certain evidence, perhaps a statistical one, to persuade readers of the reliability of research tools.

For researches that employ pre-tests and post-tests, researchers need to ensure both tests are comparable in terms of the difficulty. Otherwise, students' performance is highly likely to be biased. Therefore, results in Li and Chen (2019) were somewhat dubious because it was hard to determine whether progresses observed resulted from the teaching method adopted or from an easier post-test. Other scholars like Yan et al. (2010) did not explain whether there was any significant difference among subjects in pre-tests so it was hard to tell whether the significant difference came from new materials used or from differences already shown in the pre-test. Likewise, further studies should at least provide certain statistical evidence to consolidate their results.

In experimental research, if the control group and the experiment group are taught by different teachers, certain measures should be taken to handle possible influences brought by them. Be that as it may, Yan et al. (2010) and Li and Chen (2019) ignored possible influences or at least did not mention any detail in this respect.

In studies that require subjective ratings, rater reliability should be calculated to ensure the consistency of rating results. If there is no strong reliability among raters, scores delivered should be subject to suspicion. However, studies like Gao and Huang (2020) took no measure or did not report any detail in this respect although in their case, inter-rater reliability should be measured. What's more, if there is only one rater, intra-rater reliability should then be measured by rating the data at certain time interval.

Taken overall, empirical studies in this field lacked a pilot testing or did not report it. It is a very important step in data collection process. With a pilot study undertaken, researchers are able to find out any potential problems which may waste huge amount of time, energy, and financial resources (Gass & Mackey, 2000). Scholars are therefore recommended to conduct a pilot study and report it in their future projects.

3. *Suggestions for Data Elicitation Measures*

Empirical studies in this field have usually gathered data through surveys, interviews, experiments, tests, and corpuses. However, there are more and sometimes more suitable data collection measures to examine the military English teaching. This is because collection measures are decided by the type of data one tries to collect which in turn, is determined by what one resolves to explore. Even for the same research topic, data elicitation measures vary in accordance with one's research perspective. In the following text, the authors tentatively propose another four data collection methods.

First, surveys with close-ended questions have been frequently used to investigate problems in learning military English and in teacher development. Although relevant studies possibly managed to reveal the most common problems, they could not find out some potential problems since questionnaire takers were offered with limited choices with close-ended questions. If interviews or surveys with open-ended questions are chosen otherwise or added as additional research tools, more surprising and perhaps comprehensive findings might be obtained.

Second, when asking students to verbalise their problems in comprehending military English materials, they may sometimes not realize their problems or even falsely report their problems to satisfy researchers. It is therefore more desirable to directly observe their problems and eye-tracking technique can serve this need. It can be used to find out difficulties in processing a reading material. This is because it directly records where a learner's eyes gaze at longer or when a learner rereads certain part of a material, which, according to Reichle et al. (2006, 2012), indicates some difficulties.

Third, there is still no study focusing exclusively on military English classroom, leaving many questions around it untouched. For this, it is recommended to employ classroom observation to unveil an authentic military English class. One can observe, for example, real-time feedback from teachers and how students react to feedback, how teachers effectively integrate teaching principles into the class, whether students are given enough time to ponder, interactions among students, how students deal with learning difficulties, and even nonverbal behaviours of both teachers and students. One can either invite trained observers to help with the observation or record a class via a camera to observe afterwards. Classroom observation helps in that it reveals some problems or situations during actual teaching practices which are highly likely to be ignored through reflection. By delving into results of observations, one may be able to discover something new, which can further improve teaching practices.

Fourth, corpuses provide an alternative to explore military English teaching as they have assisted in textbook compilation (Shen et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2019), military English self-learning (Huang et al., 2012), and military English vocabulary teaching (Zhang, 2019; Zheng et al., 2020). They are not only tools for researchers to analyse for instance patterns of military texts or systematic errors in learning military English, but also materials available for teaching and learning. However, no researchers except the aforementioned five studies have incorporated them into military English teaching research. Other studies instead focus on the necessity of a corpus to research (Li et al., 2014), on the building of a corpus (Ma et al., 2018), on translation (Yang, 2011) and on the text analysis (Xing, 2020). What's more, currently there are scarcely any well-recognized or accessible military English corpuses so that most researchers have to establish one when conducting corpus-based research. Researchers are therefore recommended devoting efforts into building up more well-accepted and accessible military English corpuses and conducting researches based on them. In particular, there is still no student-specific corpus in which learners' performances in producing military English (either as a form of speaking or writing) are documented. With such a corpus, it saves time and energy for scholars who are interested into, for example, probing into systematic patterns of students' performances and with such knowledge, a better understanding of both teaching and learning outcomes can be gained.

IV. Conclusion

In this paper, previous studies in the field of military English teaching in Chinese academies are reviewed in terms of the overall situation, problems in topic selection, and problems in research design. Suggestions and future research directions are given accordingly. Major findings are presented as follows:

The general trend shows that (1) although generally there are more and more studies centering on this research field, both quality and amount of relevant studies need further boost; (2) researchers have taken all facets necessary for military English teaching into consideration although far less attention has been paid to equally essential topics including technology application in teaching, students and teachers as well as testing and assessment; (3) most studies are non-empirical and lack substantial evidence to support their analysis and discussion; (4) among empirical ones, more adopt the quantitative approach and thus cannot investigate data that cannot be gained from quantitative approach, leaving many interesting topics untouched. Therefore, different empirical approaches are encouraged to meet the demands of different research topics and researchers are recommended to carry out more researches on less explored topics.

Problems in topic selection fall into two types:

(1) The topic is too broad and general and therefore can be formidable to manipulate. Discussion on such a topic is also highly probable to be incomplete unless enough time, money and energy are allowed. Scholars are therefore expected to narrow down their topics or provide sufficient evidence to support their choices of some facets over others of one broad topic.

(2) Some equally important topics are less examined. More possible directions for research in students and teachers, testing and assessment and technology in teaching are then provided respectively. Some new research directions are also provided for hot research topics.

Apart from the general research approach mentioned in the overall situation, there are two other major problems in research design:

(1) Lack of research questions. Many studies lack research questions thus making their research less focused and difficult to follow. Researchers are then suggested to pin down their research questions from daily teaching practices or from reading before carrying out a study and make them explicit when reporting it.

(2) Reliability issue. Very few studies have provided any evidence to ensure the reliability during data gathering and analysis processes, thus greatly undermining the persuasiveness and credibility of their conclusions. It is therefore advised to take and present measures such as statistical ones to address this issue.

Lastly, four additional data collection measures, namely, interview or survey with open-ended questions, eye-tracking technique, classroom observation, and corpus, are introduced to elicit more interesting information about military English teaching via a more appropriate approach.

Research in military English teaching in Chinese military academies still has a long way to go. With more proper and wider range of topics selected and more appropriate research methods applied, this field is sure to produce fruitful results which in turn will improve the quality of military English teaching and ultimately, will benefit the cultivation of new military personnel for the PLA.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is part of the project entitled "*The Development of a Top-quality Course Military English*" sponsored by Xi'an Research Institute of Hi-Tech.

REFERENCES

[1] Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. Oxford: Heinemann.

[2] Cai, L., & Liu, D. (2014). Jun shi ying yu jie gou jian she Zhong jiao shi neng li jie gou tan jiu [An Investigation into the Structure of Teachers' Capacity in the Development of Military English Course]. *Overseas English, (16),* 87-89.

[3] Cheng, A. N., (2019). Jun dui yuan xiao EMP shi zi jian zhe yan jiu [An Investigation into the EMP Teacher in Military Academies]. *Overseas English, (22),* 132-133.

[4] Dai, S. S., Li, X. H. & Cai, R. L., (2018). Jun dui yuan xiao ying yu jiao xue xian zhuang ji dui ce [An Analysis of the Status quo and Measures Taken for English Teaching in Military Academies]. *Western China Quality Education, (20),* 195.

[5] Davies, A., Brown, A., Elder, C., Hill, k., Lumley, T., & McNamara, T. (1999). *Dictionary of language testing* (Vol.7). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[6] Gao, L. & Huang, S. (2020). Jun shi ying yu ke cheng kao shi de xin du he xiao du ge an yan jiu [A Case Study of the Validity and Credibility of Military English Course Assessment]. *Wen jiao zi liao, (20),* 213-215.

[7] Gass, S., & Mackey, A. (2000). *Stimulated recall methodology in second language research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

[8] Grotjahn, R. (1987). On the methodological basis of introspective methods. In C. Færch & G. Kasper (Eds), *Introspection in second language research*. UK: Multilingual Matters.

[9] He, L. N. & Fan, X. K. (2019). "Hun he dui fen" mo shi xia de gao xiao jun1 shi ying yu ting shuo ke cheng she ji [The Course Design of Efficient Military English Listening and Speaking Class under the PAD Teaching Model]. *Journal of Higher Education, (22),* 102-104.

[10] Hou, C. H. & Wu, J. J. (2016). Dong tai xi tong li lun zhi dao xia de jun1 shi ying yu zi zhu xue xi dang an dai shi jian yan jiu — yi jun1 xie gong cheng xue yuan 2014ji ben ke shi yan ban wei li [The Application of Portfolio in Military English Self-learning under the Guidance of Dynamic Systemic Theory: A Case Study]. *Crazy English (Pro). (04),* 33-35.

[11] Huang, S. (2019). Ji yu jun1 shi ying yu xue xi xiao guo de xue xi ji li yu jiao xue ce lue [The Learning Mechanism and Teaching Strategies in Military English Learning]. *Overseas English, (02),* 121-122.

[12] Huang, X. Q., Liu, Y., & Lv, N. (2012). Qian xi jun1 shi ying yu yu liao ku zai jun1 xiao xue yuan zi zhu xue xi zhong de ying yong [The Application of Military English Corpus in Seal-learning by Military Cadets]. *Journal of Educational Institute of Jilin Province, 28* (06), 52-53.

[13] Kou, X. L. (2015). Shi guan jun1 shi ying yu ke cheng kao he mo shi de tan suo yu si kao —yi kong jun1 di yi hang kong xue yuan ying yu kao shi gai ge wei li [A Case Study of the Course Assessment of Non-commissioned Officers], *Teaching of Forestry Region*, *(09)*, 36-37.

[14] Kou, X. L. & Zheng, Y. (2013). Fei zhan zheng jun1 shi hang dong shi jiao xia de jun1 shi ying yu jiao xue yan jiu [The Research on Military English Teaching from the Perspective of MOOTW]. *Journal of Xinyang Agriculture and Forestry University, (03),* 125-127.

[15] Li, Y. X., & Chen, Z. (2019). The Effectiveness of Content-Based Language Teaching and Task-Based Language Teaching in Teaching Reading to Learners of Military English. *English Language, Literature & Culture 4* (2):39-43.

[16] Li, Y. Q., Zhang, Y. O., Deng, Q. J. (2014). Jun shi hou qin ying yu yu liao ku jian she de bi yao xing yan jiu [A Study of the Necessity of Developing Military English Logistics Corpus], *Journal of Hubei University of Economics (Humanities and Social Sciences), (06),* 203-204.

[17] Liu, D. & Cai, L. (2017). Jun shi ying yu ge xing hua xue xi xu qiu de ge an yan jiu [A Case Study of the Need of Personalized Military English Learning], *Overseas English*, *(23)*, 58-59.

[18] Liu, X., Liu, T. G., & Wang, H. (2016). Jun shi ying yu jiao cai shi yong xiao du de xian zhuang diao cha yan jiu yu dui ce fen xi ——yi jun1 xie gong cheng xue yuan suo shi yong de xin bian jun shi ying yu ·yue du pian wei li [An Investigation of the Usage of Military English Textbooks], *Crazy English (Pro), (03),* 26-28.

[19] Lv, N. (2021). Qian ru wang luo mei ti zi yuan de jun1 shi ying yu ke cheng tuo zhan jian she yan jiu [A Study of Extended Course Development of Military English Aided by Online Media Resources], *Overseas English, (05),* 26-27.

[20] Ma, X. L., Chen, Z. Z., & Zhang, H. M. (2018). MilDEAP jun shi xue shu ying yu yu liao ku de chuang jian [The Construction of MilDEAP]. *Corpus Linguistics*, *(02)*, 91-97.

[21] Messick, S. (1989). Meaning and Values in Test Validation: The Science and Ethics of Assessment. *Educational Researcher 18* (2):5-11.

[22] Qi, L. X. (2011). Yu yan ce shi de fan bo xiao ying li lun yu shi zheng yan jiu [A Review of Washback Studies]. *Foreign Language Learning Theory and Practice*, *(04)*, 23-28.

[23] Reichle, E. D., Poliatsek, A., Rayner, K. (2012). Using EZ Reader to Simulate Eye Movements in Nonreading Tasks: A Unified Framework for Understanding the Eye–mind Link. *Psychological Review 119* (1):155-185

[24] Reichle, E. D., Poliatesk, A., Rayner, K., et al. (2005). A Cognitive-control, Serialattention Model of Eye-movement Behavior during Reading. *Cognitive Systems Research 7*:4-22.

[25] Shen, L., Li, X. X., & Ma, L. J. (2015). Ji yu yu liao ku fang fa de 《jun1 shi ying yu 》jiao cai yu jun1 shi lun wen ying wen zhai yao de cha yi fen xi [Variance Analysis of Military English Textbook and English Abstracts of Military Papers based on Corpus Technology]. *Journal of Beijing Polytechnic College, (03)*, 97-101.

[26] Sun, J. X. & Zhang, Q. J. (2013). Gou jia yu yu yin shi yan shi ying yong ji chu shang de ren zhi jiao yu jun shi ying yu jiao xue gai ge [The Reform of Military English Teaching in Vocational Education based on Phonetics Laboratory]. *Shanxi Youth, (18),* 109.

[27] Wan, Q., Yang, H. Y. & Wang, J. J. (2020). Lun hai jun ying yu jiao xue zhong xue yuan zi zhu xue xi neng li de pei yang [On the Cultivation of Students' Self-learning Ability in Naval English Teaching]. *Overseas English, (14),* 145-146.

[28] Wang, D. W. (2011). *Xu qiu fen xi de zhong wai jun1 shi ying yu jiao cai dui bi ping gu* [Evaluation of NATO and Chinese EMP Materials: A Comparative Study based on Needs Analysis]. National University of Defense Technology.

[29] Wang, L. L. & Li, Y. T. (2019). MOOCdui yan jiu sheng jun1 shi ying yu jiao xue zhuan xing de cu jin [MOOC promotes the transformation of military English teaching for graduate students]. *China New Telecommunications*, *(09),* 213.

[30] Wang, H, Peng, Q. & Liu, L. (2016). Cong yu yan yu wen hua de guan xi kan jun shi ying yu jiao xue Zhong de wen hua shen tou --- yi xin bian jun shi ying yu jiao cai wei li [Cultural Infiltration in Military English Teaching from the Perspective of the Relationship between Language and culture --- A Case study of The New Military English Textbook]. *College English(Academic Edition), 13*(02), 7-10.

[31] Wang, H. Q., Shen, J., & Dan, C. R. (2020a). Duo mei ti ji shu zai jun1 shi ying yu ting shuo zai xian jiao xue zhong de ying yong [Application of multimedia technology in online Teaching of Military English listening and Speaking]. *China CIO News, (05),* 159-160.

[32] Wang, D. L., Wang, Z. Y., & Zhao, M. (2020b). Yi ze ren jiao shou wei he xin de jun1 xiao da xue ying yu jiao xue tuan dui jian she tan suo yu shi jian [Exploration and Practice of English Teaching Team construction in Military colleges with responsible professors as the core]. *Jiangsu Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, *(03)*, 4-7+14.

[33] Wang, Q. Y. & Zhou, Y. M. (2017). "Shuang xiang rong he " li nian xia "jun1 shi yi xue ying yu "ke cheng gai ge yu shi jian [Reform and Practice of Military Medical English Course from the Perspective of Mutual Integration]. China Medical Herald , *(28)*, 140-143.

[34] Wu, J., Hou, S. S., & Zhang, Y. (2013). Lun wai yu jiao xue yu jun1 shi ying yu de you xiao jie he [On the Effective Combination of Foreign Language Teaching and Military English]. *Journal of Lanzhou Vocational Technical College, (02),* 54-56.

[35] Xing, F. K. (2020). Ying yu jun1 shi xin wen wen ben zhong shi ti fen bu te zheng yan jiu [A Study of the Distribution of Entities in English Military News]. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages, (03),* 74-81+161.

[36] Xu, L. L. (2014). Qian tan wo yuan jun1 shi ying yu ke cheng jiao xue de wen ti ji shi jian zuo fa [On the Problems and Practice of Military English Teaching in College]. *China Education Innovation Herald*, *(04),* 140.

[37] Yan, C. X., Liu, H. M., & Wang, D. J. (2010). Jun xiao shi ting shuo ke tang shang jia qiang jun1 shi ying yu zhen shi yu liao jiao xue de tan suo [Exploration on strengthening real corpus teaching of Military English in audio-visual classroom of military Academy]. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*, *(03),* 69-71+81.

[38] Yang, Y. (2011). *Ji yu yu liao ku de jun1 shi zhuang bei shu yu de fan yi yan jiu* [A Corpus-based Study on Armament Terms Translation]. Dalian Maritime University.

[39] Yang, L. Q., Zheng, Z., & Qiao, L. (2018). Gou shi yu fa li lun zai jun1 shi ying yu ci hui jiao xue zhong de yun yong [The Application of constructional Grammar theory in military English Vocabulary Teaching]. *Overseas English*, *(23),* 52-53.

[40] Yin, Q. S., Dou, W. H., Li, L. J., Ma, Z. Y., & Jiang, S. Q. (2019). A Study on the Enlightenment of the U.S. 2019 Missile Defense Review on the Framework Design of Military English for Rocket Force. *Proceedings of the 2019 International Conference on Pedagogy, Communication and Sociology (ICPCS 2019).*
[41] Yue, H. & Yang, L. (2018). Jun xiao wai yu jiao xue gai ge de yan jiu yu si kao [Research and Thinking on Foreign Language Teaching Reform in Military Academies]. *Tourism Today, (05),* 277.
[42] Zhang, J. (2011). Ji yu ESP li lun de wu jing yuan xiao jun1 shi ying yu jiao xue chu tan [Preliminary Study on Military English Teaching in Armed Police Academies based on ESP Theory]. *Education Exploration, (05),* 55-56.
[43] Zhang, J. S. (2009). Jun shi ying yu jiao xue :cheng jiu yu wen ti [A Review of Military English Teaching in China]. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages. (03),* 37-41+60.
[44] Zhang, L. (2010). Zhuan bian jiao xue li nian tui jin shi guan jun1 shi ying yu jiao xue gai ge [Change the Teaching Concept and Promote the Reform of Military English Teaching for Non-commissioned Officers]. *Truth Seeking (S1),* 273-274.
[45] Zhang, L. P. (2010). Guo nei jun1 shi ying yu yan jiu shu ping [A review of military English studies in China]. *Journal of Henan Radio & TV University, 23* (01), 49-50.
[46] Zhang, L. P. (2019). Yu liao ku zai jun1 shi ying yu ci hui jiao xue zhong de ying yong [The Application of Corpus in Military English Vocabulary Teaching]. *Jiangsu Foreign Language Teaching and Research, (04),* 35-38.
[47] Zhang, X. L., Luo, Z. Y., & Yan, L. (2020a). Ji yu wei xin gong zhong ping tai de ESPci hui yi dong xue xi ke hang xing yan jiu — yi jun shi ying yu wei li [Feasibility Study on Mobile Learning of ESP Vocabulary based on WeChat Public Platform -- Taking Military English as an Example]. *Overseas English, (23),* 80-81+85.
[48] Zhang, X. L., Luo, Z. Y., & Yan, L. (2020b). Yi dong xue xi bei jing xia wei xin zhi chi de jun1 shi ying yu ci hui xue xi shi zheng yan jiu [The Effects of WeChat-based Mobile Learning on Vocabulary Enhancement of Military English]. *Journal of Higher Education Research, (04),* 115-120.
[49] Zhang, L. P. & Miao, L. (2011). Jun shi ying yu ci hui jiao xue tan xi [Analysis of Vocabulary Teaching in Military English]. *China Electric Power Education. (14),* 196-197.
[50] Zhang, H. Y. & Ren, X. L. (2012). Xue yuan yue du jun1 shi lei ying yu wen zhang de diao cha yan jiu [A Survey of Cadets' Reading of Military English Articles]. *Journal of Yangtze University (Social Sciences Edition), (03),* 136-137.
[51] Zhang, L. P., Wu, J. F., & Ding, X. S. (2019). Yi yu liao ku yu yan xue wei shi jiao de jun1 shi ying yu jiao cai ping gu [Evaluation of Military English Textbooks from the Perspective of Corpus Linguistics]. *Wen Jiao Zi Liao, (30),* 217-218.
[52] Zhou, D. J., Li, G. Z., & Ji, Y. X. (2012). Jun dui yuan xiao wai yu jiao yu jun1 shi zhuan xing zhi lu — guan yu jun1 shi ying yu ke cheng ti xi jian gou de si kao [Construction of Military English Teaching System to Adapt to Transformation of Military College English Education]. *Journal of Naval University of Engineering (Comprehensive Edition), (03),* 90-93.
[53] Zhou, Y. L. & Wang, J. J. (2015). Ji yu xu qiu fen xi li lun de jun1 dui yuan xiao ESP jiao xue [ESP Teaching in Military Academies based on Need Analysis Theory]. *Heilongjiang Education (Theory & Practice), (02),* 39-40.

Wenjun Zhong is a teaching assistant at the Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office of High-Tech Institute of Xi'an with a BA degree in Translation and Interpretation and a MA degree in Linguistics. She has taught college English for two years. Her research interests lie in foreign language acquisition and instruction, military English teaching, speech perception and production. She has published some original articles in international journals.

Yuxuan Zhang is working as an associate professor at High-Tech Institute of Xi'an and the deputy director of the Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office. She received her BA degree in Translation from Xi'an International Studies University and MA degree in Translation from Shanghai International Studies University. She has taught both college English and military English for 10 years. She is mainly interested in military English teaching and has publications in some journals.

Yajing Jin obtained her BA degree in English from North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power and MA degree in English Linguistics from Tianjin Foreign Studies University. She is currently a lecturer teaching college English for three years at the Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Office of High-Tech Institute of Xi'an. Her research interests include foreign language acquisition and instruction and she has publications in some journals.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1115-1124, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.26

The Effect of Virtual Classes on Promoting Saudi EFL Students' Autonomous Learning

Noof S. Alharbi
English Language Centre (ELC), Taibah University, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The current study aims to explore the effect of virtual classes on promoting autonomous learning of Saudi EFL students in the PYP Year Program (PYP). Data were collected through an online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Two hundred eighty female undergraduate Saudi students in the PYP completed the questionnaire voluntarily. Fifteen English language instructors voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. The result of the study indicated that 64% of students demonstrated a high level of autonomous learning in virtual EFL classes. However, 36% of students showed an average level of autonomous learning in doing assignments, self-motivation, accelerating learning, and willingness to learn. Furthermore, the results show that students' level of autonomy in virtual classes depends on factors such as lack of motivation, constructive feedback, and students' educational culture. Additionally, the study provides some guidelines to help instructors implement autonomous learning in EFL virtual classes. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are provided.**

***Index Terms*—EFL University students, autonomous learning, virtual classes, English teachers, Saudi Arabia**

I. Introduction

The global crisis of COVID-19 has affected the education process worldwide. It has forced all universities and schools to change their instruction from face-to-face learning to distance (online) classes in all subjects, including English. Consequently, students have attended their lectures online through virtual classes. These virtual classes include sharing applications, breakout rooms, a synchronised web-browsing whiteboard, and chat rooms (Cakyroglu, 2014). Yadav (2016) added that virtual classes allow students and instructors to share views and communicate via online platforms. Virtual learning is a dynamic alternative for self-motivated students who can constantly stay on task and monitor their learning goals (Dung, 2020, p.46).

However, this urgent shift contributes to the need for students to be more autonomous in their learning. As this era advances, the focus is more on learner-centred approaches than traditional classroom teaching, putting students as individuals at the core of the learning process (Begum, 2019). Therefore, autonomous learning of foreign languages has attracted attention and has been a favourite topic among researchers for many years (Dişlen, 2011; Tamer, 2013; Alrabai, 2017; Alzubi et al., 2017). This is because helping foreign language students to become autonomous has been considered one of the essential responsibilities of all foreign language instructors worldwide. Also, they commonly agree that taking responsibility for and demonstrating a willingness to undertake the learning tasks are the two essential components of autonomous learning.

The socio-cultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978) has brought new perspectives to language learning and psychology. Autonomous learning emerged or was derived from the shift of focus from teaching to learning, which in recent years has increased the number of studies related to learners and the learning process itself. Therefore, autonomous learning has been studied comprehensively in the educational context since the 1980s.

Holec (1981) was the first to introduce the term "learner autonomy" into EFL teaching; he viewed autonomy as "the ability to take charge of one's learning" (p. 3) and claimed that learners should assume responsibility for all aspects of their language learning: determining the objectives, defining the contents and progressions; selecting methods and techniques; monitoring the procedure of acquisition; evaluating what has been acquired' (p. 3).

Different researchers offer a range of definitions of autonomous learning. For instance, Hedge (2000, p. 410) stated that "learner autonomy is the ability of the learner to take responsibility for his or her own learning and to plan, organise, and monitor the learning process independently of the teacher. Lengkanawati (2017) defined learner autonomy as learners' ability to be responsible for their learning, making decisions in choosing the learning objective, selecting appropriate learning techniques and methods, identifying their progress, observing L2 input, and assessing what has been produced. Moreover, according to Scharle and Szabó (2000, p. 4): In theory, we may define autonomy as the freedom and ability to manage one's affairs, which entails the right to make decisions. Responsibility may also be understood as being in charge of something, but with the implication that one has to deal with the consequences of one's actions. Autonomy and responsibility both require active involvement and are very much interrelated.

From the above definitions, it can be inferred that autonomous learning is linked to learners' freedom and is directed to make learners autonomous in their study. Also, it allows learners to study using their preferred learning strategies and styles. Additionally, it pushes learners to be independent in their learning by transferring responsibilities, providing ideas, and presenting methods to learn independently.

Autonomous learning in the EFL context needs some requirements. First, Alzubi et al. (2017) illustrated that learners should learn to be self-disciplined and self-motivated in terms of learning materials, course objectives, and effort and time spent. Second, Birchley (2003) highlighted that in autonomous learning, instructors need to perform the roles of the language model, facilitator, motivator, counsellor, resource provider, and knowledge transmitter. Third, the learning environment should give the students a sense of overseeing their learning with practical lessons performed in-group work and communicative tasks in which it is easy to ask questions. In contrast, the lessons should be meaningful and exciting as students are not forced to memorise by rote (Zarei & Gahremani, 2010, p. 7).

A. Statement of the Problem

The teaching of the English language, like other subjects, has been affected by the lockdown period caused by COVID-19 with the need to switch instruction to virtual classes at short notice. Consequently, students were forced to engage with these virtual classes with different levels of autonomy. Some students felt lost and challenged by the new learning system, while others adapted quickly. Therefore, several studies have been conducted to assess the effectiveness or identify the perceptions of autonomous learning and virtual classes in the EFL context. To date, no studies have focused explicitly on how practical virtual classes promote students' autonomous learning in the Saudi context. Therefore, the present study explores how effective virtual classes promote autonomous learning in the EFL classroom of Saudi female students studying in the PYP. Furthermore, the current study focuses on answering only one question in collecting and analysing its data:

How effective are the virtual classes in the EFL classroom in promoting the autonomous learning of Female Saudi undergraduate students in PYP at a Saudi university?

B. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study was to provide a comprehensive picture of how practical virtual classes are in promoting autonomous learning in the Saudi EFL context. This study can improve English instruction by providing guidelines for teachers to practice autonomous learning in their virtual classes.

II. Literature Review

Many researchers have conducted various studies on virtual classes and autonomous learning and their roles in teaching and learning. This part presents some of these related studies. Some studies are related to EFL and autonomous learning, while others are related to virtual classes in EFL learning. Yet others are related to studies on virtual classes and autonomous learning.

A. Previous Research on EFL and Autonomous Learning

Asiri and Shukri (2020) conducted a study to investigate PYP learners' perspectives of learner autonomy in the Saudi context. Furthermore, they examined if the learners have the knowledge and the competence to develop their learning. The study sample comprised 150 female EFL learners at the English Language Institute (ELI), King Abdul-Aziz University (KAU). A mixed-methods approach was applied to collect data. The study found that students had a negative attitude towards learner autonomy.

Another study was carried out by Alzubi et al. (2017) to explore the current practices of learner autonomy among Saudi undergraduates in the PYP, Najran University. In total, 208 male students in level one were randomly selected. A closed-statement questionnaire was used in this study, with the questions classified into six categories: linguistic confidence, information literacy, social comparison, locus of control, metacognition, and self-reliance. The results suggested that the overall level of autonomous learning was low.

Additionally, Tamer's (2013) study assessed Saudi university students' readiness for autonomous learning of EFL in the PYP. The participants were 121 students who were polled with questionnaires on their perceptions of responsibilities, abilities, motivation, and self-directed activities inside and outside the classroom for the independent learning of English. Also, ten teachers were interviewed about their perceptions of their students' autonomous learning of English. The results showed that the students had an adequate level of motivation but lacked any sense of being responsible for cognitive and metacognitive learning aspects of learning English inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, the teachers' interviews indicated that learner autonomy could be achieved if administrative restrictions were removed and students correctly trained.

Furthermore, Alrabai's (2017) study examined Saudi learners' autonomy in language learning at the university level; 360 students were asked to complete the questionnaire. The results showed that the students lacked autonomy in language learning. The study recommended that teachers have a significant role in promoting autonomous learning among students. Also, students should acquire skills that assist them in becoming autonomous, for instance, self-sufficiency-government and self-assessment.

Dişlen (2011) stated that first-year students from various departments of a Turkish university lack knowledge of applying autonomous learning in an EFL context due to the lack of English proficiency, effort, and time.

The above studies indicated that Saudi students have a negative perspective towards autonomous learning and a lack of autonomous learning in learning languages; thus, students need proper training to become autonomous, while teachers require professional development to promote learner autonomy.

B. Previous Research on Virtual EFL Classes

Hamouda (2020) conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of virtual classes on Saudi EFL students' speaking skills. Data of the study were collected using a questionnaire, speaking test, and semi-structured interviews. Seventy students participated in the study and were divided into control and experimental groups. The control group of 35 students were taught in the traditional face-to-face class, and the other 35 were in an experimental group and were taught English speaking in a virtual class. The findings showed that the experimental group improved their speaking performance more significantly in the post-speaking test than the control group.

Furthermore, Alhawiti (2017) conducted a study investigating the effect of virtual classes on students' English achievement at Tabuk Community College. The sample consisted of 224 learners from the PYP who were randomly divided into two equal groups: control and experimental. The study concluded that the experimental group of students who studied via virtual classes achieved higher English test scores than those who studied in traditional classes.

Another study, Mosquera (2017), aimed to identify the impact of implementing a virtual learning environment (VLE) in EFL courses at a public university in Colombia. The researcher concluded that students showed a positive attitude and were motivated and enthusiastic about implementing a VLE in the EFL classroom. The study recommended that English instructors be encouraged to keep up with advancements in educational technology to promote learning paths that better fit the interests and needs of digital-age students.

In addition, Khoshsima and Sayadi (2016) conducted a study with 20 students in Iran to examine the effect of virtual language learning methods on the writing ability of intermediate EFL learners. The findings indicated that the experimental group's post-test scores were much higher than those of their counterparts in the control group, so it can be concluded that the virtual learning method was very positive in this study.

Also, Al-Qahtani (2019) reported that language learners at King Khalid University in Saudi had positive attitudes toward teaching and learning through EFL virtual classes. They confirmed the vital role of virtual courses in enhancing their communication skills.

According to the above studies, it can be concluded that using virtual classes positively impacts improving students' level of language learning.

C. Previous Research on Virtual Classes and Autonomous Learning

Noviadayanti (2021) conducted a study to examine learner autonomy in online classes among fifteen Indonesian EFL students. A qualitative approach was used with semi-structured interviews and diaries as the instruments for data collection. The findings showed that most students showed learner autonomy characteristics and had participated in various learning activities outside classroom activities. Furthermore, the study suggested that teachers implement autonomous learning in their teaching practices, for instance, by giving students more freedom in choosing learning activities related to their interests and needs.

Similarly, Hidayati and Husna (2020) conducted a study investigating learners' experience with online and autonomous learning; 71 students were participants and asked to complete a questionnaire. The results showed that most of the students enjoyed their online English learning experience and displayed the actions of autonomous learners.

Another study by Güler and Esen (2021) explored the EFL teachers' perceptions of Turkish students' autonomy in online instruction during the lockdown period. The study followed a mixed-methods approach; 66 English teachers were selected randomly to participate. The findings revealed that learners were perceived to be autonomous by their teachers during the online instruction period. The study also highlighted the significance of factors that played an essential role in the degree, improvement, and insights of learners' autonomy in online classes.

Ghobain and Zughaibi (2021) examined Saudi EFL university students' readiness according to their autonomous behaviours and activities for online learning. According to the findings, the learners had made moderate progress towards achieving a high level of autonomy. However, they lacked a good level of actual activities.

Thus, the findings of this study support Denekamp's (2016) conclusion that the situation is changing in those contexts, as learners now exhibit significant qualities of the learner-centred approach. Hence, they are expected to improve their autonomous behaviours if not trained or scaffolded.

III. METHODOLOGY

The nature of the current study's research questions influenced the decision to employ an exploratory methodology. The present study utilises a sequential mixed-methods design in which the quantitative and qualitative phases were conducted in a sequence (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). With regard to the current study, the researcher employed two independent research methods, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. These methods complement each other, and mixed methods comprehensively describe and analyse the collected research data.

A. Sampling

The current study employed a non-probability or convenience sampling strategy for both the students and the English instructors; this means the sample was selected because of their accessibility and availability at the time of the research (Cohen et al., 2011).

For the online questionnaire, the data were collected from students in various classes with the same language proficiency level. Students' level was equivalent to A2 based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) based on the university placement test held at the beginning of the academic year by the English Language Centre (ELC). The students shared some common characteristics, such as age and socio-cultural background. Two hundred eighty female undergraduate students participated in the research and completed the questionnaire.

For the semi-structured interviews, the data were collected from English language instructors at the ELC who were available and willing to be interviewed. They were from Saudi, the UK, Canada, Pakistan, and India and are holders of doctoral or master's degrees.

TABLE 1
TEACHERS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Number of Participants	Teacher's Gender	Nationality	Qualifications
1	Female	Saudi	PhD
1	Female	Pakistani	PhD
1	Female	Jordan	PhD
6	Female	Saudi	MA
3	Female	British	MA
1	Female	Canadian	MA
2	Female	Indian	MA

The sample for the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews was restricted to females only due to the privacy of Saudi society, which prevents the mix of genders in the public and university stage.

B. Procedures

The researcher used a convenience sampling method where an online questionnaire was devised and circulated to the target group. Thirty days after the questionnaire had been distributed, 280 students responded to the questionnaire.

The procedures followed in the current study can be divided into two stages. First, students were asked to fill in an online questionnaire, which was then quantitatively analysed. After 30 days of distributing the questionnaire days, 280 students responded to the questionnaire.

Second, English language instructors were asked to volunteer to participate in semi-structured interviews in their free time. All interviews with teachers were conducted in English. Furthermore, these interviews were audiotaped and subsequently transcribed.

C. Data Collection

In the current study, the first tool was a questionnaire, which was adapted from the relevant literature and pertinent previous studies related to the focus of the study (Halabb, 2018; Pichugova et al., 2015; Taamneh, 2021). However, the questionnaire items were developed and reworded. The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements, using a 5-point Likert scale, using the scale of agreement --strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).

The second tool was semi-structured interviews. This method was chosen mainly because of the flexibility in allowing researchers to delete, include, and modify items and questions according to what information is relevant. The semi-structured interview items or questions were based on the research questions, the literature review of autonomous learning and virtual classes, and interview guides from previous studies. Then, questions in the semi-structured interview were administered to jury members to give feedback and comments. In this way, it was revised and refined many times. The semi-structured interview consisted of five questions.

(a). Instrument Validity

The researcher ensured that the questionnaire was valid through the following procedures:

1. Face validity

After the researcher prepared the initial version of the research instrument, she administered it to (5) experienced and competent faculty members in the Faculty of Education. The jury members gave feedback and comments that focused on addition, deletion, modification of questionnaire statements, and the clarity and simplicity of language to present statements free from punctuation and spelling mistakes. This feedback was addressed in the final version of the questionnaire.

2. Internal Consistency

The researcher piloted the questionnaire on 24 female students, and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated between the statements and the overall score of the instrument (see Table 2)

TABLE 2
PEARSON CORRELATION CO-EFFICIENT

No	Item	Pearson Correlation Co-efficient	Statistical Significance
1.	Virtual classes encourage me to do assignments or projects outside class.	.469*	.021
2.	Virtual classes encourage me to take responsibility for my learning.	.610**	.002
3.	Virtual classes help me plan and follow up on learning tasks.	.644**	.001
4.	Virtual classes teach me to monitor my performance on an ongoing basis.	.693**	.000
5.	Virtual classes help me find solutions to problems encountered.	.674**	.000
6.	Virtual classes help me make independent choices about my learning.	.649**	.001
7.	Virtual classes encourage me to set my own goals according to my own needs.	.687**	.000
8.	Virtual classes encourage me to feel confident about my performance during the course.	.798**	.000
9.	Virtual classes encourage me to demonstrate a willingness to learn in general.	.819**	.000
10.	Virtual classes encourage me to learn English in particular willingly.	.563**	.004
11.	Virtual classes motivate me to learn (without external rewards).	.753**	.000
12.	Virtual classes help me express my ideas and opinions freely.	.604**	.002
13.	Virtual classes help me learn by taking part in classroom interactions and discussions.	.636**	.001
14.	Virtual classes encourage me to work with various audio and video materials and resources to enhance my learning.	.742**	.000
15.	Virtual classes encourage me to respect the formality of the teacher-student relationship.	.670**	.000
16.	Virtual classes help accelerate my learning compared with other traditional methods.	.423*	.039
17.	Virtual classes encourage me to learn with and from others.	.775**	.000
18.	I can motivate myself to learn English even if I am not supervised.	.822**	.000
19.	Virtual classes help me identify my strengths and weaknesses independently.	.804**	.000
20.	Virtual classes help me positively receive feedback and suggestions from my teachers and classmates.	.574**	.003

* Statistically significant at the level of 0.05
** Statistically significant at the level of 0.01

The above Table shows the Pearson correlation coefficient scores to indicate the effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL classrooms in promoting Saudi female students' autonomous learning, and the total score at the levels of 0.01 and 0.05. The scores ranged from *.0423 and **.0822

(b). Instrument Reliability

The researcher piloted the research instrument on the pilot sample and calculated the consistency factor using Cronbach's Alpha. Table 3 shows the reliability coefficients.

TABLE 3
CRONBACH ALPHA RELIABILITY ON THE INSTRUMENT TOTAL SCORE OF THE

	Number of Statements	Reliability Co-efficient
The overall reliability of the effectiveness of virtual classes in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in promoting autonomous learning for Saudi female students	20	0.93

Table 3 above shows that Cronbach's alpha score reached 0.93, a high score showing that the research instrument suits the research aims and the questionnaire is reliable.

D. Data Analysis

The data from the semi-structured interviews were coded and labelled, and the interview was then read line by line to make an initial list of themes and sub-themes. That means the data were analysed thematically to identify the themes within the data. By the end of the process, a coding scheme was created that comprised the main themes and categories.

SPSS version 23 was used to analyse the data of the questionnaire and answer the questions:

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to verify the validity.

Cronbach's alpha was used to check the reliability of the study tool.

Mean scores, standard deviations, median, and Cronbach alpha ranks were used to answer the following research question: How effective are virtual classes in English as a foreign language in promoting autonomous learning for Saudi female students?

The following step-by-step procedures were adopted to achieve the dimensions of the study instrument to determine the degree of agreement based on the range equation as shown in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4
DEGREE OF AGREEMENT BASED ON THE RANGE EQUATION

Range Equation	Degree of Agreement
1.00 – 1.80	(Very low agreement)
More than 1.80 – 2.60	(Low Agreement)
More than 2.60 – 3.40	(Average Agreement)
More than 3.40 – 4.20	(High Agreement)
More than 4.20 – 5.00	(Very high agreement)

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

This section reviews the most important findings of the current study by answering the research questions.

The results of the first question: How effective are virtual classes in English as a foreign language in promoting autonomous learning for Saudi female students?

The researcher calculated the mean scores, standard deviations, and median of the responses of the study sample on the effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL classes in promoting the autonomous learning of Saudi female students, as shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
MEAN SCORES, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, MEDIAN, AND RANKS FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF VIRTUAL CLASSES IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN PROMOTING AUTONOMOUS LEARNING FOR SAUDI FEMALE STUDENTS

No	Item	Mean score	Standard Deviation	Median	Cronbach Alpha
1.	Virtual classes encourage me to do assignments or projects outside class.	3.46	1.244	18	High
2.	Virtual classes encourage me to take responsibility for my own learning.	3.95	1.161	4	High
3.	Virtual classes help me plan and follow up on learning tasks.	.369	1.184	13	High
4.	Virtual classes teach me to monitor my performance on an ongoing basis.	3.74	1.190	9	High
5.	Virtual classes help me find solutions to problems encountered.	3.53	1.179	16	High
6.	Virtual classes help me make independent choices about my learning.	3.90	1.085	5	High
7.	Virtual classes encourage me to set my own goals according to my own needs.	3.70	1.179	12	High
8.	Virtual classes encourage me to feel confident about my performance during the course.	3.61	1.310	15	High
9.	Virtual classes encourage me to demonstrate a willingness to learn in general.	3.47	1.335	17	High
10.	Virtual classes encourage me to learn English willingly.	3.80	1.335	6	High
11.	Virtual classes motivate me to learn (without external rewards).	3.34	1.308	19	Average
12.	Virtual classes help me express my ideas and opinions freely.	3.73	1.230	10	High
13.	Virtual classes help me learn by taking part in classroom interactions and discussions.	3.65	1.263	14	High
14.	Virtual classes encourage me to work with various audio and video materials and resources to enhance learning.	3.99	1.084	3	High
15.	Virtual classes encourage me to respect the formality of the teacher-student relationship.	4.08	1.052	2	High
16.	Virtual classes help quicken my learning compared with other traditional methods.	3.32	1.492	20	Average
17.	Virtual classes encourage me to learn with and from others.	3.71	1.238	11	High
18.	I can motivate myself to learn English even if I am not supervised.	4.09	1.101	1	High
19.	Virtual classes help me identify my strengths and weaknesses independently.	3.78	1.156	8	High
20.	Virtual classes help me positively receive feedback and suggestions from my teachers and classmates.	3.79	1.145	7	High
21.		3.71	.902		High

Table 5 shows that the total mean scores of the effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL classes in promoting the autonomous learning of Saudi female students was (3. 71), with a standard deviation (0. 902) and a large effect. The mean scores on the questionnaire statements about the effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL in promoting the autonomous learning of Saudi female students ranged from 3.32 to 4.09. The effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL classes focused on promoting the autonomous learning of Saudi female students with the following points, from the most to the least important, respectively:

- I can motivate myself to learn English even if I am not supervised.
- Virtual classes encourage me to respect the formality of the teacher-student relationship.
- Virtual classes encourage me to work with various audio and video materials and resources to enhance my learning.
- Virtual classes encourage me to take responsibility for my learning.

- Virtual classes help me make independent choices about my learning.
- Virtual classes encourage me to learn English in particular willingly.
- Virtual classes help me positively receive feedback and suggestions from my teachers and classmates.

However, traditional classes are less effective in promoting Saudi female students' autonomous learning.

- Virtual classes help accelerate my learning compared with other traditional methods.
- Virtual classes motivate me to learn (without external rewards).
- Virtual classes encourage me to do assignments or projects outside class.
- Virtual classes encourage me to demonstrate a willingness to learn in general.

The responses from interviews with English language instructors indicated that promoting autonomous learning in EFL virtual classes depends mainly on both the instructor and the students. Mrs Nada gave an example of this issue:

> *If it's a student who wants to be there, who wants to be in the class, they can help a lot. The students can benefit a lot. If the student is active, and the student is getting the chance to be active in the classroom virtually and is given a chance to promote their credentials, like 'I'm a good student, I know how to speak, I know how to write, and it's done in the right way, it can be very effective. But again, it comes down, I think, to the teacher, to the student, and the context. In other words, it all comes down to the student, student planning, student organisation, students' willingness and then the teachers' planning, teachers' organisation, teachers' strategies etc.*

Furthermore, Mrs Wafa had a similar view; she stated:

It depends on the learners and how much they work on themselves to learn. It also depends on the teacher and his awareness of her role. Also, the circumstances and the environment around the learners affect their learning.

Additionally, Mrs Lina mentioned that autonomous learning could be applied in virtual or face-to-face classes if the instructor is willing to apply it in EFL classes or any subject class. She commented:

> *To be honest, I can say that both virtual and face-to-face classes can promote the autonomous learning of EFL students. It depends mainly on the ideas of the instructors themselves. If she wants to apply, or if she wants to maximise her chances of autonomous learning, she will do this easily by assigning some parts of the curriculum to be discussed or to be said later on by the students themselves. I mean, if she's willing to apply autonomous learning, she would try to apply it in virtual or face-to-face classes.*

The responses collected from the interviews with English language instructors revealed that factors hinder their promotion of autonomous learning in virtual classes. For example, Dr Amal stated that the learning environment is considered a primary factor that affects the advancement of promoting autonomous learning:

> *The learning environment is a huge factor. The instructor is a huge factor because so many instructors are unwilling to take on board the responsibility of promoting autonomy in their classrooms […] because it depends on the environment they're teaching in. It depends on their workload, and the work assigned to them […] depends on what kind of culture they belong to. Our students, I mean the educational culture. Here, there is no autonomy; I don't think. There's hardly any autonomy in the high schools. So, it's new when they come to us because they haven't got any learning strategy to cope with this so-called 'autonomy'. Many of them shy away from it, and many are anxious when presented with some autonomy. No, I think it's challenging. So, this is a big thing which plays against them. And they're like, oh, what is this? Where is the teacher? I need the teacher; I need the help. And when you don't give it, you can even get some hate from the students because they think you like working against them.*

Another English instructor indicated that the context, providing the content, and students' lack of interaction in groups are other factors that might contribute to hindering autonomous learning. An example of this was given by Dr Mona, who said:

> *Yes. We will consider so many factors. Number one, the content needs to be at the right level and not very high because this is not going to be. I mean, once it is very high, it will not help them acquire or study something. So, the input needs to be comprehensible to study something and use what they are learning. This is the most important thing to me, number one. Number two: the chances of working together, whenever they have, for example, breakout rules or something like that, or studying by Zoom or by any other kind of application. This will promote the study because I think working in groups would increase the accountability of students. So it would just encourage them to do something because they are just like part of the group, and they will be held responsible for anything they do in the group. So, I think this would maximise the chances of studying something if they have a specific meeting time.*

Additionally, two English instructors highlighted that not providing constructive and comprehensive feedback can be another factor that could obstruct autonomous learning. This view was described by Mrs Maha as follows:

> *I think that the proper feedback or providing students with the proper feedback can make or can maximise the chances of virtual learning being more successful. As a result, it will increase the achievement of autonomy. We need to introduce our feedback to students so they can know their performance, whether right or wrong. Whenever the teacher can provide such kind of feedback, I think it can make a big difference in autonomous learning through the virtual classes.*

Similarly, three English instructors revealed other factors hindering autonomous learning: students' lack of motivation, attitude, and enthusiasm.

> *I think students' attitude toward autonomous learning, lack of motivation, and lack of student skills to deal with online classes. Also, lack of enthusiasm for complex tasks, lack of guidance during the process, and the task not set at the correct level of ability for the students is an essential factor which obstructs students' autonomous learning in virtual classes.*

The data analysis of the interviews with the English instructors revealed that various guidelines could be used to help the instructors implement autonomous learning in EFL virtual classes. For instance, Mrs Huda said:

> *Autonomous learning can be fostered by asking students to work on projects individually or in groups. They can also be asked to set targets for their learning. So, the student would identify an area that needs improvement and decide how they will work on improving the chosen area and a time frame for completing it.*

Moreover, three English instructors asserted that students should force their students to work independently to implement autonomous learning. An example of this was given by Mrs Dina, who stated:

> *We can apply autonomous learning by just pinpointing the vital point of, for example, a reading passage. I would say that this passage is talking about so and so, and we will have some questions; you have to do it on your own, and you have to depend on yourself to read the passage and apply the skills that we have learnt correctly. Then answer the questions. Once we have introduced the concepts and the rules of the idea of the lesson, students, with a bit of guidance, can go and study later on if they have the will or are willing to do that by themselves.*

Similarly, Mrs Maha emphasised the importance of doing research or projects for students from the undergraduate stage. Her views were expressed as follows:

I make exercises more interactive; writing, reading and speaking more research- and project-oriented; and ask students to design the work.

Dr Sarah, one of the instructors, highlighted the importance of planning as a guideline that can help implement autonomous learning, and she expressed this as follows:

> *The teacher can make plans to apply autonomous learning. She can learn about her students. You get to know their level, their preferred learning style, their robust learning, the strategies they've got, and what are the strong ones and the weak ones. She uses those, caters for them and plans autonomous learning for them. That's a good idea, I think.*

Dr Amal drew attention to the importance of identifying the role of instructors and clarifying the concept of autonomous learning to students as follows:

> *I explain and clarify the meaning of autonomous learning to the learners and how to apply it correctly. Besides, the learners should be aware of the importance of knowledge and appreciate it. They don't have to focus on studying for the sake of the exams. More important, as a teacher, I should be aware of my role as a director, a monitor, and a facilitator who reinforces and supports learners.*

The above results analysed the collected data from different views based on the research question. The quantitative and qualitative results were combined to present the finding in a unified style.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to answer one research question, which examined the effectiveness of virtual classes in EFL classrooms for promoting the autonomous learning of female Saudi undergraduate students at the PYP at a university in Saudi Arabia.

The current study confirmed direct and positive correlations between all phrases and the overall research focus of autonomous learning. This finding in the present study is in line with some previous studies (Noviadayanti, 2021) Hidayati and Husna (2020) found that most of the students in their research agreed with the important role of virtual classes in promoting their autonomous learning in the EFL classroom.

Furthermore, the study's findings pointed out the students' lack of motivation, positive attitude, or enthusiasm. These factors hinder the promotion of autonomous learning in virtual classes. Similar results were found in research conducted by Güler and Esen (2021), who revealed that lack of motivation was considered a barrier to learner autonomy in online instruction.

The current study's findings demonstrated that the educational culture students come from is an essential factor that hinders their autonomy in EFL virtual classes because they are deficient in the necessary training to cope with autonomous learning. Similar findings were also reported in Ghobain and Zughaibi's (2021) study, which indicated that rather than being non-autonomous learners, EFL learners in Arab contexts lack training in autonomous activities or behaviours.

Güler and Esen (2021) indicated that EFL teachers suggested that providing more support and feedback would make students more autonomous. The current study aligns with this finding of giving constructive and comprehensive feedback for more autonomous learning in virtual classes, as suggested by Saudi English language instructors.

Additionally, the results showed that the teacher plays a significant role as a director, mentor, and facilitator in increasing students' autonomous learning. This result agrees with the research study by Güler and Esen (2021). They pointed out that making students more independent can be done by avoiding spoon-feeding them and allowing students to find information by themselves.

However, students in the current study were in average agreement regarding how virtual classes can help them accelerate their learning. Compared with other traditional methods, virtual classes can encourage them to complete assignments or projects outside of class and demonstrate a willingness to learn. These outcomes are supported by Ghobain and Zughaibi's (2021) results. They revealed that students showed moderate autonomy when taking responsibility for their English learning in online classes.

It can be observed from the above findings that autonomous learning is beneficial for students when they learn how to study independently in various ways and find the most effective method to support their learning. This is because 'the development of autonomy involves big, even fundamental, changes in learners' beliefs, identity, and affective realities in learning. These do not happen overnight, and they do not manifest themselves only in a limited range of contexts' (Chong & Reinders, 2022, p. 19).

One of the goals of Saudi VISION 2030 is to adopt strategies that encourage autonomous learning to assist students in being capable of thinking and innovating by themselves. Therefore, the current study is considered an attempt to contribute to learner autonomy in the Saudi EFL context. It aims to shed light on the effectiveness of the virtual classes in the EFL classroom in promoting the autonomous learning of Saudi undergraduate students in the PYP year.

The study concludes that with autonomous learning, students should relish the learning process, reflected in their desire to learn and their willingness to complete tasks readily with knowledge of the advantages that may support their future learning.

There is still much left for future researchers to investigate. A direction worth pursuing for future research is to see how virtual classes affect Saudi EFL students' autonomous learning, focusing on specific language skills, such as English reading or writing, at the undergraduate stage. A study with male Saudi participants could be conducted to generalise the results nationwide.

REFERENCES

[1] Alhawiti, M. M. F. (2017). The effect of virtual classes on student English achievement at Tabuk Community College. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *16*(5), 90-101.

[2] Al-Qahtani, M. (2019). Teachers' and students' perceptions of virtual classes and the effectiveness of virtual classes in enhancing communication skills. *Arab World English Journal*, Special Issue: The Dynamics of EFL in Saudi Arabia, December *2019*, pp. 223 -240. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/efl1.16

[3] Alrabai, F. (2017). Exploring the unknown: The autonomy of Saudi EFL learners. *English Language Teaching, 10*(5), pp.222-233. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n5p222

[4] Alzubi, A. A. F., Singh, M. K. M., & Pandian, A. (2017). The use of learner autonomy in English as a foreign language context among Saudi undergraduates enrolled in PYPdeanship at Najran University. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies, 8*(2), 152-160. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.alls.v.8n.2p.152

[5] Asiri, J., & Shukri, N. (2020). PYP learners' perspectives of learner autonomy in the Saudi context. *Arab World English Journal, 11*(2), 94-113. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no2.8

[6] Begum, J. (2019). Learner autonomy in EFL/ESL classrooms in Bangladesh: Teachers' perceptions and practices. *International Journal of Language Education, 3*(1), 12-21. https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v1i1.6397

[7] Birchley, S (2003). Creating learner Autonomy: Self-access & an English lounge, Japan. *Bulletin of Toyo Gakuen University, 15*, 31-44

[8] 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.

[9] Chong, S. W., & Reinders, H. (2022). Autonomy of English language learners: A scoping review of research and practice. *Language Teaching Research*, 1-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688221075812

[10] Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education*. Routledge.

[11] Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[12] Denekamp, C. (2016). *The development of L2 Arab writers' proficiency: Autonomy, online self-access centers, and advisement* [Unpublished Doctoral Thesis]. Massey University, Manawatu, New Zealand. Retrieved from https://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/11217/02_whole.pdf on May 15, 2022.

[13] Dişlen, G. (2011). *Exploration of how students perceive autonomous learning in an EFL context*. Edited by David Gardner.

[14] Dung, D. T. H. (2020). The advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education, 10*(3), 45-48.

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

[16] Ghobain, E. A., & Zughaibi, A.A. (2021). Examining Saudi EFL university students' readiness for online learning at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Special Issue on CALL (7)*, 3-21

[17] Güler, A. & Esen, M. (2021). EFL Teachers' Perceptions on Learner Autonomy in Online Instruction during the Lockdown Period. *EFLIJ, 25*(6), 6-25.

[18] Halabi, N. (2018). *Exploring learner autonomy in a Saudi Arabian EFL context* [Doctoral dissertation]. The University of York.

[19] Hamouda, A. (2020). The effect of virtual classes on Saudi EFL students' speaking skills. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation, 3*(4), 175-204.

[20] Hedge, T. (2008). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

[21] Hidayati, T., & Husna, F. (2020). Learning English from home during the Covid-19: Investigating learners' experience for online and autonomous learning. *Journal of the Association for Arabic and English*, *6*(2), 202. https://doi.org/10.31332/lkw.v0i0.2223
[22] Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Council of Europe, Oxford: Pergamon Press.
[23] Khoshsima, H., & Sayadi, F. (2016). The effect of virtual language learning method on writing ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, *7*(2), 192-202.
[24] Lengkanawati, N. S. (2017). Learner autonomy in the Indonesian EFL settings. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 6*(2), 222–231. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v6i2.4847
[25] Mosquera, L. H. (2017). Impact of implementing a virtual learning environment (VLE) in the EFL classroom. *Íkala, Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura, 22*(3), 479-498. https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.ikala.v22n03a07
[26] Noviadayanti, Y. (2021). Exploring learner autonomy in online classes among Indonesian EFL students. *Research on English Language Teaching in Indonesia, 9*(2), 112-119.
[27] Pichugova, I. L., Stepura, S. N., & Pravosudov, M. M. (2016). Issues of promoting learner autonomy in EFL context. *In SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 28, p. 01081). EDP Sciences.
[28] Scharle, A &.Szabó, A. (2000). *Why should you develop responsibility and autonomy?* Part 1. Responsibility and autonomy. Learner Autonomy. A guide to developing learner responsibility. 4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
[29] Ta'amneh, M. A. A. A. (2021). Attitudes and challenges towards virtual classes in learning English language courses from students' perspectives at Taibah University during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *12*(3), 419-428. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1203.12
[30] Tamer, O. M. E. R. (2013). *A dissertation on students' readiness for autonomous learning of English as a foreign language* [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Sunderland, England.
[31] Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
[32] Vygotsky, L. (1978). Interaction between learning and development. *Readings on the Development of Children, 23*(3), 34-41.
[33] Yadav, G. (2016). Reflection on virtual classes: Spirit of the time. *International Journal of Advanced Research, 4*(4), 1162–1167.

Noof Alharbi is an Assistant Professor of Education at the English Language Centre (ELC) in the Preparatory Year Program (PYP) at Taibah University, Saudi Arabia. She obtained her PhD from the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, the UK. She also had a Master's degree in English Curriculum and Instruction from Taibah University, Saudi Arabia. Her research interests are English as a Second / Foreign Language, Teaching Methods and Approaches, and English Language Skills.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1125-1132, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.27

Analysis of Multimodal Metaphor in TV Advertisement

Hongce Wang
College of International Studies, Southwest University, Chongqing, China

***Abstract*—Advertisements are becoming increasingly popular and are being presented in multifaceted ways due to their unique features and artistic techniques of expression. Advertisements are primarily presented through visual, sound, and verbal modality. These modalities have their own functions, and they interact with each other. Based on the working mechanism of conceptual metaphor, the metaphorical meaning of an advertisement is constructed in cooperation with each modality while demonstrating the social cognition behind advertising discourse.**

***Index Terms*—advertisement discourse, conceptual metaphor, multimodal metaphor, modality**

I. Introduction

Metaphor is an exceedingly important cognitive tool for interpreting abstract concepts. For that reason, it has long been a major focus of linguistic research. Statistically, nearly 70% of expressions originated from metaphorical concepts. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) posited that metaphor exists in daily life—not only in language but also in thoughts and activities. Even people's conceptual systems are essentially metaphorical. As an important propaganda instrument, advertising is similarly metaphorical. The understanding of metaphor experiences has two stages: the identification of the metaphor and the deduction of its meaning (Shu, 2000). People transfer main characters of the source domain to the target domain, which provides them a profound understanding of the advertising and strikes a chord.

The rapid development of informatization and the resulting combination of texts, pictures, gestures, and other developments have formed a multimodal phenomenon that has become a salient feature of daily life (Zhang & Zhan, 2011). Metaphor as an indispensable way of thinking tends to be presented by multimodalities.

Most early metaphor studies analyzed the language representation of static discourse, focusing primarily on the textual analysis of novels and other textual discourses, print advertisements, and static cartoons. The first comprehensive and systematic elaboration of image metaphors in print advertising to take a cognitive perspective was Forceville's (1996) study titled "Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising." As technology has developed, multimodal research has gradually expanded to include a variety of dynamic modal symbols such as visual and auditory elements, including television commercials and music.

In recent years, foreign researchers have uncovered several new findings in dynamic multimodal video discourse. For example, O'Halloran (2004) explored the salient symbolic choices in film clips, and Tan (2009) proposed a systematic functional multi-semiotic analysis framework to analyze how dynamic multimodal discourse expresses potential meaning through symbolic interaction.

Domestic scholars have conducted relevant research in multimodal metaphorical discourse analysis as well. Zhang and Zhang (2022), for instance, have made several key discoveries. Over three decades, they constructed a comprehensive theoretical framework of multimodal discourse and established the grammatical metaphor theory. Furthermore, they posited that the development of multimodal discourse analysis in the field of cognitive linguistics is based mainly on its conceptual metaphor theory. Feng (2011) provided a multimodal theoretical framework from a systematic functional view and systematized and classified the construction and types of images and multimodal metaphors. Moreover, Zhao (2011) systematically overviewed the cognitive study of multimodal metaphor transfer.

Although several scholars have also gradually turned to multimodal video analysis in recent years, most continue to examine the multimodality of static texts. Overall, the research remains relatively limited.

II. Multimodal Metaphor Theory

A. Conceptual Metaphor

The understanding and experience of conceptual metaphor are influenced by the culture in which it is located. From a cognitive perspective, metaphor is a mapping from one conceptual domain or cognitive domain to another—in other words, from the source to the target domain (Wen, 2007). In general, the source domain is a concrete, familiar concept, while the target domain consists of more abstract and less familiar concepts. Metaphor is the conceptualization of abstract things. Metaphors have two "entities:" the ontology (i.e., subject) and the vehicle (i.e., subordinate). For example, in the phrase "Man is a wolf," *man* is the ontology and *wolf* the metaphor. According to Black (1962), at least one feature of each metaphor's subordinate domain (i.e., the source domain) is projected onto the subject domain. This projection process involves the foregrounding, adoption, or modification of certain features of the subject (i.e., the target domain). Similar elements are projected between the source and target domains, so there is an elemental match between the two. For example, the metaphor "the car beetled along" transforms the characteristics of the beetle into those of the car.

In addition, the concept of metaphor is systematic, culturally articulated, and anthropomorphic. Metaphors include directional and entity types. A directional metaphor refers to abstract words with directional metaphorical features. These include happiness, consciousness, good, life, health, more, and high status, which are upward, and sad, bad, sick, death, less, low status, which are downward. The entity metaphor involves considering part of the experience of a concrete entity or substance so that it can refer to abstract things and make them domained, grouped, and quantified, such as inflation is lowering our standard of living.

Many metaphors have been used so often that they have become conventional and so entrenched in people's perceptions that their metaphorical function has been forgotten. Grady (2005) noted that basic metaphors have three properties: 1) direct experiential relevance, 2) strict unidirectionality of mapping, and 3) universality across languages.

B. Multimodal Metaphor

The multimodal view of metaphor suggests that metaphors exist not only in language but also in other modalities, such as sound, music, color, and line. The term "multimodal metaphor" refers to the use of two or more modalities to represent the phenomenon of mapping metaphors in the source and target domains (Forceville & Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Multimodal research focuses on the complementary and regular features of non-verbal symbols such as images and music in multiple media. Such symbols are used to convey meaning, establish the relationship between modality and media, and communicate the synergy of multimodal visual and verbal elements in second-language classrooms (Barthes, 1977; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Royce, 2002). Paula (2014) argued that multimodal metaphor theory must be further developed and conceptual interaction models devised to give richer connotations to multimodal information. For example, there is a need to develop dynamic multimodal conceptual integration patterns to explore the structure of multimodal expressions. The creative integration of multimodal input in this model is largely conditioned and guided by the interplay of multimodal metaphor and metonymy complexes. Based on the previous study, the characteristics of multimodal metaphor are as follows (Zhao, 2011).

(a). Dynamics and Narrativity of Mulitomodal Metaphor

Non-verbal modality often has a spatiotemporal sequences feature. It can construct basic metaphors, which include the Great Chain of Being and Event Structure metaphors (Lan & Cai, 2013), from people's cognitive experiences. Multimodal metaphor reflects the dynamics of narrativity through visual extension, sequences of scenes, and sound fluctuation.

For example, the use of music, images, and color in "Isolation Keyboards" helps depict people confined to keyboards, lost in online networks and with relationships between family members fading away. Video provides the audience a story to consider in their minds.

(b). Vividness of Multimodal Metaphor

Compared with pure language text, the source domain of the visual field is more direct in both form and spatial dimension. For example, the conceptual metaphor +POWERFUL IS BIG+ is presented in linguistic form, which makes it difficult to imagine how big it is. However, with images, it is easy to form a concept in people's minds that causes reactions and emotions.

(c). Universality of the "Concrete Is Concrete" Multimodal Metaphor

The typical conceptual metaphor emphasizes that people can only use the concrete object to map the abstract object. However, many researchers have illustrated that people can actually combine the properties of two domains to form a new integration concept. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) noted, both domains can be specific objects. Other metaphorical approaches have revealed that the "concrete is concrete" metaphor is common in people's lives (Forceville, 2009). For example, in the image metaphor +WATCH IS BUTTERFLY+, both the source and target domains are perceptible and specific objects.

III. Modalities in TV Advertisement

A. Functions of Modality

To study the concept of modality, Forceville (2006) subdivided modality into nine modes: 1) pictorial signs, 2) written signs, 3) spoken signs, 4) gestures, 5) sounds, 6) music, 7) smells, 8) tastes, and 9) touch. Following Forceville (2006), as well as features of public service advertisements, this paper mainly discusses two modalities: 1) visual modality, which is composed of pictorial and written signs, and 2) auditory modality, which is composed of spoken signs, sounds, and music.

(a). Pictorial Signs

The purpose of advertising is to promote a certain product or service in a limited time and space. Therefore, the metaphors in advertisements differ from conventional metaphors, and more image metaphors are used to attract customer attention.

Broadcast on CCTV in 2006, the public service advertisement “Will Love Passed On” used images to present its background. The broadcast was received well by audiences. The story of the advertisement can be divided into four stages: beginning, developing, climaxing, and ending. In the opening part, the mother is gently washing her child’s feet and telling the story of “duck swimming.” After the child goes to bed, the mother brings her own mother water. Then, as the story progresses, the elder affectionately says “You’ve had a busy day, take a break.” “I’m not tired; a foot bath is good for your health,” the mother replies with a smile. The child next door hears the conversation. Then, during the climax, when the mother returns to the child’s room, the child is not in bed. At the same time, the mother hears footsteps and then sees the child holding a foot basin, shambling and saying, “Mom, let me wash your feet.” Finally, the scene shows the son washing his mother’s feet and telling the story of “duck swimming.” Then the screen darkens. Without the pictorial mode, the audience would neither understand the story that had taken place nor receive the educational enlightenment from the TV public service advertisement.

(b). Spoken Signs

Spoken signs are the main expressive instruments of multimodal metaphor. People use the spoken modality to understand advertisements’ main meaning. In addition, when combined with other modalities, spoken modality can act as a comprehensive tool; it can better demonstrate and explain the meaning, add new elements to the meaning that are perceived by other modalities, and enhance understanding of the meaning. It can even conjure other modalities in people’s minds to construct a meaning.

The advertising for “Sidashu Stomach Medicine” in China has succeeded in using spoken signs. In the advertisement, a mother says “your dad’s stomach troubles again! Get Sidashu!” The son then runs into a room, pointing to another man, and says “Four uncle!” The mother anxiously replies that “I didn't ask you to find Four uncle. It is Sidashu!”

In this advertising, “Sidashu” and “four uncle” are a pair of sound homonyms in different Chinese. Therefore, as Yu (2009) observed, “Sidashu” (medicine) stimulates another symbol of the unit “Sidashu” (Four uncle).

(c). Written Signs

The functions of written signs are similar to the first two functions of spoken signs.

Written signs are a main expressive instrument that can add new information to what is already known to increase understanding and better explain meaning. In addition, written signs imply that the information rendered in public service advertisements (PSAs) is formal and important. Most CCTV public service advertisements, for example, conclude with a sentence explaining the central theme.

(d). Sound

Based on the particularity of sounds, the source domain is indirectly activated by metonymy (Barcelona, 2000). A successful example with sounds is the “Save Paper” TV advertisement. In this ad, a man places a piece of paper in a printer. When he does so, the shrill sound of a chainsaw can be heard, and powder fills the screens. Then, in the black background, a line of text appears on the screen: “today, how many trees have you cut down?” The chainsaw noise reminds people of cutting trees with a saw.

(e). Music

Music is one of the most important elements of a complete presentation of multimodal metaphor in TV advertisements.

Music is mainly used to establish atmosphere and is one of basic elements of multimodal TV advertisement, playing an important role in the dynamic meaning construction of metaphors.

Music in TV advertisements encompasses all the music used in the advertising process. Music primarily works with words and images to transmit information and can be divided into two categories: vocal and instrumental music. Vocal music generally refers to advertising jingles with lyrics, whereas instrumental music is played in the background, is composed of instruments, and contains no lyrics. Music not only renders the atmosphere but also plays an important role in the construction of multimodal metaphor.

The perfect combination of corn and peas, for example, is the raw material used to animate products in “Promoting Fast Food” foreign television commercials. The metaphor is that the “corn and pea is the bride and groom.” The advertisement only uses the “Wedding March” music to remind of the wedding event, which effectively activates the concept of “wedding.”

It is important to note that these modalities are intertwined. Perceiving a meaning construction of one modality is the first stage in meaning construction. The second stage is to use the relations of modalities to make the meaning sufficient.

B. Relations Between Modalities

After discussing the function of modalities, it becomes clear that each one interacts with the others. Perceiving the meaning construction of a pattern is the first stage of meaning construction, and the second stage is the use of pattern relationships to make meaning sufficient.

The function of modalities determines the relationship between patterns. One example is the “Haifeisi Shampoo” TV advertisement.

1). +HAIFEISI SHAMPOO IS A POWERFUL FIGURE+

In this case, the combination of applications of pictorial modality and spoken modality implies the similarity of shampoo and a powerful figure. Pictorial modality is present throughout the advertisement, with music modality combining with spoken modality. In general, pictorial, spoken, and musical signs interact. Spoken modality helps to reinforce figurative meaning, which is based on the pictorial modality.

2). +HAIR IS MUSICAIN+

In this example, pictorial symbols, musical symbols, and spoken signs interact and trigger the theme metaphor +HAIR IS MUSICIAN+. Modalities in this instance have their own functions while simultaneously cooperating. The music modality coexists with the pictorial and spoken modalities.

3). +WOMAN IS BUTTERFLY+

In this example, the spoken sign has only 13 characters. The music modality plays the most important role in this advertisement. The spoken modality has a bridge with music and pictorial modalities.

4). +SHAMPOO IS THE ERASER+

In this example, the application of musical and spoken signs is extremely limited. This places the pictorial signs in a prominent position. The music is only interspersed in this advertising.

In summary, all metaphorical meanings are composed of pictorial, written, and spoken symbols as well as sounds and music. Pictorial modality is more salient than the others. Typically pictorial metaphor is considered the most important factor when identifying the source and target domains. The accuracy and interpretations of written and spoken signs are often used to indicate the mapping process from source to target domain. Sound and music modalities tend to be combined with pictorial signs to achieve their function and are often used to evoke emotions and set the mood. Using sound and music can improve the effectiveness of messaging (Lan & Cai, 2013).

There are, then, four main model relationships: symbiosis, reinforcement, interweaving, and bridge.

IV. Metaphorical Meaning Construction in TV Advertising

A. Analysis of Metaphorical Meaning Construction

The main modalities in TV advertising are widely understood, but how do people’s minds construct the metaphorical meaning of TV advertising through each modality? The following section addresses this question using examples from cognitive perspective.

(a). Case One: “Let Everything Full of Hope”

This is a public service advertising designed to encourage patients with depression to remain positive, change a few aspects at a time, and find hope. This entire multimodal discourse can be divided into two parts: 1) the inner world of the depressed person and 2) the depression patient facing life with hope after changing himself.

1. First Part: The Inner World of the Depression Patient

+DEPRESSION PATIENT IS IN GLOOMY AND PASSIVE MOOD, SHUTS HIMSELF IN HIS INNER WORLD AND SUFFERS FROM THE DISEASE CONTINUOSLY+

Table 1
The Interpretation Of Multimodal Metaphor In First Part

	Source Domain	Target Domain
Pictorial Sign	Black and dark grey background	The gloomy mood of patient with depression
Pictorial Sign	Small and closed room	The patient with depression isolates himself in his narrow inner world
Spoken Sign	The low passive noise	The passive way the patient with depression perceives the world
Pictorial Sign	The figure “D” around the man all the time	The depression bothers the patient continually
Pictorial Sign	Sitting in the dark corner	The passive thought of the man
Pictorial Sign	Hanging up the phone	Getting away from the world
Music Sign	The dolorous music	The depression atmosphere around the man

In lenses 1–6, black and dark gray act as basic color tones that fill the screen, which is dimly lit. Though it may be simple common sense, it should be noted that when there is no light, there is no way to see. According to human cognition, there are similarities between darkness and depression. Therefore, since black and gray represent the feelings of people suffering from depression, they imply depression in the advertisement’s protagonist.

The written signs that emerge in the beginning in this case act as subtitles that explain the pictorial signs. In addition to lens 1, the text “Depression” appears on the right side of the screen. Figure “D” in the following lens is a symbol of depression. This advertisement uses the part-whole relationship to use “D” to symbolize “depression.” In this advertisement, spoken language is used in the beginning and plays an explanatory role. However, the tone of the spoken language also has metaphorical implications. Lens 2 shows a dark, empty chamber that represents the inner world of someone suffering from depression. The depressed man isolates himself in a narrow inner world. Lens 3 shows the man lying on the ground, “D” with him. In Lens 1, with the help of the spoken and written signs in this advertising, the audience is aware that the figure “D” in this ad is anthropomorphic. It is the enemy of this man. The emergence of “D” shows that the patient has been suffering from depression. However, the tone of the spoken language also has metaphorical meaning. Lens 4 depicts the man sitting in a dark corner with a handsome smile as the sun shines on his old photograph. Though the sun is directly above him, he does not seem to notice. We share the common sense that sun represents positivity. In this case, the sun represents hope. Avoiding sunlight demonstrates that the depression patient is depriving himself of hope. In lens 5, the man hangs up the phone. Today, it is generally understood that the phone is the main or only way to connect with others and the outside world. This means that hanging up the phone actually represents this man’s desire to say goodbye to his life. He wants to isolate himself. Then, lens 6 shows the man in the water. This photo evokes the concept of drowning. In the spoken language of “he wants to leave the world,” the audience can infer that he wants to kill himself.

2. *Second Part: The Depression Patient Faces the Life With Hope after Changing Himself*

+SEEKING HELP IS SEEKING HAPPINESS AND A POSITIVE ATTITUDE+

TABLE 2
THE INTERPRETATION IN MULTIMODAL METAPHOR IN SECOND PART

	Source Domain	Target Domain
Pictorial Sign	The sunlight	Hope and happiness
Pictorial Sign	The determined look and tears in his eyes	Change is necessary but difficult
Pictorial Sign	Look at the sunlight	Seek help
Pictorial Sign	Big smile and thumps up	The patient getting better
Pictorial Sign	The paper airplane	The patient
Music Sign	Faster and louder music	A positive attitude toward life

Lens 1 illustrates that the patient with depression wants to touch the sunlight. Based on people’s basic information, sunlight means hope and happiness. The image shows the man trying to catch the sun, reflecting his desire to be happy and hopeful. From the spoken and written signs in lens 7, “However, there is something in the world that wants to retain him,” the audience infers that sunlight is what keeps the person from giving up. In lens 8, the patient with depression has a determined look and tears in his eyes simultaneously. When people decide to take action, that determined look is present. Based on the similar body experiences, the determined look implies that the man has definitively chosen to change. In lens 8, the music quickens and becomes louder, spoiling the positive atmosphere, which aligns with the metaphorical meaning that pictorial modality has constructed. Lens 9 depicts a man sitting on the floor and looking into the sun. At the same time, the text “Depression, seek medical help” appears. Written symbols, as an interpretive tool, help audiences understand meaning. Lens 10 implies that sunshine is the doctor, presenting a doctor with a large smile and a thumps up. Smiles and gestures send a message to viewers that the patient with depression is healing with the help of doctors. Then, in shot 11, the patient throws a paper airplane. The action reflects the patient’s willingness to face life and fly in his own world like an airplane. In contrast to the dark background of lens 1, lens 12 is brighter and has a wider field of vision. This contradiction allows the audience to really see a change in the man. With the phrase “Let everything be hopeful,” the audience can deduce that where there is hope there is opportunity.

(b). Case Two: “World No-Tobacco Day”

TABLE 3
THE INTERPRETATION OF MULTIMODAL METAPHOR IN "WORLD NO-TOBACCO DAY"

Source Domain		Target Domain
Smoking	mapping	Chronic suicide
Smoke shaped like a gun	→	Killed by gun
Smoke shaped like a rope	→	Suffocated by rope
Smoke shaped like a plastic bag	→	Suffocated by bag

This advertisement consists of four parts. At the beginning of the commercial, there is gloomy music and dark conditions. In lens 1, a young man in a black suit is seen sitting in a white chair. He lights a cigarette with a lighter and the screen shows the following text: “One million people in China have died from tobacco-related disease.” The man begins to exhale the cigarette smoke, which continues to expand, gradually forming the shape of a pistol to the left of his head.

Then, the screen darkens with the sound of gunfire. Lens 2 depicts a beautiful young woman sitting in a chair, lighting a cigarette as the smoke gradually forms a white silk wrap around her neck. At the same time, a series of texts flashes across the screen: “The rise in smoking among young women should be a cause for concern.” Lens 3 shows a young man with a puff of smoke in his mouth. The smoke expands in the direction of the two lovely ladies, forming two plastic bags that land on the ladies’ heads in lenses 4 and 5. A list of words reads “the rate of passive smoking women suffering from lung cancer is six times as normal people.” Three smokers are then filmed using the same lens. They inhale smoke back in their mouths. Above, a list of red words reads “the 23rd world no-tobacco day.” In large letters, the picture states that “Smoking equals chronic suicide.” The dark and gloomy background foils a passive atmosphere about smoking.

The metaphor reveals itself to be “Smoking is chronic suicide.” This meaning is accomplished by three sub metaphors. The shape of cigarette smoke formation depicts three ways of committing suicide: shooting, hanging, and suffocating oneself. People understand that the shape of an object can represent a real object, all of which—in this case—are linked to smoking. This is a new way to establish a relationship between smoking and other factors. In this advertisement, smoking is divided into active and passive forms. At the end of the video, the view can conclude that smoking is tantamount to suicide.

All four metaphors share the same source domain of “smoking.” However, they have different target domains for the source of “chronic suicide,” such as “shooting yourself in the head” and “hanging up the phone.” In this ad, certain modalities interact with each other. In the case of the “smoke gun shape,” both images and sounds refer to shooting and popping movements, illustrating common shooting patterns. Smoking is also known to be harmful to health.

Despite that people have never thought smoking to be so terrible, this ad states that it can be as damaging as guns, white silk, or plastic bags. In the first part, the ad constructs a metaphor meaning “a person who smokes will be shot.” The metaphors are based on similarities and correlations between two input spaces, both of which are harmful to humans and both of which are “spontaneous.” In addition, these metaphors link to the important relationship of "identity," which in this case involves the same person. They are related to each other. Furthermore, based on the establishment of incentive mechanisms, there exist relations of identity, analogy, attribute, causal category, and others. The analysis of the final three metaphors is similar to that of the first.

According to Fauconnier and Turner (1998), projection is selective. For instance, space need not contain all the elements of an input relationship, and integration spaces contain only expected results. At times, two domains are expected, and at others only one. In certain cases, one domain predicts two domains (Fauconnier, 1985). The synthesis space is selected from the input elements, and a new structure is formed through the combination process. Since the first three metaphors have similar mixing mechanisms, this paper analyzes the first one in detail before combining the different mixing mechanisms of the first three the multimodal metaphors. For the first metaphor, “a smoker is a shot of suicide,” the discussion above is projected into the integrative space. In it, people are compressed into a unique relationship, while others are projected onto the integrative space. The multimodal metaphor “smoking is Chronic Suicide” is the end of the text ad, and it appears to be the conclusion of the first three metaphorical forms.

The above table illustrates that the pictorial modality in this TV advertisement is also in the predominant position. There are no spoken signs at all in this TV advertisement. The few written signs in such advertisements serve a primarily explanatory function. The relationship between music and pictorial signs is essentially a co-occurrence. Music form is additionally important in such advertisements. The relationship between music and pictorial modality is also strengthened. The metaphorical meaning in this ad is, then, constructed through pictorial, music, and written modality.

B. Other Influential Factors

(a). Background Sound

The role of music in the multimodal metaphor of multimodal metonymy should not be ignored. The multimodal metaphor, a source and object metaphor, is primarily or entirely presented in different patterns, including minimal visual effects, written language, spoken language, sound, and music. Therefore, the study of musical function continues to belong to the multimodal metaphor domain.

There are two kinds of music in the background: music with and without lyrics. The above analysis referred to wordless music, which can establish the mood and affect the audience's emotions. It can also construct metaphorical meanings in other ways.

Just like music without lyrics, music with lyrics can establish mood and affect audience emotion. Moreover, since the lyrics belong to written or spoke modalities, music with lyrics can function as an explanation instrument. At the same time, musical lyrics can be overly externalized in their metaphorical meaning of existence. Those have the reinforcement function.

(b). Cultural Characteristics

It is important to note that cultural characteristics should also be considered when analyzing multimodal metaphors in TV advertisements. To make the study more objective, a group of foreign teachers working in Western cultures at Xuzhou’s English Language Teaching Center received an ad saying “Mom and Dad, I love you.” Reading the ad provided them a solid understanding of what it was attempting to express. However, they also observed that such ads cannot be public service announcements or be broadcast on national television.

The difference is distinct cultural characteristics. Because of China's special circumstances, such as the "one child" family policy, it is necessary to establish a complete social welfare system and strengthen the cultivation of traditional Chinese family values. Chinese family members are closer to each other than their Western counterparts are. Young children are valuable assets to parents, and many Chinese people consider children the center of the family. When children grow up, they take care of their parents in their retirement age and support the entire family in spiritual and material matters. This example demonstrates that the multimodal metaphor in intercultural communication and intercultural advertisements can only be accepted and understood by audiences with specific cultural characteristics.

V. Conclusion

This paper used specific cases to analyze multimodal metaphor in TV advertisements from a cognitive perspective. Each model constructs a metaphorical meaning related to the thematic meaning of TV advertisements. Therefore, it is not sufficient to study the meaning construction of a pattern. Understanding the concepts and characteristics of multimodal metaphors can enhance understanding of complex source domains. This analysis of metaphorical construction in TV advertisements revealed five modalities in the medium: pictorial signs, written symbols, spoken signs, sounds, and music. These models not only have their own functions of meaning construction; they also play an auxiliary role in the metaphorical meaning construction of other models. All these modalities interact with each other. This study of multimodal metaphor in TV ads uncovered that the modality of pictorial signs is more salient than that of other patterns. The meaning structure of these advertisements showed to rely on pictorial signs with the help of music and text signs. In addition, an example was given to illustrate the influence of cultural differences on metaphorical meaning construction. The results of this paper will enhance and deepen people's understanding of TV Advertisements. As an important method for shaping people's behavior and humans' morality, the information conveyed through TV advertisements must be disseminated in the correct way. Moreover, the analysis of multimodal metaphor in TV advertisements can provide new methods and perspectives for linguistic research.

References

[1] Barcelona, A. (2000). *Metaphor and Metonymy at the Crossroads: A Cognitive Perspective*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[2] Barthes, R. (1977). *Image-Music-Text*. London: Fontana.

[3] Black, M. (1962). *Metaphor in models and Metaphors*. New York: The Cornell University Press.

[4] Fauconnier, G. (1985). *Mental Space*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[5] Fauconnier, G., & Turner, M. (1998). Principles of conceptual integration. In D. Edwards (Ed.), *Discourse and Cognition* (pp. 68-89). Stanford: CSLI Publication.

[6] Feng, D. Z. (2011). Duo mo tai yin yu de gou jian yu fen lei: Xi tong gong neng shi jiao [Construction and classification of multimodal metaphors: a systemic functional perspective]. *Wai yu yan jiu*, *1*, 24-29.

[7] Forceville, C. (1996). *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising*. London: Routledge.

[8] Forceville, C. (2006). Non-verbal and multimodal metaphor in a cognitivist framework: Agendas for research. In G. Kristiansen, M. Achard, R. Dirven, & F. J. Ruiz (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics: Current Applications and Future Perspectives* (pp. 379-402). Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[9] Forceville, C. (2009). *Multimodal Metaphor---Applications of Cognitive Linguistics*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[10] Forceville, C., Urios-Aparisi, E. (2009). *Multimodal Metaphor*. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[11] Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication*. London: Arnold.

[12] Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

[13] Lan, C., & Cai, Y. (2013). Dian shi guang gao zhong duo mo tai yin yu de ren zhi yu yan xue yan jiu: Yi Hai fei si guang gao wei li [A cognitive linguistic study of multimodal metaphors in TV commercials - A case study of Haifeisi commercials]. *Wai yu yan jiu, 141*, 17-23.

[14] O'Halloran, K. L. (2008). Inter-semiotic expansion of experiential meaning: Hierarchical scales and metaphor in mathematics discourse. In C. Jones & E. Ventola (Eds.), *From Language to Multimodality: New Developments in the Study of Ideational Meaning* (2nd ed., PP. 57-78). London: Equinox.

[15] Paula, P. S. (2014). Multimodal cognitive operations in classical music. *Vigo International Journal of Applied Lingui*stics, *63*, 137-168.

[16] Royce, T. (2002). Multimodality in the TESOL classroom: Exploring visual-verbal synergy. *TESOL Quarterly*, *36*(2), 191-120.

[17] Shu, D. F. (2000). Lun yin yu de li jie guo cheng ji qi te dian [On the understanding process of metaphor and its characteristics]. *Wai yu jiao xue yu yan jiu, 32(4)*, 253-259.

[18] Tan, S.A. (2009). Systemic Functional Framework for The Analysis of Corporate Television Advertisements. In E. Ventola & R. M. Guijarro (Eds.), *The World Told and The World Shown: Multisemiotic Issues* (pp. 157-182). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

[19] Wen, X., & Ye, K. (2007). Gai nian yin yu yu wai yu jiao xue [Conceptual Metaphors and Foreign Language Teaching]. Chong qing gong xue yuan xue bao, *21*(1), 145-154.

[20] Yu, N. (2009). Nonverbal and multimodal manifestations of metaphors and metonymies: A case study. In C. Forceville (Ed.), *Multimodal Metaphor* (pp. 119-144). New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

[21] Zhang, D. L., & Zhang, K. (2022). Duo mo tai pi ping (ji ji) hua yu fen xi zong he kuang jia tan suo [Exploring a comprehensive framework for multimodal critical (positive) discourse analysis]. *Wai yu jiao xue, 43(1)*, 1-8.

[22] Zhang, H., & Zhan, W. W. (2011). Guang gao yu pian zhong duo mo tai zhuan yu yu yin yu de dong tai gou jian [Dynamic onstruction of multimodal metonymy and metaphors in advertising discourse]. *Wai yu yan jiu*, *1*, 16-23
[23] Zhao, X. F. (2011). Gai nian yin yu yan jiu de xin fa zhan: Duo mo tai yin yu yan jiu [New developments in conceptual metaphor research: multimodal metaphor research]. *Wan yu yan jiu*, *125*, 1-10.

Hongce Wang is a PhD candidate from College of International Studies at Southwest University. Her main research interests include cognitive linguistics, socio-cognitive linguistics and discourse constructions.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 13, No. 5, pp. 1133-1138, September 2022
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1305.28

The Effects of Shadow-Reading on EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension

Murad Al Kayed
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Muntaha Samardali
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Lama Bani Essa
Ministry of Education, Jordan

Rebekah Johnson
LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York, USA

***Abstract*—The current study investigates the effects of shadow-reading on the development of the reading comprehension of undergraduate students who studied English at Ajloun University College/ Al-Balqa Applied University. The researchers randomly selected 100 EFL learners from the Department of English Language at Ajloun University College who enrolled in the reading course in the first semester2021/2022. The students were first and second-year students aged 18-22. The sample of the study was divided equally into experimental and control groups. The control group was exposed only to regular classroom reading instruction, while the experimental group received shadow-reading instruction. The researchers conducted a posttest to find out if there were significant differences between both groups. The results indicated that shadow-reading affected reading comprehension positively. It is found that shadow-reading is more effective than other traditional methods in teaching reading comprehension. The current study presents several recommendations for language learners, researchers, teachers, and syllabus designers.**

***Index Terms*—EFL, shadow-reading, reading comprehension, undergraduate students, reading skills**

I. Introduction

Reading is one of the language skills that English language learners should master to improve their linguistic competency and to use language appropriately in different contexts. Among several definitions of reading comprehension, Grabe (2009) defined reading comprehension as the skill of processing text, comprehending its meaning, and integrating it with what the reader already knows. The process of reading comprehension was divided into a lower level (linkages between orthographic forms and the sounds of the language) and a higher level (building semantic and syntactic networks (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

Moreover, reading comprehension depends on the readers' pre-knowledge and the text itself, so the active readers should link the pre-knowledge with the information in the text to understand its meaning in context. Many EFL students in English Language departments have problems understanding academic reading texts in their classrooms because they do not have enough pre-knowledge related to the given texts. To solve this problem and to improve their reading comprehension, students can build vocabulary, become motivation, read extensively, learn to recognize the structure of the text, and use a suitable reading method.

Reading comprehension is a basic skill in learning a foreign or second language since it is the base for improving language skills, such as writing, listening, and speaking (Anderson, 2012). Reading is also very important in real life, as it is one way to get information or knowledge about the world. Thus, it is essential to improve the reading skills of language learners.

Readers can use strategies to understand what they read, but the best reading strategies are often taught by teachers and utilized by students. There are several strategies used in EFL classrooms for comprehending the text, such as asking and answering, top-down and bottom-up reading, and extensive and intensive reading.

One of the strategies used to teach reading is shadow-reading (SHR). Murphey (2001) assumed that shadowing is a strategy used by learners in which they imitate their interlocutors by repeating and summarizing what they said. Kadota and Tamai (2004) defined shadowing as a strategy that uses listening skills, where the learner practices speech by repeating it without looking at a text. Shadowing is a useful technique used in learning a second language because it provides learners with aural input. Le Féal (1997) claimed that using the shadowing strategy has advantages in learning a foreign language because it improves foreign language learning by focusing on the words that are not recorded. In addition, using shadowing may have positive effects on brain processing.

The SHR strategy is highly effective in teaching and learning reading. When learners apply SHR, they either repeat what the readers have read completely or selectively, or they engage in conversational interaction (Commander & Guerrero, 2012, p. 8). SHR can help the students comprehend the text because each student acts as a reader and shadower. Oral summarizing, which is used in shadow reading, is very useful in developing students' reading abilities. It allows the shadowers to summarize the text in their own language, which in turn helps them comprehend the text. Moreover, interactive shadowing, which allows the students to ask questions, make comments, and discuss others, enhances the students' reading skills. They get help from each other in order to comprehend the text (Commander & Guerrero, 2013). In addition, using immediate and delayed written retelling helps students to understand the main ideas of the text, recognize the basic elements of the text/story, draw conclusions, identify significant details, and make inferences.

To apply SHR effectively, the teacher should train the students to use this technique. The teachers ask the students to read the text aloud, repeat the sentences, and read them again as whole paragraphs or passages. Then, the students are asked to summarize the text in either spoken or written form. The oral interaction between students helps them review the text and build meaning. In applying SHR, one partner (reader) reads the text, and the other partner (shadower) imitates what the reader says orally (Commander & Guerrero, 2013).

A. Statement of the Problem

Many students face several problems in comprehending the texts, and many students do not enjoy reading. Thus, there is a need to use suitable strategies, activities, and techniques that have an important role in enhancing learning skills. In the current study, the researchers discovered that many students who enrolled in reading courses at Ajloun University College in the first and second semesters of the academic year 2020/21 and the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022 received low grades on their exams. It was found that 90 students out of 400 (22.5%) failed the courses during that period. Additionally, it was found that the average of students’ marks in the related courses was 54.1, which indicated that students did not perform well overall in the reading courses. The researchers then performed a pilot study to find out whether the students of English language at Ajloun University College had low reading comprehension. Twenty students were chosen randomly from first and second-year students. They sat for a reading comprehension test. The findings of the test showed that the students got low marks on the test since 13 students failed the exam (65%). These findings suggest that many students’ competency in reading skills is not well developed. Thus, it is necessary to improve the reading skills and strategies of the students at Ajloun University College by using modern and collaborative teaching methods, such as shadow-reading. Based on these findings, the current paper suggests that using shadow-reading may improve the reading skills of learners of EFL.

B. Research Objectives

The main objective of the current study is to find out whether shadow-reading is more effective than the conventional strategy in enhancing students’ reading comprehension. The study is beneficial for teachers, students, and researchers. For teachers, the study demonstrates the importance of using shadow-reading in teaching reading comprehension and introduces a practical application for using shadow-reading. For students, they can use this method to imitate and think critically to understand the texts easily when they use shadow-reading. Finally, the study is considered a preliminary study upon which other researchers can build by conducting similar studies on the benefits of using shadow-reading in teaching reading skills.

II. Literature Review

In recent years, various studies have concentrated on examining the impact of shadow-reading on students’ reading comprehension. Zarei and Alipour (2020) conducted a study aimed at comparing three selected scaffolding techniques with three types of shadow-reading. They selected 120 EFL learners as a sample for the study and divided them randomly into six groups of twenty members each. After analyzing the data, the most important result related to the current study indicated that among the three shadow-reading types (complete shadowing, partial shadowing, and interactive shadowing), interactive shadowing was the most effective technique and had a significant statistical effect on students’ reading comprehension.

Another study explored the impact of two reading strategies (collaborative strategic reading and shadow-reading) on EFL students’ reading comprehension (Babapour et al., 2018). The sample of the study consisted of 72 participants distributed into three groups (two experimental groups and a control group). The instrument of the study was a reading comprehension test used to assess the student's achievement in reading comprehension. The researchers of the study used two-way ANOVA to analyze the obtained data. One important finding of the study revealed that shadow-reading had a positive impact on improving EFL students’ reading comprehension.

In another study, Zarei and Jahanbakhsh (2016) compared shadow-reading with two other methods of teaching reading (multimedia and traditional) to find out the effect of shadow-reading on improving EFL students’ reading comprehension. The participants of the study were randomly assigned and divided into three groups. Then, the researchers used a reading comprehension test as an instrument to explore the impact of the three methods on Iranian EFL students’ reading comprehension. The collected data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA. The results of the study showed that shadow-reading had a positive effect compared with the traditional method, although its effect was not statistically significant.

Sadeghi et al. (2016) investigated the impact of using shadow-reading on improving reading comprehension according to a Vygotskyan view. The sample of the study, which consisted of 52 EFL students at the university level, was divided into two groups (experimental and control). The instrument of the study is a reading comprehension test, which was used as a pre-test to be sure that both groups were linguistically equivalent. A post-test was also used to find out the effect of using shadow-reading after applying the treatments. The result of the study indicated that shadow-reading had a positive influence on the students' reading comprehension.

Mohamed (2015) explored the impact of shadow-reading on improving the reading competency of Saudi EFL students. The sample of the study included forty students at the Arar Faculty of Education and Arts in Saudi Arabia. The study found that the shadow-reading strategy improved the reading skills of EFL students. Similarly, Lee (2014) explored the benefits of shadow-reading in teaching reading to EFL students. The study found that students in the shadow-reading group perform better than those in the silent reading group in retention and comprehension of texts. In another study, Nakanishi and Ueda (2011) compared the reading results of two groups of second-language college students. One group was taught using shadow reading with extensive reading, while the other group was exposed to extensive reading only. The findings of the study revealed that shadow reading developed the reading abilities of the students slightly compared to extensive reading only.

All of the previous related studies showed a positive influence of using shadow-reading in improving students' reading comprehension, either at the school level or university level. Thus, there is a need to conduct similar studies in different contexts to examine the benefits from using shadow-reading in teaching and learning reading comprehension.

In the Jordanian context, no studies have been conducted as of yet to find out the impact of using shadow-reading on improving the students' reading comprehension. Thus, the current study sought to investigate the impact of shadow-reading on EFL students' reading comprehension in the Jordanian context.

III. Methods

A. The Sample of the Study

The sample for this study consisted of 100 students studying at Al Balqa Applied University who enrolled in the reading course in the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022. The students were first and second-year students aged 18-22. The sample of the study was distributed equally into the experimental and control groups. The participants in the study were selected randomly regardless of gender, social class, regional background, and religion.

B. The Instruments of the Study

(a). Reading Comprehension Test

The study's instrument was a reading comprehension test designed by the researchers and used before the treatment as a pre-test to be sure that both groups were linguistically equivalent. After the treatment, a post-test was used to find the effect of the treatments on the students' reading comprehension. The reading comprehension test included a group of different passages followed by 50 multiple-choice items. The main purpose of the test was to figure out the meaning of the text according to different levels of comprehension (critical, inferential, and literal comprehension). After the students had taken the test, the researchers used a rubric to give them a score.

(b). Teaching Materials

The reading texts that were used to teach control and experimental groups were taken from the book 'Skills for First Certificate: Reading'. The book includes 16 units, and each unit includes a reading passage, dialogue, grammar, and exercises.

C. The Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The researchers established the validity of the test by using content validity. A group of experts, who are professors specializing in English language teaching and assessment, were selected to comment on the test. The researchers followed the comments suggested by the experts and produced the final draft. The study used the KR-21 formula to check the reliability of the reading comprehension test. It was found that the test was reliable as it turned out to be 0.78.

D. Procedure

The experimental group was exposed to shadow-reading while the control group was exposed to traditional teaching methods. The experiment lasted for three months and a total of 40 lectures/sessions.

(a). Shadow-Reading Intervention

The shadow-reading group, which consists of 50 students, was divided into 25 pairs to play the roles of the readers and shadowers. The experiment lasted for three months with a total of 40 lectures/sessions.

Training the students

It is very important to acquaint the students with the shadow-reading strategy before implementation, so the teachers spent 6 lecture hours to teach them this method. The training focused on three strategies: chunking, shadowing sentences, and shadowing discourse. The students learned how to chunk by dividing the utterance into smaller meaningful units and how to shadow sentences by watching Murphey's (2000) Shadowing and Summarizing video. They gained the ability to shadow sentences completely (repeating the sentences), selectively (shadowing only the key words), and interactively (asking questions and making comments). Additionally, they were taught how to shadow a whole discourse/text by shadowing each paragraph and summarizing the text as a whole.

Procedure

The implementation of shadow reading in the class took place as part of an activity that had two phases: an interactional phase and non-interactional phase (Commander & de Guerrero, 2012). It is worth noting that the procedure used all three types of shadowing (complete, selective, and interactive) in the interactional phase, as described by Murphey (2001). Complete shadowing involves repeating everything the speakers say. Selective shadowing includes shadowing certain words or phrases. Interactive shadowing includes the comments and questions given by shadowers to the readers.

First, the teachers assigned same-level partners in order for students with similar proficiency to work together. They also distributed a 200-300 word text which had been chosen very carefully to suit the linguistic level of students. The teachers divided each text into two equal parts. In the interactional phase, the teachers read the text aloud to the students and explained the meaning of the unfamiliar words. Then the students were asked to work in pairs as readers and shadowers. The reader read the first part of the text word by word and used chunks when it was necessary, while the shadower completely shadowed what he/she heard (complete shadowing). Then the reader read the text sentence by sentence, and the shadower selectively repeated the keywords without looking at the text (selective shadowing). Then the reader read the whole text, and the shadower summarized it orally. During this phase the students were allowed to use interactive shadowing by adding comments and asking questions. At the end of this phase, the teachers asked the partners to switch their roles as readers and shadowers, and work on the second part of the text. In non-interactional phase, the teachers asked the students to write a summary for the whole text individually in English. The next week in class, the students were asked to write a second summary of the text.

(b). Traditional Teaching Method

The group consists of 50 students. Firstly, the teachers read the text, then they wrote the unfamiliar words on the board and asked the experimental group to guess the meaning. After giving the meanings of the new words in English, the students started reading individually. The teachers followed the three stages of reading (pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading).

E. Design of the Study

The study used one of the quasi-experimental designs that included an experimental and a control group with a pre-test and post-test. The students in the experimental group learned reading comprehension by using the shadow-reading strategy, while the students in the control group learned reading comprehension by using the traditional way. Both groups were tested by using a pre and post-test. The variables of the study were the independent variable (shadow-reading strategy) and the dependent variable (reading comprehension).

IV. RESULTS

A. The Results of the Pre-Test

An independent sample t-test was used to find out if the mean scores of the experimental and control groups were equivalent. The results of the t-test were shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND T-TEST RESULTS OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS ON THE PRE-TEST.

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
PRE-TEST	Experimental	50	35.31	7.898	.475	98	.636
	Control	50	34.49	9.192			

Table 1 reveals that the linguistic knowledge of both groups was almost equivalent in the pre-test since there were no significant differences between the scores of both groups in the pretest. This reveals that the two groups were linguistically equivalent before conducting the study.

B. The Results of the Posttest

At the end of the experiment, the control and experimental groups sat for a posttest to find out whether there was an impact of shadow-reading on students' reading competency. An independent sample t-test was used to find whether there were statistically significant differences between the control and experimental groups, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATION, AND T-TEST RESULTS OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS ON THE POSTTEST.

	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
POSTTEST	Experimental	50	44.76	5.872	5.212	98	.000
	Control	50	35.88	10.434			

Table 2 shows there are statistically significant differences (α= 0.05) between the means of both groups on the post-test, in favor of the experimental group. These results suggest that using shadow-reading improves the reading competence of students better than using the conventional method of reading instruction.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results of the study showed a significant statistical impact of applying shadow-reading on reading comprehension for Jordanian EFL learners. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The study showed that using shadow-reading in the English classrooms improved the students' reading comprehension. The findings of the study were in line with the results of other studies, such as Zarei & Alipour (2020), Babapour et al. (2018), Zarei and Jahanbakhsh (2016), Mohamed (2015), and Sadeghi et al. (2016).

The result of the study is expected because of the positive features of shadow-reading. It is one of the collaborative methods that encourage students to communicate with each other. For example, Kern (2000) claimed that social interaction among students helped students to comprehend the text. Besides, shadow-reading is based on imitation, which is considered a beneficial technique in teaching reading comprehension. Murphey (2000) reported that repetition helped the learners to be controlled by others' language and to control their own language. While using shadowing-reading, the process of learning comprehension becomes more enjoyable because understanding the text is not just a matter of recognizing the words' meaning, but also is related to psychological, social, and cultural functions. Shadow-reading makes the learning environment more pleasant and cooperative, so it motivates the students to easily comprehend the text. Most of the students work in a relaxed way without the fear of committing mistakes because they work in pairs cooperatively.

Another reason why shadow-reading positively affected students' reading comprehension in the current study was the use of the three types of shadow-reading (complete, interactive, and selective shadowing). The reader and the shadower helped each other to understand the text by repeating the same words (complete shadowing), repeating selective words or phrases (selective shadowing), asking questions, making comments, sharing elaborations, and paraphrasing (interactive shadowing). Thus, all levels of text comprehension can be achieved when the readers and shadowers use all three types of shadowing-reading.

By using shadowing-reading, the class was changed from a teacher-centered class to a student-centered class. Therefore, the students as readers and shadowers are more active in the classroom, which improves their learning skills. The role of teachers was changed from lecturers to facilitators and directors. Their job is to guide students to improve their reading skills.

VI. CONCLUSION

The current study explored the impact of the shadow-reading strategy on improving students' reading comprehension. The participants of the study were divided into an experimental group (50 students) and a control group (50 students). The study used a posttest to find out whether the shadow-reading affected the students' reading comprehension positively. The results of the study showed that the students who were taught by using the shadow-reading strategy improved their reading comprehension more than those who were taught by using the traditional method. In other words, the use of the shadow-reading strategy is more effective than the traditional method of teaching reading.

The present study provides many suggestions for learners, researchers, teachers, and syllabus designers. For the English learners who study at university, the researchers encourage them to use effective strategies like shadow-reading to improve their reading comprehension, so teachers need to try it and know how to use it inside the class. In tandem, the teachers should take courses and workshops to learn how to use and practice shadow-reading in their reading classes. Additionally, the syllabus designers and decision-makers should include such strategies while designing reading curricula. Finally, the researchers urged other researchers to conduct similar studies on other populations and collect samples from different contexts to determine whether other students can reap the same benefit from this method.

REFERENCES

[1] Anderson, N. L. (2012). Reading instruction. In A. Burns & J. C. Richards (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to pedagogy and practice in second language teaching* (pp. 218-225). New York: Cambridge University Press.

[2] Babapour, M., Ahangari, S., & Ahour, T (2018). The effect of shadow-reading and collaborative strategic reading on EFL learners' reading comprehension across two proficiency levels. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 13*(4), 318-330. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/17501229.2018.1465059

[3] Commander, M. & Guerrero, M. C. M. de. (2012). Shadow-reading in the ESL classroom: A brief report. *Perspectives, 9*, 8-11.

[4] Commander, M., & Guerrero, M. C. M. de. (2013). Reading as a social interactive process: The impact of shadow-reading in L2 classrooms. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 25*(2), 170-191.
[5] Déjean Le Féal, K. (1997). Simultaneous interpretation with training wheels. *Meta, 42*(4), 616–621.
[6] Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice.* New York: Cambridge University Press.
[7] Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2002). *Teaching and researching reading*. London: Pearson Education.
[8] Kadota, S., & Tamai, K. (2004). *Ketteiban Eigo shadowing* [Shadowing in English]. Tokyo: Cosmopier.
[9] Kern, R. (2000). *Literacy and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[10] Lee, I (2014). EFL Students' Shadow-reading and Written Retelling. *Korean Journal of Applied Linguistics 30*(3), 77-82.
[11] Mohamed, M (2015). Shadow-Reading Strategy for Developing Saudi English as a Foreign Language University Students' Reading Comprehension. *Al-Azhar Journal of Education, 35* (5), 469-494.
[12] Murphey, T. (2000). *Shadowing and Summarizing* [NFLRC Video #11]. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
[13] Murphey, T. (2001). Exploring conversational shadowing. *Language Teaching Research, 5*, 128–155.
[14] Nakanishi, T., & Ueda, A. (2011). Extensive reading and the effect of shadowing. *Reading in a Foreign Language. 23*(1), 1-16.
[15] Sadeghi, E.; Afghari, A. & Zarei, G. (2016). Shadow-Reading Effect on Reading Comprehension: Actualization of Interactive Reading Comprehension: (A Vygotskyan View!). *English Language Teaching, 9*(3). 130-138.
[16] Zarei, A. A. & Alipour, H. (2020). Shadowing and Scaffolding Techniques Affecting L2 Reading Comprehension. *Applied Research on English Language, 9*(1), 53-74.
[17] Zarei, A. & Jahanbakhsh F. (2016). The Effect of Multimedia Instruction and Shadowing on EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension. *Teaching English Language, 10*(2), 73-93

Murad Al Kayed has a PhD in linguistics from the University of Jordan. He is an assistant professor of linguistics at Al Balqa Applied Linguistics. He is interested in many subfields of linguistics, such as psycholinguistics, second and foreign language learning, discourse analysis, pragmatics, and translation.

Muntaha Samardali has M.A in Translation from Yarmouk University-Jordan. She also has a certificate of Teaching English as a Second Language from Columbia University- Teachers College in New York City. She is currently an instructor at Al Balqa Applied University. Her research interests are related to translation, second language teaching, and discourse analysis.

Lama Bani Essa has M.A in Translation from Jordan University of Science and Technology. She is currently an English teacher at the ministry of education in Jordan. Her research interests involve translation, foreign language learning and teaching, and curriculum design.

Rebekah Johnson has an Ed.D. in Applied Linguistics from Teachers College, Columbia University. She is currently an Associate Professor of Linguistics and English as a Second Language at LaGuardia Community College, The City University of New York. Her research interests include discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, second language writing, and technology enhanced language learning.

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
    - Submission of extended version
    - Notification of acceptance
    - Final submission due
    - 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)