

# Journal of Language Teaching and Research

ISSN 1798-4769

Volume 13, Number 6, November 2022

## Contents

---

### REGULAR PAPERS

- Literary and Linguistic Symbols of the Fatal Signs of Death in the Literature of Dino Buzzati  
*Eris Rusi and Manjola Zaçellari* 1139
- Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Higher Education: A Revisitation of EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices  
*Ali Abbas Falah Alzubi, Khaled Nasser Ali Al-Mwzaiji, and Mohd Nazim* 1147
- Bilingual Proficiency Development and Translanguaging Practices of Emergent Korean-English Bilingual Children in Korea  
*Christina D. Jung* 1156
- An Investigation Into the Appropriateness of a Procedural Negotiated Syllabus for Adult Vocational Learners  
*Mohammad A. Assaf, Mohammad I. Zabadi, and Emad A. S. Abu-Ayyash* 1166
- EFL Students' Perceptions of the Effects of the Integration of Reading and Writing on Their Writing Skills  
*Cang T. Nguyen* 1177
- The Effect of Communicative Language Teaching in Test Preparation Course on TOEIC Score of EFL Business English Students  
*Pallapa Lertcharoenwanich* 1188
- The Use of Passive Voice in News Reports for Political Purposes  
*Yazan Shaker Almahameed, Khaleel Bader Al Bataineh, and Raeda Mofid George Ammari* 1196
- Assistive Technology in the English Language Classroom: Reality and Perspectives  
*Jamila Al Siyabi, Victoria Tuzlukova, Khalid Al Kaabi, and Mohammad Hadra* 1203
- Effects of the Instruction With *Liushu* on Mandarin Learners' Chinese Character Achievement and Motivation  
*Qing Li Guo, Fong Peng Chew, and Yin Yin Yeoh* 1211
- Lexical Borrowing of Covid-19 Terminologies in the Indonesian Language  
*Dewa Ayu Kadek Claria, Ketut Artawa, Made Sri Satyawati, and Anak Agung Putu Putra* 1222
- Gender Role of Characters in the Illustrations of Local and Introduced Edition Textbooks of College Portuguese Teaching in China  
*Jiajia Sui* 1232
- Consolidation Through Rebellion in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*  
*Farhadiba H. Khan* 1243
-

Language Learning With Neurolinguistic Programming: An Integrative Review <i>Edhy Rustan</i>	1251
A Bibliometric Analysis on Teaching Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language Outside Mainland China (2001-2020) <i>Siqi Deng and Xiao Xie</i>	1259
EFL Teachers' Practices and Challenges Towards Implementing Critical Thinking Skills Online During Covid-19 Pandemic <i>Nasser Alasmari</i>	1269
Marriage Break-Ups and Its Effect on Children's Future: An Exploration of the Novel <i>Custody</i> <i>Jayajothilakshmi V, Mohan S, and Kannan R</i>	1279
A Corpus-Based Study on the Semantic Use of Reporting Verbs in English Majors' Undergraduate Thesis Writing <i>Yueyue Huang</i>	1287
Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL Teaching: A Sociocognitive Perspective <i>Sami Abdullah Hamdi</i>	1296
The Indonesian Di- Passive and Discourse Contexts <i>I Nyoman Udayana</i>	1304
Interactional Metadiscourse and Author Identity Construction in Academic Theses <i>Guobing Liu and Junlan Zhang</i>	1313
Demotivating Teaching Practices in EFL Classrooms in Saudi Secondary Schools <i>Alhanouf Alharbi and Nashwa Saaty</i>	1324
Deculturalization of Culturally Bound Meaning: Indonesian-English Translation Evidence <i>Ni Wayan Sukarini, Ida Bagus Putra Yadnya, Ida Ayu Made Puspani, and Ni Luh Ketut Mas Indrawati</i>	1332
A Multimodal Ecological Discourse Analysis of Presentation PowerPoint Slides in Business English Class <i>Wenjin Qi and Yutao Hu</i>	1341
Enhancing EFL Learners' Verbal Communication Engagement Through WhatsApp Chat Group's Voice Messages Using Referential and Display Questions <i>Amir Abdalla Minalla</i>	1351
E-Learning and Social Media for ELT — Teachers' Perspective <i>Gayathri Paliath and Marie Evangeline</i>	1357
How do Chinese Antonymous Cognate Words Emerge? A Study From the Perspective of Metonymy and Metaphor <i>Weiwei Pan</i>	1365
EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Reflections on Different Aspects of Teaching in Saudi Arabia: A Preliminary Qualitative Case Study <i>Talal Musaed Alghizzi</i>	1374

# Literary and Linguistic Symbols of the Fatal Signs of Death in the Literature of Dino Buzzati

Eris Rusi

Department of Language and Literature, F.S. Noli University, Korça, Albania

Manjola Zaçellari

Department of Albanian Language, Aleksandër Moisiu University, Durrës, Albania

**Abstract**—In this paper we will try to identify the literary and linguistic symbols of the fatal signs of death, focusing on the concept of "happy death" as a key concept in the literature of Dino Buzzati. The literature of this author passes from the traditional writing to the narrative forms of magical realism, and unfolds an imagination which shows how the reality of this world cannot be separated from the mystery of our daily existence. Also, we will analyse if there is a connection between Buzzati's literary vision and the metaphysical debate on the existence of God. These research questions, aim to highlight the fact that the most obvious novelty of Dino Buzzati's literature should be summarized in the assessment that all the echoes of Death in his works are described with humor and self-irony, ranging from jokes to punitive and apocalyptic sarcasm. Death is shrouded in the allegory of the "receiving the call"; sooner or later it knocks on the door of every human being. Buzzati's literature is precisely the attainment of such a dimension, where art becomes sublime, and it is very hard to define clear lines, between the human existence and what happens after it.

**Index Terms**—magic realism, happy death, God

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fantastic literature and Buzzati's works

In this theoretical framework of fantastic literature, this paper will focus on what is considered one of the essential themes of Dino Buzzati's literature: the theme of death. There is no doubt that the literary universe of Dino Buzzati offers a mysterious vision of the enigmatic punishment that occurs to random people and describes the surrounding labyrinths of daily life. From the hill of the fantastic, Buzzati tries to go up and down every day - night; he gives people the possibility to reflect about crucial issues. Death is a crucial thematic choice for him. Death has different, multiple echoes and each time it sounds differently. It deals with the nuances of the real and the unreal, it is the starting and the ending point of each character.

Dino Buzzati is one of the most famous representatives of magical realism in the Italian literature. His works are an illustration of the coexistence between the real with the unreal world, an expression of contraposition of life with death, of the concrete with the absurd. This is the background where Dino Buzzati explores the dimension of Death and its multiple faces. The fantastic literature, which became a widely used literary language in different parts of the world during the twentieth century, did not aim to significantly expand the concept of reality in order to include another reality, but rather confirmed the epistemological post-modern state in which it leaves open the hypotheses, the confrontation with doubts. This process helps to recognize that the reasons that came from the irrational, from the inner psychological world, should have a central place in overcoming the possible and the real, through the narration with fantastic tendencies.

During the years when theoretical studies on postmodernism began to emerge, McHale (1987) noted that postmodernist aesthetics concluded in itself fantastic, as it was possible to reflect on ontological issues, which for postmodernism occupied a central place as a distinctive element versus modernism. Calvino (1980) explained the renewed interest in this literary genre, underlining how the fantastic literature was the key to decipher the human anxieties associated with the subconscious. "We feel that the fantastic tells us things that directly concern us, though we are less inclined than the readers of the Eighteenth to be lied to or stunned by the phantasmagoria or unexpected performances; here we can enjoy them in another way, as the colorized elements of an era" (p. 5).

The fantastic literature can be considered as an alternative to the real. This literature becomes a necessity; it radicalizes the need of every man to see things that cannot be grasped by the senses of his body. One of the main characteristics of this literature is hesitation which can appear in two forms: hesitation between reality and illusion (we doubt the interpretation we can give to the events we are convinced of), or between reality and imagination. (we wonder if what we perceive is not the fruit of our imagination as readers).

From this point of view, the "fantastic" way of storytelling focuses on some topics where we have the classification of opposite categories between them. Campra (1981) offers such a list that includes the following contradictory categories: concrete / abstract; alive / inanimate; me / the other; present / past / future; here / there, underlining that at

this level “the nature of fantasy lies in proposing a rational scandal, as long as we do not have a substitution of one order for another, but an overlap between them. Hence the feature of dangerousness, the function of annulling - or weakening - the reader's assurances and convictions” (p. 203).

At the moment of crossing or breaking the boundary between the natural and the supernatural, between real time and space and imagined time and space, the reader is transferred beyond the limit: the territories of fantastic remain defined as transient boundaries, as a place that constantly implies the coexistence of opposite views: reality and unreality: coherence and incoherence: of life and death.

Buzzati began to explore this reality with spiritual compassion from a young age with "Barnabo of the Mountains" (1933), and after that he specified it in the wonderful and ruthless allegory of the "Desert of the Tartars". One of the interrogations that are endlessly repeated in the work of Dino Buzzati, refers to the human being: Is man an unpredictable anomaly verified in the arc of the evolutionary process of life or he is the result where evolution should necessarily lead?

This rebus pushes Dino Buzzati to create a universal image of life surrounded by the mysterious, the invisible signs, that can only be perceived and never described in their totality. For this reason, the literary vision of Buzzati refers to the human being as a weak creature, very intelligent, inevitably unhappy, on the edge of the abyss where seemed to be nothing beyond, except death. The theme of death is inseparable in Buzzati's work at different times. On December 1, 1971, in the last diary, Buzzati noted the desire to greet once again “what had been really good with us, that piece of life even if it is gone forever”. And again: “But it's a wonderful day and shortly after Brescia I suddenly saw the pure, supreme mountains of glass shine far away in the north, where never again; dear mirages of when I was a kid remained intact waiting for me”. “It's cold - he adds, - it's the beginning of December, will I have time to see Christmas? (Buzzati, 1985, p. 76)”

These last words that Buzzati wrote while he was alive, describe the writer's deep connection with the riddle of death and the mystery that envelops human existence which can only be overcome by what nature offers to us in silence: the appearance of mountains, the beauty of the silent mountains in the background.

“I wrote a piece once - explains Buzzati, in an interview with Panafieu (1973) - [...] and it was entitled “On the mountains”. There I tried to explain the reason of my passion for the mountain. And the conclusion came that there was first solitude, then immobility, which is found in deserts [...] And then I ended by saying that immobility represents an extreme state of stillness, because man instinctively tends to a state of maximum calm. He struggles all his life to get rich, to make a family, to make a house, to make a position and then remarry and achieve absolute peace. In a certain sense, man instinctively tends to death (p. 49)”.

## II. ANALYSIS

### A. Travels

The short story “The Seven messengers”, which opens the book “Sixty Stories”, conveys the desire to know and to reveal the mysterious secrets of death. It certainly resembles the Kafkaesque tale “The Emperor's Message”, but this story is something more intense, colourful and immediate.

“Having set out to explore my father's kingdom, day by day I go away from the city and the news that reaches me becomes increasingly rare ...” (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 597) -, this is the introduction part of this story. The main character seems to symbolise every human being, each of us, and is ready to advance in the search for the Truth. His journey begins in his kingdom which is under the orders of God, and the latest doesn't facilitate the way at all. There follows a mystical interrogation while walking through the unknown future and then comes the act of sacrificing one's life, in order to hope, one day, to see the borders of the world.

[...] A new hope will draw me even further tomorrow morning, towards those unexplored mountains that the shadows of the night are concealing. Domenico will disappear on the horizon on the other side, to bring my useless message to the distant city (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 601).

The story seems, in miniature, like an allegory of human life. The heir to the throne who decides to explore the kingdom of his father, until he reaches *the extreme* frontier, a frontier where we will never arrive, or rather, that we will reach only with our personal death: it is me, it is you, it is all the people of this world.

The messengers that we send back and who return, first frequently, then more and more rarely, and then at intervals of years and decades, are our memories. They are the bonds that join us with the mythical time of our childhood or in any case, which connect us to our past life. These are the bonds of every man with the surrounding world, which are inexorably loosen from year to year, to the point that the memories and messages that arrive doesn't have any meaning anymore and can no longer be interpreted even when they arrive at their destination.

In the second story of this book, “The assault on the great convoy” the act of waiting is the most important event for the reader. Waiting means changing, and the brigand Gasparre Planetta is someone who has lost the connection with the reality after spending three years in prison. But the time that passes is the meaning of forgetfulness, and there is nothing worse than the feeling that the world has forgotten you or no longer cares for you; in this case you no longer exist, so even though you breathe, you are dead if others do not remember you anymore. If you wait without being able to do anything, means that your existence is flowing away in the river of time. The protagonist of the story has nothing left. A



forgotten man doesn't need even to have a name, an identity, a life. That's why he is no longer even called Gasparre: "[...] So it was with Planetta, now no longer chief brigand, but only Gaspare Planetta, or rather Severino, aged 48, homeless" (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 606).

What is the reaction in front of the mountain that we cannot climb? What is the reaction in the face of happiness? What is the reaction in the face of the impossibility of shedding light on the darkness in which we are locked up? The protagonist of this story locks himself in his imagination and fantasizes, plans something extraordinary. He dreams of making a brilliant attack, as in his glorious times, but the moment the man understands that life cannot be turned back, he feels that everything is an unattainable illusion. That old man, former brigand, has really a great desire for his great return, but the story is only about him, nobody believes it anymore, and so he is killed, but death in this sense is positive. He becomes light, rejuvenates, finds his old companions, the glory of his best days, and goes away, leaving in the air the traces of a nearly twenty-year-old ghost that doesn't look at all like the body covered in blood, lying on the ground, under the eyes of the world.

On the same wavelength, the hospital in the story "Seven floors" is something attractive, and seen from a distance it makes you want to go inside. Then, when someone pushes himself and crosses the hall, everything changes, the river of events can no longer be stopped, the patient Giuseppe Corte understands that there is no more hope for him, it is late, it is not worth thinking about it. It is difficult to imagine a simpler story than this, a parable about death that takes hold of man through a progression of minimal signs. The so-called "inspiration" came to Buzzati while he was in the waiting room of a doctor's office. Looking at a seven-storey building from the window, he imagined the story of a typical patient: who is hospitalized in a clinic for a trivial matter, and after that he is ordered to move down, from floor to floor, up to the terminally ill ward, on the ground floor. Giuseppe Corte begins his descent to death from the seventh floor, but he is not worried at all that he will die soon; the illusion of life is that death happens to the others, but not to ourselves; That's why he protests at the moment when the doctors order him to move from floor to floor. After some time, he gets used to it, but nevertheless he hopes, prays, wants to leave, but everything is useless. Everything is fatal. It is already decided for your life, dear Giuseppe, when you took the first step, to enter in this hospital with seven floors that reminds the several false hopes of life in daily existence: "... He turned his head away, and saw that the sliding shutters, obedient to a mysterious command, closing the way to the light..." (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 636).

"The capote" is another extraordinary story by Buzzati. The protagonist is destined to die, he is almost dead, he is already dead, but this is his secret, only he knows it. Giovanni, the protagonist, returns home pushed from the feeling to embrace for the last time his mother and his brothers. He is a soldier, he is not alive anymore, he has been killed in the battle and he knows that he has to leave (forever) in a while, so he doesn't show himself happy in front of his family. He feels dazed. He does not feel excited from his mother's joy, he is not ready, no, he has not yet learned how to travel in the eternal cold winter of the Night. His mother tells him to take off the capote, but it covers the wounds that prove his death. Under the capote is hidden the unimaginable, the impossible, the fantastic, and this cannot be said in words, cannot be clearly explained, it doesn't need to be publicly demonstrated. It is no surprise that this dead boy came to visit his mother and brothers for the last time, as fantastic literature acknowledges the possibility that the dead and the living people can coexist together at the same place. What is most important in this context has to do with travel. The journey to another world, mysterious, dark, unknown, must be done, there is no salvation. It is a cruel journey, yes, Buzzati makes us feel how sad may sound certain journeys. When one has to leave, he must never let his guard down, the wait is terrible: Come on, hurry up, what are you doing, why do you slide your gaze out the windows, stare at a man who seems to be a shadow, and feel the heart tearing apart inside your chest?! Leave everything, come on you have to go, you've already made Death wait long enough... "He was already at the door. He came out as if transported by the wind. He crossed the garden, almost running, opened the gate, two horses galloped off, under the grey sky, not towards the town, no, but across the prairies, up to the north, towards the mountains. They galloped, galloped ..." (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 664).

But the journey is not always done in silence or when the shadows fall or when no one sees you anymore and you are ready to jump into a new life. The story "One thing that begins with 'L'" offers another way to tell the journey. Death becomes something that is announced, that everyone should know, that everyone must know.

Buzzati almost forces us to stop reading the story, to close the book, while we see that a strong man, a giant named Christoforo Schroder, after being touched from the announced death, loses everything, his power, his voice, his future, his movements. Everything he can do is to lower his head and to accept the fatality. But is it possible that all men are condemned like him? That we too are forced to carry on a disease, which is life itself? And to be honest, what did the poor merchant do?! A useless sin, a little push without even thinking about the leper patient who attacked him with the disease. His death becomes a spectacle for the readers. "The square was large, long to cross. With a stiff gesture, he was now shaking the bell which gave a clear and festive sound; den, den" (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 691).

This philosophy of life and death seems to offer to the reader a simple but not superficial approach to the small everyday world, where the geography of places and souls interacts with the melancholy of memories, in an ironic and evocative narrative. In all this context, the events and thoughts emerging from Dino Buzzati's narrative appear elusive and tinged with mystery.

## B. God

There is no shortage of writings where Buzzati questions his characters whether God exists or not. The answer is

always painful, everyone who dares to ask about this, sooner or later dies. Everything is absurd, life seems useless and the harder you try to keep your eyes open to see something unusual, the more you don't want to hope to see something again. Everyone surrenders, in front of the Great Gate. If there is a God, he is not necessarily as we have dreamed of Him, He is not as our parents, or the parish priest of the neighbourhood church, or our uncles have described Him time after time.

Otherwise, why so much suffering, why we don't find Our God to help us when we really need Him? One, then, who during all his life is looking for at least one sign and finds nothing beyond the confines of his existence, is angry, raises his tone; it is a similar reality with that described from Buzzati, regarding the situation of a group of German soldiers, trapped during the Second World War in Siberia, destined to die: "There are those who write to their priest, a Protestant pastor, with desperate sarcasm (" God did not show himself when my heart cried out to him. The houses were destroyed, the comrades were as heroic and as cowardly as I am. On earth there was hunger and murder and bombs and fire fell from the sky. Only God was not there. No, father, there is no God. I write it again and I know it is a terrible thing and irreparable for me. And if there really must be a God, he is only with you, in the psalms and in the prayers, in the pious words of priests and shepherds, in the sound of bells and in the perfume of incense. But in Stalingrad, no" (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 1411).

In the same text, we find another sincere testimony of someone dying alone, without God by his side:

I cannot be made to believe that comrades die with the words 'Deutschland!' or 'Heil Hitler!' on their lips. You die, yes, you can't deny it; but the last word is for your mother, or for the dearest person, or it's just a cry for help (Carnazzi, 1998, p. 1414).

Buzzati tries to make us reflect about this matter, but how did he behave, faced with the same puzzles, which he previously proposed to his characters?

In 1971, at the Circolo della Stampa in Milan, during the presentation of his last collection of short stories "The difficult nights", a priest, Ernesto Pisoni, who was his friend from many years, asked the author, even with imprudence, some final questions. He asked him abruptly if, after the long insistence of his pages around the indecipherable purpose of existence, he suspected a justifying transcendence: did he believe in God and in the hereafter?

With a weak and clear voice, Dino Buzzati denied it. He reaffirmed his agnostic position. The God of believers was an image he had lost from his youth. He rejected the idea of an afterlife that envisaged both the concept of a reward or a punishment.

This answer was given a few months after the fatal conclusion of his illness, of that "subtle, mysterious and rare disease - as Buzzati wrote ironically from the clinic to Gene Pampaloni - whose last case certainly ascertained dates back to the Gergonid dynasty (Fontanella, 1982, p. 68)". But even earlier, speaking with Panafieu, Buzzati had an unsuspected idea regarding this matter:

"God is an absurd, cruel, unjust thing. It is absurd that someone brings me into the world, creates me and then punishes me, if I behave badly..." (Panafieu, 1973, p. 94).

The author torments himself and trembles as soon as he begins to formulate answers: the anxiety of time, the Gnostic intention to consider the world and reality as a dream of which we are prisoners, a perplexed candour in inserting in the architecture of the visible, in the beloved and tortured appearances that surround us, "tenuous interstices of absurdity", in order to reassure us that everything is over.

However, Dino Buzzati did not hesitate to declare to Panafieu that he considered himself "overall a Christian man": "I believe I am a deeply moral man and I accept the Kantian imperative to behave as if the principle of all our actions can become the general norm" (Panafieu, 1973, p. 95).

The presence of a religious question does not necessarily presuppose a profession of faith: it is sufficient to provoke that deepening of the moral life which gives rise to the compassion for every living creature. Buzzati reconnect the reader with that piety which, imbued with an inseparable metaphysical value, disposes us to a spiritual consonance with everything that surrounds us. And this never extinguished ember of piety and participation is the reason that made him one day affirm that the face of his dog, of his boxer "Napoleone", was for him an irrefutable proof of the existence of God.

Porzio, in the text "Religious question mark in the work of Dino Buzzati", noted:

There is no doubt that Buzzati's narrative literature contains the anxiety of the time, the gnostic purpose of considering the world and reality as a dream where we are imprisoned, while we continue to insert inside the architecture of the obvious, 'constant particles of absurdity' that can comfort us that everything is false (Fontanella, 1982, p. 71).

This feeling and anxiety of the time that seems to engulf everything, both fear and religious belief, the desire to live and the insecurity of life, seems to be characteristic of Dino Buzzati's creative vision. In those occasions where the writer cannot find the image of God, it must be invented or proclaimed. On the other hand, when the pain from heaven injustices is great, unbearable, the monument of God must be questioned, challenged, rejected. This literary process doesn't allow to see the clear image that hides behind the sky, but creates the assumption that there for sure must be something up there.

### C. Death

"But we, who need / so great mysteries, - how many times from mourning / blissful progress blossoms - could we

ever be / we, without the dead?" (Destro, 1978, p.7), asks R.M. Rilke in his poem "The Duino elegy".

There is something in the novel of Dino Buzzati "The Desert of the Tartars", a painful echo, like a consciousness that around us (always and when we are less ready to fight and we want a truce) emerge to the surface holes of an enormous dimension which swallow our desire to live, to fight, to raise our voices, even in the nights of winter when the moon and stars are covered from silence. It seems that we are the characters of the Desert! Death... we always say this word when we finish reading the book. It is all so strange, we repeat it and if we want, we begin to memorize the movements of the haunted shadows.

This novel shows a precise model that marks the obligatory passage of human life. Our dreams, our desire to be, our intrigues and the lies we repeat every morning, help to give us greater importance to the final goal.

Giovanni Drogo's initiation takes place when he takes responsibility for his own existence, and understands that he has passed the border of his naive childhood without realizing it. One understands, then, that there is nothing in the real world that reminds you of the dreams you had as a child.

"Giovanni Drogo noticed - the best time, the early youth, was probably over. Drogo stared into the mirror, he saw a broken smile on his face, which he had tried in vain to love" (Buzzati, 1945, p. 7).

He realizes, before leaving, that it's all over. It seems that Drogo is walking towards his destiny, aware that he has no longer a chance to return. Is it life that shows us the way to death? We may attribute to this initial journey the Drogo's desire to see something unusual. And indeed, the fortress is his grave. He finds himself in this great mausoleum, with soldiers, guards, night shifts inside, and begins to savour the taste of a great event, in a great stronghold, made on purpose to honour his end and his burial. The grave of a great man must be gigantic, and this fascinates Drogo's desire to remain in the fortress for years and years. He wants to have at least a decent ending.

The narration follows a cyclic time that always is oriented through the same path. The act of waiting in this sense is absurd, like death itself. Everyone expects for the arrival of the enemies, for the Tartars who will one day come down from the north. The atmosphere offers an absurd version of the man who, not knowing what awaits him, waits for his end without lifting an eye. But can be considered wasted the life of a man who awaits his glory, for a lifetime, and when it is his turn to die, he does so without whispering a single lament?

The Bastiani fortress is a surreal place where men, aware of their strength, intend to wait for moments of glory. Young Drogo, however, is determined to stay in this isolated place. His desire to continue his duty means that it is impossible for someone already marked by death to be able to do something to change the order of future events.

An itinerary takes place in the Desert that leads to a test and the revelation of a destiny. But the novelty lies in an acquisition of human awareness, in a deepening of existential themes. There is a tragic seriousness that appears dictated by a more mature life experience; it is a content of intimate suffering which, however, is projected into a story of strong symbolic power and universal resonance. The story of Giovanni Drogo is nothing more than the parable of human existence consumed in waiting, dominated by repetitive gestures and daily habits, by a code in which one deludes oneself to find the meaning of one's life. Drogo hears the voice of his companions, but is enchanted by the charm of the mystery that awaits him. He learns by heart the role of dying in everyday life. There is no actor who does not try to play this highly successful "comedy" at least once. We think of great applause, the stage covered with flowers coming from the stands, an immense crowd, enthusiastic about what was shown on stage ... These and others, the signs of ruin...

Metempsychosis or the power to return to a circle where everything can be rearranged to the same order of many years ago, is a risk that makes us try to live the same days, without showing a sign of weakness. Ultimately it is a slow death monitored, step by step, by sudden thoughts. Loneliness or the desert of lost souls:

"What a sad mistake, Drogo thought, perhaps everything is like this, we believe that around there are creatures similar to us and instead there is only frost, stones that speak a foreign language, we are about to greet our friend but the smile goes out, because we realize that we are completely alone" (Buzzati, 1945, p.76).

One who lives in the Bastiani fortress is already dead, he has no possibility of redeeming himself in real life, and he puts everything back in the hands of Time. Through this point of view, everything is about waiting the death. If the Tartars arrive one day, one must die in combat, gritting his teeth and struggling to kill the unknown enemies of the north. Death always should happen with a smile on the lips. The most important fact, then, is that as soon as you see the footprints of death, everyone becomes more courageous and willing to challenge the last hour.

Drogo decides to stay. It no longer makes sense to return to the common world of the living, to the city where people fight for daily bread. Time has already made the necessary path, no one remembers him anymore. A return to his home, in the life he had before, is almost a foregone disappointment:

- Good night, mom, - and he continued almost pacified towards his room, when he realized that she too was speaking. - What have you got mom? - he asked in the vast silence. At the same instant he knew he had mistaken the roll of a distant carriage for her dear voice. In truth, his mother had not answered, his son's nocturnal footsteps could no longer awaken him as they once did, they had become like strangers, as if their sound had changed over time (Buzzati, 1945, p. 107).

The desert highlights the absurd condemnation of a soldier, forced to remain trapped in an uncomfortable place, where death is expected.

You are forced to stay in your footsteps, dear Drogo, the others have gotten away with it, sleep better than you are! See the lies your superiors have told you. Nothing to do, you lower your eyes and try not to feel anything! You don't

move from here.

Who are the Tatars? Will there ever come a day? Nobody believes it anymore. It would be absurd for someone to show up on the pretext of making a war! The absurd journey does not allow the only consolation to an existence wasted in a useless wait. The dream must end before waking up. Man, the sinner, is condemned not to see and not to touch the promised fruits.

### III. DISCUSSION

Dino Buzzati has lived all the time with the mysterious anguish of death. Marked by the loss of his father when he was still a boy, the idea of death grows and consolidates in him. He does nothing but go forward step by step, pushed into the unknown by mysterious energies, trying to counter the silence with the desire to find a precise answer. He follows his destiny, concentrated in a mad struggle, in a battle with unknown forces, supernatural phenomena, among shadows that travel to all corners of the earth, and put an end to human existence, chosen by pure chance. As cited by Fontana, Vigorelli figured out about this issue: "Analysing a writer like Buzzati, a writer made up of problems, obsessions, manias, a writer who talks about God and tries to hide Him, a writer who always comes to terms with a reality that usually Italian writers try to hunt even in an aggressive way - even the vilest people become courageous in chasing death because they are afraid of it - here we found ourselves in front of a writer who, in any case, tells stories to challenge our perception about death. That was his real obsession, the fear of death and not waiting for death ..." (Fontanella, 1982, p. 83).

Death is the birthplace of Buzzati's allegory, of his inner majesty. The dynamism and almost morbid intensity of discovering and unravelling the mystery of death was accentuated in everyday life, in painting, in literature, in his musical texts and in his poems. His literature benefited from this tendency. Buzzati sees Death everywhere. Thus a short story like "Fear at the Scala", stands as an opposing example to the problem of death, where are established two categories of persons and souls: those who do not realize their own impending mortality, and the "others", who foresee the final moment as the end of every pathos, of every worldly laceration.

Death is no longer part of the reality we live in every day; it doesn't characterize only the reality we accept and submit to as if it were merely an essential part of human or human existence. In a perspective where reality is overpassed, Death becomes a place of pilgrimage, it becomes the Meaning of Meanings. The perception about Death is combined with the anguish of time that passes. It is followed from messages arrived from distant borders and its presence underlies the mystery of existence. To those who criticized his anguished way of always saying the same things, Buzzati replied:

[...] But all writers and artists in their lives, however long it may be, say only one thing! Some with great breath, some with thin breath, but they are always identical to themselves. Of course. Otherwise, they would not be sincere. The style, moreover, by which the personality of a writer stands out does not imply a certain uniformity or rather univocity? And then, why these absurd claims against us who write? There are very famous painters whom for their entire existence have done nothing but paint exactly the same landscape, the same identical plain life, the same identical figures. And no one finds nothing to complain about with painters. Why this difference? (Buzzati, 1980, p. 115).

We already underlined that fantastic literature can be defined as literary manner where the fictional world is regulated by laws (that avoid reality) which the reader accepts from the beginning, thus avoiding any kind of internal contradiction. This connection is built on a stable graph where the coordinates are determined by the fantastic, the wonderful and the unreal, which have been and are the necessary elements for the materialization of the creative imagination.

Following these considerations, we can say that Buzzati obsessively treats the theme of death in his creativity, maintaining an escalating tension between false and real world. He chooses the voluntary characters "beyond the waves of time", who slowly encounter the unreal world, the mysterious and tragic side of life where the fantastic world is projected. This world is painted with elements that introduce you to a dark reality, without edge, without shape, without space, without time, without the laws of the everyday life. This frame encourages the reader to enter in a world where it is difficult to distinguish, time and space, but everyone should follow the instinct of the narrator. We have thus a combination of the vision of life with the vision of death, but also an imagination and a transfiguration of situations and characters.

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This study was focused on the literary work of Dino Buzzati and his narrative journey through allegories and parables from human anxiety in everyday life, to the mystery of death. Buzzati is an extraordinary man that knows how to tell extraordinary stories. Throughout his life, he did not surrender to the challenge of making incredible events "explode" in the pages of his books, with an almost grotesque ease, as if to say: It is not finished, don't worry, now comes the best!

The reader wonders if what is happening in the book can happen or not and in reality. This sort of literature while dealing with the unknown, with death, with the mystery that surrounds it, encourages the reader to reflect on

fundamental issues that have to do with the existence of every human being. These multiple echoes of death give to the literature of Dino Buzzati an international dimension that surpasses the boundaries of the Italian literature. By dealing with incredible themes, he manages to make us take our attention away from the usual question of how is this possible? ..., and makes us feel involved in extraordinary events because in reality, the true miracle, as Buzzati suggests, is life itself. The analogies and allegories bring to the fore his art sophistication. The author strikes reality against traditional symbols and tries to liberate it, to discover what is hidden behind the mystery of things, behind the mystery of life, in the behaviors of people, in the darkness of Death. It seems as if the mission of the writer Dino Buzzati is not to rework the prevailing reality, but to shake that reality.

We have the real, the surreal, the magical realism, the psychological realism in his books, and the author manages the linear time, the cyclic time, the total time inside his texts. We have the connection between life and death, as if the keys of this earthly miracle are not something extraordinary, but are commonly found in the actions and perception of the characters. It seems like this sort of literature should challenge and precede the norms of an ordinary, traditional life. These elements, the perfect artistic and aesthetic essence, make Buzzati's literature a beautiful prose, created through narrative, rhetorical and stylistic techniques, which testifies a high literary level.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Buzzati, D. (1942). *I sette messaggeri*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [2] Buzzati, D. (1945). *Il deserto dei Tartari*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [3] Buzzati, D. (1949). *Paura alla Scala*. Milano: Mondadori.
- [4] Buzzati, D. (1950). In quel preciso momento. Venezia. Neri Pozza.
- [5] Buzzati, D. (1957). *Il crollo della Baliverna*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [6] Buzzati, D. (1960). *Il grande ritratto*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [7] Buzzati, D. (1975). *Siamo spiacenti di...* Milano. Mondadori.
- [8] Buzzati, D. (1985). *Il reggimento parte all'alba*. Milano. Frassinelli.
- [9] Buzzati, D. & Carnazzi, G. (1998). *Opere scelte*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [10] Calvino, I. (1980). *Una pietra sopra*. Torino. Einaudi.
- [11] Campa, R. (1981). *Il fantastico: una isotopia della trasgressione*. "Strumenti critici" XV. Torino.
- [12] Crotti, I. (1977). *Dino Buzzati*. Firenze. La Nuova Italia.
- [13] Fontanella, A. (1982). *Dino Buzzati*. Firenze. Olschki.
- [14] Le Noci, G. (1974). *Il pianeta Buzzati*. Milano. Edizioni Apollinaire.
- [15] McHale, B. (2003). *Postmodernist fiction*. London and New York. Routledge.
- [16] Mignone, M. B. (1981). *Anormalità e angoscia nella narrativa di Dino Buzzati*. Ravenna. Longo.
- [17] Panafieu, Y. (1973). *Dino Buzzati: un autoritratto*. Milano. Mondadori.
- [18] Porzio, D. (1982). *L'interrogazione religiosa nell'opera di Dino Buzzati*. *Dino Buzzati*. Firenze. Olschki.
- [19] Rilke, R. M. (2006). *Elegie duinesi* (Vol. 2188). Milano. Feltrinelli Editore.



**Eris Rusi** was born in Korça, Albania in 1983. He got the Bachelor degree in Literature, from La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy, in 2005, a Magisterial Degree in Text, Linguistics and Literature from La Sapienza University of Rome, Italy in 2007, a Second Master's degree in Editing and Communication, Specialized Institute in Training Development Communication "Comunika" Palombi Editore, Rome, Italy in 2009 and a Doctorate degree in Literature studies from Tirana University in 2015.

He is a full-time lecturer at the University "Fan S. Noli" of Korça. He has more than 12 years of extensive experience on literature issues; Albanian Literature, Comparative Literature, Foreign Literature. He is a member of Albanian Young Academy, connected with Academy of Science in Albania. He is the president of the Writers' Club "New World" in Korça, Albania. He has published eight books of short stories and two novels being awarded national prizes for his creativity. He is a well-known translator from English and Italian

into Albanian language and has translated several literary books from English and Italian into Albanian language.

#### Publications:

- [1] Rusi, E. (2013). The Metaphysics of Possible Worlds in the Narrative of Fatos Kongoli. Publisher: Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences MCSER Publishing Rome-Italy, Vol 4 No 9 October 2013, E-ISSN 2039-2117 ISSN 2039-9340
- [2] Rusi, E. (2017). The Man, the Artist and the Spectator in Pirandello's Work. Publisher: "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University Press. Acta Iassyensia Comparationis AIC Nr.20 2/2017 ISSN (online) 2285 – 3871
- [3] Kodhel, E. & Rusi, E. (2021) Discourse on Europe and the European Identity of Albanians. *Balkanistic Forum* 21 ol.3 Print ISSN: 1310-3970

#### Translations:

- [1] Rusi, E. (2016). *Le notti difficili*. Dino Buzzati. Ombra GVG
- [2] Rusi, E. (2017). *La congiura dei potenti* – Carlo Martigli - Ombra GVG
- [3] Rusi, E. (2019). *Tiger! Tiger!* – Mochtar Lubis - Ombra GVG

Dr Rusi has participated in several teaching mobility experiences as follows: ERASMUS + at Aristotle University of Thessaloniki\Department of Italian language and literature Teaching mobility about Italian literature and translation studies at IASI University (Romania) and at Porto University (Portugal). Dr. Rusi has more than 8 years' experiences in consultancy as legal advisor for CSOs and he also has an extensive experience in Text editing for Publishing Houses in Albania.



**Manjola Zaçellari** was born in Korca, Albania in 21/05/1983. She got a Bachelor degree in Languages and Literature from Tirana University, Albania in 2005, a Master of Science degree in Linguistics from Tirana University, Albania in 2009, a Doctorate degree in Linguistics from Academy of Albanological Studies, Albania 2014 and a Master of science degree in Civil Law from Wisdom College University, Albania, 2020-2022.

Dr. Manjola 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] Zaçellari, M. (2015). Conceptual fields in Albanian phraseology. Publisher: Naimi, ISBN: 978-9928-109-90-3, 311 pages (monograph)
- [2] Zaçellari, 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] Lauwers, G. Zaçellari, 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. 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.

# Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Higher Education: A Revisitation of EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

Ali Abbas Falah Alzubi

English Department, College of Languages and Translation, Najran University, Najran, Saudi Arabia

Khaled Nasser Ali Al-Mwzaiji\*

English Department, PY, Najran University, Najran, Saudi Arabia

Mohd Nazim

English Department, College of Languages and Translation, Najran University, Najran, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—Assessment is a key component of the educational spectrum and engages teachers in evaluating students' performance through various methods. During the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers employed various assessment methods through the online mode of teaching and learning; now, at the beginning of the end of the pandemic, teachers are back to practicing offline assessment methods. This study identifies English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' perceptions of online versus offline assessment methods in higher education. Furthermore, it targets the best skill-wise assessment methods and constraints that teachers can use when applying EFL assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes. To achieve the study objectives, a descriptive-diagnostic approach was applied; the data were collected from 61 EFL teachers through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings show that EFL teachers perceive assessment methods in the online mode of learning as being of a medium level of utility, whereas they perceive assessments in the offline mode of learning as being highly useful. Furthermore, statistically significant differences were found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in offline and online modes of learning; the teachers perceived assessments as being significantly more useful in the offline mode of learning. It was also found that the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode are issues of cheating and impersonation, insufficient exposure to information technology, and lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools. In the offline learning mode, the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods are a lack of awareness of assessment methods and classroom management. In light of these new findings, a set of recommendations is suggested for further research.

**Index Terms**—EFL, teachers' perceptions, assessment, online/offline learning, higher education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Assessment measures the competence level of a learner in any educational setting, and English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers are no exception. In the EFL context, assessments measure the ability of a learner to use the target language. Language assessment is therefore important because it helps teachers decide how to approach the teaching and learning process (Oz & Atay, 2017). Inbar-Lourie (2017) has argued that the way language assessment is performed must be varied to encourage a more formative understanding. Teachers use various methods and practices to assess their learners' performance. The assessment methods commonly practiced in EFL classes include, but are not limited to, discussions, questions, assignments, presentations, quizzes, observation, portfolios, journals, projects, and peer assessment. The overuse of traditional assessment methods and the evaluation of micro-skills is a trending pattern in language teachers' practice. This was demonstrated in a series of studies by Frodden et al. (2004) which reported that teachers tend to employ quizzes as they are practical assessment tools. Similar results were found in López and Bernal (2009) and Cheng et al. (2004). These studies were conducted exclusively to investigate teachers' perceptions of language assessment in either offline or online modes of learning. The present study therefore aims to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and practice of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. It identifies EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods, and aims to determine the best skill-wise assessment methods while discovering the constraints that teachers face when applying EFL assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes. This study is intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education.

---

\* Corresponding Author.

2. To investigate any significant differences in EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods.
3. To determine the most widely-practiced EFL skill-wise online and offline assessment methods from the teachers' point of view.
4. To explore the constraints EFL teachers face when they apply online and offline assessment methods.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

EFL teachers' assessment practices are a common subject of discussion among English language teaching (ELT) practitioners. Teachers employ various assessment-related methods and practices in their classrooms. The Covid-19 situation forced teachers to employ a variety of new assessment methods, and now, at the beginning of the end of the pandemic, teachers have returned to practicing offline assessment methods in their classrooms. Al-Samiri (2021) in the context of the Covid-19 situation in Saudi Arabia, reports that "in a brief timeframe, the whole country began the transition to remote learning platforms, whether it was broadcast on particular channels or shared online ventures like Telegram, Zoom, Teams, WebEx, and Blackboard" (p. 148). Bailey et al. (2015) asserted that shifting assessment from an offline mode to an online one is difficult because "the temptation or commonly used approach is to mirror face-to-face strategies and practices" (p. 112). In an online mode of learning, the term 'online formative assessment' is defined as an assessment in which students use online tools to assess themselves (Yilmaz et al., 2020). Yoestara et al. (2020) explored how prospective English teachers felt about using online assessment methods. However, the perception of these instructors was based on their knowledge, not on how it was used in the classroom. The current study fills an important research gap: very few studies have been conducted on teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment practices. It is essential to identify teachers' views on online formative assessments in order to find ways to make necessary and additional improvements (Remmi & Hashim, 2021). In the context of ESL and EFL tertiary-level classrooms, many studies have been conducted to understand teachers' assessment practices (Cheng et al., 2004; Cheng & Wang, 2007; Cumming, 2001). In the same context, Brookhart and Durkin (2003) were of the opinion that extending research on classroom-based assessment to the university context is of vital importance as fair assessment practices can enhance learners' motivation. Sikka et al. (2007) investigated teachers' beliefs and their use of assessments. The findings marked a need for inclusion and use of various assessment practices in faculty professional development programs. Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003) investigated the assessment procedures of 297 instructors across a range of subject areas and teaching levels, as well as how they perceived the relationship between teaching experience and measuring training. The findings of this study revealed an increase in the variety of objective-type questions used in classroom assessments along with a rising concern for assessment quality due to its association with high performance levels. There were also differences in teachers' assessment practices in relation to content areas. Sahinkarakas (2012) explored the role of teaching experience in teachers' opinions of language assessment. In this study, Sahinkarakas asked language instructors with different levels of teaching experience to define 'language assessment' using a metaphor. Then, she examined the metaphors and categorized them into themes. Four main themes were revealed: assessment as 1) a formative tool, 2) a summative tool, 3) something agitating, and 4) a sign of self-efficacy. Mertler (1998) conducted a study to explore teachers' assessment practices in the state of Ohio and see whether they used traditional or alternative types of assessment in their classrooms. Six hundred and twenty-five K-12 teachers from various grade levels and with different levels of experience participated in the study. The findings show that teachers' assessment procedures vary significantly depending on their level of experience and their backgrounds at different educational levels. These findings highlight the importance of addressing the real assessment procedures and knowledge requirements of instructors at the various grade levels. Shim (2009) used questionnaires and interviews to examine teachers' opinions and regular tasks with regard to classroom-based English language assessment. The results of the study indicate that teachers did not put some of the assessment methods into practice, despite being aware of these assessment methods. In addition, assessment was affected by other factors that the teachers had no control over, like classroom size, student strength, heavy teaching loads, issues relating to the central administrative office of the education system, and a lack of funds for foreign language teaching. Muñoz et al. (2012) studied 62 Colombian teachers' beliefs about student assessments; the findings reveal a gap in the perceptions and practices of the teachers which must be bridged through teacher training programs. The present study, however, was carried out with the aim of identifying and diagnosing EFL teachers' perceptions and practice of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. To achieve the objectives of the current study, the following research questions were framed.

### Research Questions

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education?
2. Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning?
3. What are the most practiced online and offline assessment methods in skill-wise terms from the teachers' points of view?
4. What constraints do EFL teachers face when applying online and offline assessments methods?

## III. METHODOLOGY



### A. Research Design

The current study investigates and diagnoses EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. The researchers applied a descriptive-diagnostic approach.

### B. Population and Sample of the Study

The study was applied to EFL teachers at Najran University, Saudi Arabia. The population of the study included (N= 85) male and female teachers at the College of Languages and Translation, Preparatory Year Deanship, Applied College who teach English as a foreign language for several purposes, including English for special purposes, general English and English for academic purposes. The EFL teachers held Bachelor's, Master's degrees, and doctorate degrees. They came from different backgrounds and were of different nationalities: Saudi Arabian, Jordanian, Indian, Pakistani, Sudanese, Yemeni, Cameroonian, and Egyptian. In addition, their levels of teaching experience (measured in years) varied.

The researchers administered the study instrument to all EFL teachers at Najran University (N= 85) in the 2021–2022 academic year. The electronic link to the instrument (the questionnaire) was shared with the study population through mail and WhatsApp. The link remained available for two weeks. The collected responses reached N=61, or 71.8% of the study population. Table 1 shows the distribution of the study sample according to gender and years of teaching experience.

TABLE 1  
STATISTICS OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Category		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	34	55.7
	Female	27	44.3
	Total	61	100.0
Years of experience	1-5	22	36.1
	6-10	21	34.4
	Above 10	18	29.5
	Total	61	100.0

Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Consent was acquired at the beginning of the electronic questionnaire. The population were asked to confirm that their participation was voluntary, and that their completion of the questionnaire entailed that they had agreed to participate in the study. Furthermore, they were assured that the data would be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes related to the current study.

### C. Study Instrument

The study instrument included a closed-item questionnaire. This was developed based on a review of the relevant literature. It covered the assessment methods used to assess students' EFL learning in offline and online modes of learning. Ten assessment methods were included (discussion, questioning, observation, presentation, journals, quizzes, portfolios, peer assessment, projects and assignments). Moreover, the questionnaire included other sections on the most widely-used EFL skill-wise assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes.

### D. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 EFL teachers from among those who had completed the questionnaire. Each participant was asked at the end of the closed-item questionnaire whether they were willing to participate in an interview. The interview questions targeted two main points: constraints on the application of EFL assessment methods in online and offline classrooms and suggestions for overcoming those constraints. The interviewees who had volunteered for interviews were contacted immediately after the completion of the closed-item questionnaire. After arranging the details of the date, time and place of the interviews, the male interviewees (N= 9) were met in-person in their offices whereas interviews with the female participants (N=3) were conducted by telephone. The interview questions were pre-prepared and validated; however, the interviewees were given some liberty to ask questions and elaborate on their answers wherever possible. Each interview lasted ten minutes, on average. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

### E. Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire and the semi-structured interview responses were verified by measuring face validity through a panel of judges (N= 6). The judges checked whether the instruments could measure what they were intended to. Furthermore, they checked issues related to wording and language. The judges approved the initial versions of the instruments, and their suggestions concerning amendments, rearrangements, and the merging and rewriting of some items were considered. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated after administering it to a pilot sample (N= 20). Cronbach's alpha was then calculated: a value of 0.87 was achieved. Accordingly, the instrument was considered valid and appropriate to the objectives of the study.

### F. Statistical Processing

A number of tests were used to analyze the collected data. The data for the first research question *What are EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education?* was computed using means, standard deviations and ranks. The second research question *Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning?* was answered using a paired-samples t-test. The third research question *What are the most practiced online and offline assessment methods in skill-wise terms from the teachers' points of view?* was answered using frequencies and percentages. The fourth question *What constraints do EFL teachers face when applying online and offline assessments methods?* was answered using content analysis. The respondents' answers to the interview questions were studied and categorized according to some emerging themes. Finally, a grading system was used to grade the five-point Likert scale as follows: 1–1.80 = very low, 1.80–2.60 = low, 2.60–3.40 = medium, 3.40–4.20 = high, 4.20–5 = very high.

## IV. RESULTS

### A. Results for the First Research Question: What Are EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Higher Education?

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations and ranks of EFL teachers' responses on using online or offline assessment methods in higher education.

TABLE 2  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF EFL TEACHERS' RESPONSES ON USING ASSESSMENT METHODS ONLINE AND OFFLINE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mode of learning	Item	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Rank	Level
Online	I find <u>discussion</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	2.93	1.209	9	Medium
Offline			4.36	.484	5	Very high
Online	I find <u>questioning</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.43	1.087	4	High
Offline			4.44	.592	1	Very high
Online	I find <u>assignments</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.31	1.232	6	Medium
Offline			4.33	.724	6	Very high
Online	I find <u>presentation</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.67	1.028	2	High
Offline			4.07	.873	8	High
Online	I find <u>quizzes</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.72	1.019	1	High
Offline			4.38	.582	4	Very high
Online	I find <u>observation</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	2.60	1.359	10	Medium
Offline			4.43	.499	2	Very high
Online	I find <u>portfolios</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.10	1.012	7	Medium
Offline			4.05	.384	9	High
Online	I find <u>journals</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.57	1.040	3	High
Offline			3.57	.884	10	High
Online	I find <u>projects</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.08	1.201	8	Medium
Offline			4.08	.822	7	High
Online	I find <u>peer assessment</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.34	1.413	5	Medium
Offline			4.30	.782	5	Very high
Online	Total	61	3.28	.819		Medium
Offline			4.20	.429		High

Table 2 shows that EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in the online mode of learning were, on average, at a 'medium' level ( $M=3.28$ ,  $SD= 0.819$ ). Participants' responses varied from 'medium' to 'high' and were not homogenous, as indicated by the relatively high standard deviations. The utility of quizzes and presentations was perceived as 'high' ( $M = 3.72$ ,  $3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.019$ ,  $1.028$ , respectively). However, EFL teachers perceived the utility of observation and discussion as 'medium' when assessing their students online ( $M = 2.93$ ,  $2.60$ ,  $SD = 1.209$ ,  $1.359$ , respectively).

Table 2 shows that EFL teachers' perceived the utility of assessment methods in the offline mode of learning as 'high' ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 0.429$ ). These results indicate that EFL teachers find offline assessment methods to be more useful than online assessment methods. The participants' responses varied from 'high' to 'very high' and were homogenous, as indicated by the low standard deviations. Questioning and observation were perceived as the most useful assessment methods, with a 'very high' response on average ( $M = 4.44$ ,  $4.43$ ,  $SD = 0.592$ ,  $0.499$ , respectively). However, portfolios and journals were perceived by EFL teachers as the least useful method of assessing their students offline ( $M = 4.05$ ,  $3.57$ ,  $SD = .384$ ,  $.884$ , respectively).

### B. Results for the Second Research Question: Is There Any Significant Difference Between EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment Methods in Online and Offline Modes of Learning?

Table 3 depicts the results of the paired samples t-test to check for any significant differences between the EFL teachers' perceptions of using assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning.

TABLE 3  
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST STATISTICS

Pair	Mean	N	Std. deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Online	3.28	61	.819	-10.622-	60	.000
Offline	4.20	61	.429			

As Table 3 shows, there were statistically significant differences between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning: the study sample's responses were significantly in favor of the utility of assessments in the offline learning mode. These results can be attributed to the EFL teachers' relatively lower level of experience in the online mode of learning: because of its novelty, they were not familiar with it, and had not received enough exposure to online learning tools. They therefore encountered difficulties when using them. A complete transfer to teaching and learning online was urgently necessary due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and therefore neither teachers nor students were fully ready for the experiment.

*C. Results for the Third Research Question: What Are the Most Practiced Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Skill-Wise Terms From the Teachers' Points of View?*

The researchers extracted the frequencies and percentages of the study sample's responses on EFL assessment methods, which were based on the four skills of the English language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in both online and offline modes of learning. Table 4 shows the results.

TABLE 4  
SKILL-WISE ASSESSMENT METHODS IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE LEARNING MODES

Skill	Online								Offline							
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Assessment	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%
Discussion	34	0.56	39	0.64	23	0.38	14	0.23	36	0.59	45	0.74	49	0.80	31	0.51
Questioning	35	0.57	42	0.69	35	0.57	22	0.36	41	0.67	38	0.62	46	0.75	37	0.61
Assignments	29	0.48	23	0.38	28	0.46	42	0.69	23	0.38	19	0.31	30	0.49	38	0.62
Presentation	19	0.31	35	0.57	22	0.36	29	0.48	23	0.38	30	0.49	26	0.43	22	0.36
Quizzes	42	0.69	29	0.48	39	0.64	39	0.64	39	0.64	35	0.57	39	0.64	41	0.67
Observation	22	0.36	20	0.33	24	0.39	10	0.16	35	0.57	32	0.52	29	0.48	27	0.44
Portfolios	16	0.26	23	0.38	7	0.11	17	0.28	13	0.21	13	0.21	29	0.48	35	0.57
Journals	15	0.25	13	0.21	12	0.20	17	0.28	9	0.15	12	0.20	16	0.26	29	0.48
Projects	13	0.21	13	0.21	20	0.33	24	0.39	13	0.21	20	0.33	20	0.33	32	0.52
Peer assessment	18	0.30	23	0.38	18	0.30	17	0.28	23	0.38	29	0.48	33	0.54	35	0.57

Table 4 shows that the most commonly used assessment methods in online classrooms were quizzes for listening (69%) and reading skills (64%), questioning for speaking skills (69%), and assignments for writing skills (69%). The least commonly used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills (21%), journals and projects for speaking skills (21%), portfolios for reading skills (11%) and discussion for writing skills (23%). Table 4 also shows that the most commonly used assessment methods in offline classrooms were questioning for listening and reading skills (67%), discussion for speaking (74%) and reading skills (74%) and quizzes for writing skills (67%). The least commonly used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills (21%), journals for speaking (20%) and reading skills (26%) and presentations for writing skills (36%).

These results indicate that the methods used by EFL teachers to assess each of the four skills were dependent on the mode of learning. The results in Table 4 suggest that the respondents chose assessment methods for each skill according to whether they were operating in an online or offline mode of learning, which may be due to the effect of their level of experience in teaching in online or offline modes.

*D. Results of the Fourth Research Question: What Constraints Do EFL Teachers Face When Applying Online and Offline Assessments Methods?*

One of the main aims of this research was to gather information from teachers in a more direct way through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and their content analyzed. As Nartey (2013) stated, content analysis is "a key methodological apparatus that enables researchers to understand the process and character of social life and to arrive at a meaning, and it facilitates the understanding of the types, characteristics, and organizational aspects of documents as social products in their own right as well as what they claim" (p. 122). In the process of content analysis, the researchers analyzed the transcripts carefully and classified themes and responses into certain categories.

The study sample's responses to questions about the constraints that EFL teachers face when applying assessment methods online and offline were gathered and their content analyzed. The main topics were highlighted and then classified under main themes. The results of the analysis reveal several constraints when applying assessment methods in the EFL context. Table 5 illustrates the constraints according to the mode of learning.

TABLE 5  
CONSTRAINTS OF EFL ASSESSMENT METHODS IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE LEARNING MODES ACCORDING TO THEIR OCCURRENCES

	Online	Offline
Constraints of EFL assessment methods	Issue of cheating and impersonation	Lack of language assessment knowledge
	Information technology exposure	Classroom management
	Lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools	Ensuring validity and reliability of assessment methods
	Seriousness toward learning	Anxiety
	Absence of non-verbal communication	Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation
	Evaluation of subjective type of questions	
	Reluctance	
	Demotivation	
	Classroom management	

As Table 5 shows, the greatest constraints on EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode identified by the interviewees were issues of cheating and impersonation, information technology exposure, lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools, the seriousness of learners' attitude toward learning, the absence of non-verbal communication, the evaluation of subjective questions, reluctance, demotivation, and classroom management.

The constraints in an online learning mode are provided by the interviewees in the following excerpts:

*(T1) Students take exams without any surveillance, so this gives them lots of opportunities for cheating and impersonation and thus the results will not reflect their real performance.*

*(T2) We have many issues, including IT issues, lack of exposure, and students not being serious.*

*(T3) You cannot observe the facial expressions of the students. It's difficult to correct practical writing mistakes. Also, the Internet is sometimes interrupted.*

*(T4) There is lack of face-to-face interaction. The students' target language is too poor. They cannot participate in discussion and questioning. They are reluctant to participate in learning.*

*(T5) Students' passive participation, late submissions, failure to complete assignments and interest levels are not up to the required standard.*

*(T6) There is a lack of training for new strategies and the use of technology for assessments.*

According to Table 5, the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an offline learning mode included lack of awareness of assessment methods, classroom management, ensuring the validity and reliability of assessments, and anxiety.

The constraints on EFL assessment methods in an offline learning mode are described by the interviewees in the following excerpts:

*(T1) Well, there are numerous limitations or constraints, like: a) the passive participation of students; b) large class sizes; c) late or no submission of assignments; d) students' complaints being biased; e) the lack of a common rubric to assess students' performance; and f) students' inability to participate in peer assessment due to issues like shyness, motivation, et cetera.*

*(T2) Okay, students feel demotivated to participate in discussions. We cannot follow portfolio practice because students aren't serious.*

*(T3) There are many problems, such as: a) change in examination pattern; b) teachers themselves have to put a lot of effort into preparing and planning the assessments; c) a lack of training; d) the cost of investment; and e) a lack of assessment policy.*

*(T4) The tendencies for students to be absent, uninterested, unprepared or inactive in the lecture are a few hurdles.*

*(T5) There are many constraints like discipline, proctoring, maintaining justice, et cetera. Some assessment methods aren't applicable in my case, such as observations, portfolios and peer assessment.*

*(T6) Hesitation, anxiety, low confidence, lack of preparation: students are less interested in doing the assignments and quizzes, et cetera.*

## V. DISCUSSION

The results suggest that the EFL teachers on average perceived the utility of the assessment methods in the online mode of learning as 'medium'. The participants' responses varied from 'medium' to 'high' and were not homogenous as indicated by their relatively high standard deviations. This is in parallel with Abduh's (2021) finding that EFL teachers reported a neutral attitude toward online assessment methods. In addition, most of the teachers' statements of opinion about the strategies and procedures used in online assessment were favorable. However, the majority of the items pertaining to difficulties with online assessments received high or very high scores, which indicates that the teachers encountered significant constraints when evaluating students online. As for the assessment methods, quizzes and presentations were perceived as highly useful, while observation and discussion were considered least useful online assessment methods. EFL teachers' perceived offline assessment methods as highly useful, which supports the view that teachers feel comfortable and well-practiced when employing traditional assessment methods. These results indicate that EFL teachers perceive offline assessment methods to be more effective than online assessment methods. The responses varied from 'high' to 'very high', and their low standard deviations show that they were homogenous. Questioning and observation were the most commonly practiced assessment methods, with a 'very high' average

response, while portfolios and journals were the least commonly practiced offline assessment methods. This is because the two methods have been recent developments in assessing students and have not been in practice especially in offline/in-class mode of teaching. Statistically significant differences were found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of offline and online assessment methods: the teachers were significantly more in favor of the offline mode of learning. These results can be attributed to the EFL teachers' relative lack of experience in the online mode of learning because of its novelty: they were not familiar with it and had not received enough exposure to it. The complete transition to online teaching and learning was urgently necessary due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and this did not give teachers and students time to prepare for the change. The most commonly used online methods of assessing the four main English language skills were quizzes for listening and reading skills, questioning for speaking skills, and assignments for writing skills, while the least commonly used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals and projects for speaking skills, portfolios for reading skills, and discussions for writing skills. The results also reveal that the most commonly used offline methods of assessing the four main English language skills were questioning for listening and reading skills, discussions for speaking and reading skills, and quizzes for writing skills. The least used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals for speaking and reading skills, and presentation for writing skills. These results indicate that EFL teachers select methods of assessing the four main English language skills according to the mode of learning they are operating in. The results suggest that the respondents chose methods of assessing each skill according to the mode of learning; this was a result of their relative level of experience in offline and online modes of learning and exposure to online learning tools. The findings also reveal that the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode were considered by the participants to be cheating and impersonation. This is consistent with a Canadian study which investigated the attitudes of 412 faculty members to violations of academic integrity: just over half of the respondents felt it was getting worse and that their institutions' ineffective rules and actions were one of the reasons for this issue (MacLeod & Eaton, 2020). The findings of the current study are further supported by those of Baijnath and Singh (2019). They worked on a number of studies from over fourteen countries examining dishonest practices such as cheating in higher education, perceptions of these practices, and possible solutions to such phenomena. They concluded that cheating is a global academic problem and technology has become a major enabler of it. Therefore, universities should play a crucial role in efforts to counteract such malpractice. Academic dishonesty is an issue in traditional classrooms, but it gets worse when assessments are performed online. Lack of exposure to information technology was also described as a major constraint by the teachers in this study, in addition to issues relating to a lack of awareness of available assistive evaluation tools, the seriousness of learners' attitudes toward learning, the absence of non-verbal communication, difficulties in the evaluation of subjective questions, the demotivation of learners and classroom management. In the offline learning mode, the most cited constraints on EFL assessment methods included knowledge of language assessment. The findings support that assertion that "the major reason of the low level in language assessment knowledge of EFL teachers" can be the result of "the insufficiency of trainings" in teacher education, and therefore, their knowledge is inadequate (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydın, 2019, p. 373). The results of our study are also compatible with Jannati (2015), who found that teachers were familiar with the basic concepts of language assessment; however, despite having understanding of evaluation and assessment, they were unable to execute them to their classroom practices. Classroom management was also stated as a constraint, especially when the number of students in the classroom grows beyond a teacher's ability to control the class. As for ensuring the validity and reliability of assessments, our findings are supported by those of Aristizabal (2018), who analyzed the assessment-related beliefs and practices of English language teachers teaching at a language institute in Colombia. The analysis concluded that the participants were of the opinion that tests should have the basic qualities of validity and reliability, but reported that these qualities were not always reflected in practice. They also indicated that designing a test as a part of their training was useful for their professional development.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify and diagnose factors related to EFL teachers' perception of online and offline assessment practices: 1) EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education; 2) any significant differences between EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of offline and online assessment methods; 3) the most commonly used EFL skill-wise online and offline assessment methods, from the teachers' points of view; and 4) the constraints faced by EFL teachers when applying assessment online and offline assessment methods. The results show that the EFL teachers' perceived the utility of assessment methods in the online mode of learning as 'medium' and the utility of assessment methods in the offline mode of learning as 'high'. Statistically significant differences were also found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of online and offline assessment methods: the teachers were significantly more in favor of the offline mode of learning. In addition, the findings reveal that the assessment methods most commonly used by the teachers in online classrooms were quizzes for listening and reading skills, questioning for speaking skills, and assignments for writing skills, while the least commonly-used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals and projects for speaking skills, portfolios for reading skills, and discussion for writing skills. Furthermore, the findings reveal that the most commonly used assessment methods in offline classrooms were questioning for listening and reading skills, discussions for speaking and reading skills, and quizzes for writing skills, while the least commonly used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals for

speaking and reading skills, and presentations for writing skills. This study has some implications for EFL teachers who use online and offline assessment methods in their classrooms. Considering the findings, the researchers recommend the adoption of a multilayered approach to address the issues and constraints that were perceived by the teachers in this study when employing online and offline assessment methods:

- Raise awareness of ethics and academic honesty among learners to combat cheating and impersonation
- Train teachers to detect and prevent cheating in online and offline assessment contexts
- Hold faculty development workshops to boost teachers' competency in online and offline assessment practices
- Ensure state-of-the-art gadgets or tools are available and hold professional IT training programs for both teachers and students
- Enrich classroom atmosphere through various extrinsic and intrinsic techniques

The current study suggests the necessity of conducting further research in the EFL context to investigate the reasons for employing or not employing particular assessment methods in online and/or offline teaching contexts.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are thankful to the Deanship of Scientific Research at Najran University for funding this work under the Research Groups Funding program grant code (NU/ RG/SEHRC/11/1).

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Abduh, M. Y. M., (2021). EFL Teachers' Online Assessment Practices During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Changes and Mediating Factors. *Asian EFL Journal*, 28(1.1), 26–46.
- [2] Al-Samiri, R. A. (2021). English language teaching in Saudi Arabia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic: challenges and positive outcomes. *Arab World English Journal*, (S1), 147-159. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/covid.11>.
- [3] Baijnath, N., & Singh, D. (2019). Examination cheating: risks to the quality and integrity of higher education. *S Afr J Sci* 115(11/12), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2019/6281>
- [4] Bailey, S., Hendricks, S., & Applewhite, S. (2015) Student perspectives of assessment strategies in online courses. *J Interact Online Learn*, 13(3), 112–125. Retrieved July 5, 2022 from <https://www.ncolr.org/issues/jiol/v13/n3/student-perspectives-of-assessment-strategies.html>
- [5] Brookhart, S. M., & Durkin, D. T. (2003). Classroom assessment, student motivation, and achievement in high school social studies classes. *Applied Measurement in Education*, 16, 27-54.
- [6] Cheng, L., & Wang, X. (2007). Grading, feedback, and reporting in ESL/EFL classrooms. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 4, 85-107.
- [7] Cheng, L., Rogers, T., & Hu, H. (2004). ESL/EFL instructors' classroom assessment practices: Purposes, methods, and procedures. *Language Testing*, 21, 360-389.
- [8] Cumming, A. (2001). ESL/EFL instructors' practices for writing assessment: Specific purposes or general purposes? *Language Testing*, 18, 207-224.
- [9] Frodden, M., Restrepo, M., & Maturana, L. (2004). Analysis of assessment instruments used in foreign language teaching. *Íkala: Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 9(15), 171-201.
- [10] Aristizabal, F. G. (2018). A Diagnostic study on teachers' beliefs and practices in foreign language assessment. *Íkala: Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*, 23(1), 25-44. doi:10.17533/udea.ikala.v23n01a04
- [11] Inbar-Lourie, O. (2017). Language assessment literacy. In E. Shohamy, L. Or & S. May (Eds.), *Language Testing and Assessment* (pp. 257-270). Springer International Publishing AG. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-02261-1\_19
- [12] Jannati, S. (2015). ELT teachers' language assessment literacy: Perceptions and practices. *The International Journal of Research in Teacher Education*, 6(2), 26–37.
- [13] Lopez, A., & Bernal, R. (2009). Language testing in Colombia: A call for more teacher education and teacher training in language assessment. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 11(2), 55-70.
- [14] MacLeod P.D., & Eaton, S.E. (2020). The paradox of faculty attitudes toward student violations of academic integrity. *J Acad Ethics* 18(4), 347–362. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-020-09363-4>
- [15] Mertler, C. A. (1998). *Classroom assessment practices of Ohio teachers*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
- [16] Muñoz, A. P., Palacio, M., & Escobar, L. (2012). Teachers' beliefs about assessment in an EFL context in Colombia. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 14(1), 143-158.
- [17] Nartey, M. (2013). A speech act analysis of status updates on Facebook: The case of Ghanaian university students. *Language in India*, 13(12), 114–141.
- [18] Ölmezer-Öztürk, E., & Aydin, B. (2019). Voices of EFL teachers as assessors: Their opinions and needs regarding language assessment. *Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi - Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*, 7(1), 373–390. <https://doi.org/10.14689/issn.2148-2624.1.7c1s.17m>.
- [19] Oz, S., & Atay, D. (2017). Turkish EFL instructors' in-class language assessment literacy: Perceptions and practices. *ELT Research Journal*, 6(1), 25-44.
- [20] Remmi, F., & Hashim, H. (2021). Primary School Teachers' Usage and Perception of Online Formative Assessment Tools in Language Assessment. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(1), 290–303. <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v10-i1/8846>
- [21] Sahinkarakas, S. (2012). The role of teaching experience on teachers' perceptions of language assessment. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 47, 1787-1792.

- [22] Shim, K. N. (2009). *An investigation into teachers' perceptions of classroom-based assessment of English as a foreign language in Korean primary education* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Exeter, Exeter.
- [23] Sikka, A., Nath, J. L., & Cohen, M. D. (2007). Practicing teachers' beliefs and uses of assessment. *International Journal of Case Method Research & Application*, 3, 240-253.
- [24] Yilmaz, F. G. K., Ustun, A. B., & Yilmaz, R. (2020). Investigation of Pre-service Teachers' Opinions on Advantages and Disadvantages of Online Formative Assessment: An Example of Online Multiple-Choice Exam. *Journal of Teacher Education & Lifelong Learning*, 2(1), 10–19. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/tell/issue/52517/718396>
- [25] Yoestara, M., Putri, Z., Keumala, M., & Idami, Z. (2020). Pre-Service English Teachers' Perception towards Online Assessment Method. *International Journal of Education, Language and Religion*, 2(1), 1–10.
- [26] Zhang, Z., & Burry-Stock, J. A. (2003). Classroom assessment practices and teachers' self-perceived assessment skills. *Applied Measurement in Education*, 16(4), 323-342.

**Ali Abbas Falah Alzubi** earned his PhD in Applied Linguistics from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia. He did his master degree in English Language and Translation from Yarmouk University, Jordan. Currently, he is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, Najran University, Saudi Arabia. He has been teaching English for over 13 years. He does research in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Language Acquisition, Language Assessment, Mobile-Assisted Language Learning, and Discourse Analysis. Dr. Alzubi is a reviewer for some journals including International journal of English Linguistics, Canadian Center of Science and Education and International Journal of Instruction, Turkey. Email: [aliyarmouk2004@gmail.com](mailto:aliyarmouk2004@gmail.com), <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6252-9522>

**Khaled N. A. Al-Mwzaiji** holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the Central University of Hyderabad, India. He has been teaching English for over 10 years and is currently an Assistant Professor of English at the Deanship of Preparatory Year, Najran University, Saudi Arabia. His research interests include ELT, Stylistics, CDA, and translation. The ORCID ID is <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5891-4169>

**Mohd Nazim** earned his Ph.D. in English (Literary Stylistics) from Aligarh Muslim University, India in 2008. He earned his master's degree in English Language Teaching, also from AMU, in 2002. A post graduate diploma in Linguistics enriches his academic qualifications further. He has been teaching a variety of English language and literature courses for more than 13 years. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of English at Najran University, Saudi Arabia. His research interests include (but not limited to) developing writing skills, assessment literacy, teacher training, and ethical interpretation of literature. Dr. Nazim has rich experience in journal editorial services, and currently sits on the editorial board of English Language Teaching journal, published by Canadian Center of Science and Education. The ORCID ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1802-6412>

# Bilingual Proficiency Development and Translanguaging Practices of Emergent Korean-English Bilingual Children in Korea

Christina D. Jung

Department of Child Welfare, Woosong University, Daejeon, Republic of Korea

**Abstract**—With the rise of globalization, transmigration becomes more commonplace. Globalization is often accompanied by multiculturalism that constitutes an important fabric in societies and countries around the world. This has been the case in South Korea. Multiculturalism has resulted in many shifts and challenges within the Korean family dynamics. Multilingualism is an important characteristic that uniquely identifies many multicultural families. Regardless of the unique traits of each multicultural family, what seems to be the common denominator within these families of emergent bilingual children is that translanguaging is practiced for various purposes both inside and outside the home environment. Through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and narrative frames, this qualitative case study explores Anglophone fathers' perceptions of their bilingual children's language proficiency, the translanguaging practices of Korean-English bilingual families in Korea, and the impact of translanguaging practices on bilingual children's self-identity development. Three conclusions can be drawn based on the results: Parents of emergent bilingual children generally value high proficiency in both languages, translanguaging is often practiced for communicative purposes, and translanguaging has an important effect on emergent bilinguals' self-identity development. Implications are drawn regarding the importance and necessity of translanguaging practices both inside and outside of the home environment.

**Index Terms**—multiculturalism, bilingual, family language policy, identity, translanguaging

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the rise of globalization, transmigration becomes more commonplace. Globalization is often accompanied by multiculturalism that constitutes an important societal fabric in countries around the world. Over the last three decades, the population of multicultural families in Korea has been steadily increasing. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the number of multicultural households was 385,000, rising by 4.7% from 2020 (Statistics Korea, 2022). Multiculturalism has resulted in many shifts within the family dynamics. Multilingualism is an important characteristic that uniquely identifies many multicultural families. In Korea, the official language is Korean. However, English is taught as a foreign language from the third grade of elementary school up until the end of high school as it is an important subject on the university entrance exam in Korea. In addition, although English is not commonly spoken in Korea, being proficient in English is a highly sought-after ability as it is considered a valuable social capital to possess stemming from neoliberalist government policies within Korea (Piller & Cho, 2013). In Korea, it has also recently become more common to encounter bilingual families, with one of the spouses being a native Korean speaker and the other, a native English speaker. Although Korean-English bilingual families have varying approaches and practices regarding family language policy, what is common in all multicultural and multilingual families is some form of translanguaging (Hereafter, TL) occurring during social interaction between family members. Past research has demonstrated that TL has a tremendous impact on children's bilingual proficiency, family relations, and self-identity development (Zhao & Flewitt, 2020). Thus, TL is an important aspect of language development in bilingual individuals and can be viewed as the medium through which both languages can be nurtured and preserved. As the number of multicultural families continues to increase in Korea, it will become more imperative to encourage the use of TL at home in a bilingual environment. Thus, identifying how bilingual children employ TL practices according to their own needs and purposes and how parents' values and beliefs influence their family language policy are important factors in the successful outcome of the bilingual proficiency of bilingual children.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The term “translanguaging” was originally coined by Cen Williams in 1994 from the Welsh term, “trawsieithu” to refer to the alternating use of Welsh and English in the monoglossic language classroom (Yang et al., 2021). In the past, bilingualism was originally situated within the monoglossic ideological framework. The monoglossic ideology of bilingualism states that a bilingual individual possesses two separate compartments for each language which should not be intertwined. For example, when an individual has the ability to use both English and Korean, it was believed and strongly encouraged that the two languages should not be mixed or used together while communicating. Later on, many



researchers began to take on a more heteroglossic view of bilingualism which supports the concept that bilinguals do not possess a separate compartment for each language but rather utilize simultaneously an infinite number of various forms and signs of languages in the linguistic repertoire to make sense of and communicate with individuals in the world around them (Wilson, 2021). The theoretical framework for this study draws from this heteroglossic perspective of bilingualism in which emergent bilingual speakers utilize their full linguistic repertoires from their two languages in order to navigate and make sense of a multilingual world (Higgins, 2019). Put another way, TL conceptualizes language as an activity rather than a discrete entity (Zhao & Flewitt, 2020). This is evident in the morphology of the word “translanguaging” where the grammatical verb ending of ‘ing’ informs that it is an action. Through TL, bilingual learners are able to acquire the flexibility to take control of their own learning “to self-regulate when and how to use a language, depending on the context in which they are being asked to perform” (Karpava et al., 2019, p. 622).

Within the home environment, the discrete boundaries between languages are blurred during everyday interactions (Higgins, 2019). A recent study on the at-home TL practices of 150 bilingual/multilingual Russian-speaking children and their parents in Cyprus, Sweden, and Estonia showed that “family language use and child-directed TL can support, expand and enhance dynamic bilingualism/multilingualism, and reinforce and integrate minority language in a wider context: societal and educational” (Karpava et al., 2019, p. 619). Furthermore, “it is natural that during interactions languages become mixed” (Karpava et al., 2019, p. 622). Very often code switching (Hereafter, CS) is an integral part of the TL process. CS is when bilinguals use a combination of two or more languages in the same conversation or sentence (Karpava et al., 2019). It is important to note the difference between CS and TL. Current research has revealed that when individuals TL, a multifaceted process occurs, one of which is CS (Berlianti & Pradita, 2021; Karpava et al., 2019; Nguyen, 2019). Thus, CS is an integral process of TL, but when bilinguals perform CS, it does not necessarily mean that they are also TL. Bilinguals use TL with their families at home and with friends at school and members of the local community.

Furthermore, TL has numerous benefits for bilingual and multilingual children such as the development of greater metacognitive awareness compared to monolingual children (Lee & Garc á, 2020), negotiation strategies, metalinguistic knowledge, metacognitive ability, and higher-order-thinking skills (Kwon, 2022). TL also plays an important role in biliteracy development in bilinguals (Yang et al., 2021). In addition, biliteracy development is a strong contributor to their health due to the formation of a positive self-identity which are important for mental and psychological well-being (Lee et al., 2021; Park & Lee, 2016). Likewise, TL also has important implications for multilinguals in an academic context as research has firmly established that TL not only contributes to the development of language skills, it also raises students’ scholastic achievement at the secondary and postsecondary levels (Garc á-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Kirsch, 2018). Furthermore, being bilingual or multilingual also results in the acquisition of valuable social capital, greater competitiveness and marketability in the workplace which can lead to higher socioeconomic status (Seo, 2021). Thus, based on the extant literature, TL plays many roles and provides numerous affordances with regards to bilingual language development and maintenance.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Family Language Policy to Support Bilingualism

Family interactions in the home environment are important for language maintenance (Karpava et al., 2019). Family Language Policy or FLP can be defined as the particular language ideologies and beliefs about language practices in the home domain (Higgins, 2019; Piller & Gerber, 2021). Through FLP, how languages are managed, negotiated, and transmitted intergenerationally and under what conditions languages are maintained or lost are explored (Karpava et al., 2019; Liang et al., 2022). Past research has found that family language practices or policies are crucial to the maintenance and revitalization of indigenous and minority languages (Higgins, 2019). According to Said (2021), “as a paradigm, FLP focuses on the manifestation of family ideologies or beliefs about languages and how such beliefs affect decisions about which languages a family learns and uses” (p. 424). In other words, the FLP and the decision made by each family is crucial in terms of influencing the language outcomes of children in a dual or multiple language home environment. Specifically, FLP addresses child language learning along with parents’ language ideologies, choices, and strategies within sociocultural contexts (King & Fogle, 2013). Research shows that the characteristics of a “FLP is closely related to parental language ideologies, attitudes, or beliefs about language learning, bilingualism, and types of interactions” (Lee et al., 2021, p. 3). FLP is a purposeful attempt to practice a particular language use pattern within the home TL space and among family members (Said, 2021). Due to the many tangible benefits of being bilingual mentioned earlier such as cognitive, health, and economic among others, the concept of the bilingual advantage is an impactful language ideology which dictates family language policy decisions (Piller & Gerber, 2021).

#### B. Identity Development Through Translanguaging

A plethora of extant literature has firmly established that there is a strong link between language use and identity. As Dubiner (2021) states, “People’s identities are set in relation to their language practices and the sociolinguistic milieu in which their lives are situated” (p. 194). The realization of one’s identity is strongly linked to the language one speaks (Richards & Wilson, 2019). For the multilingual individual, identity becomes multifaceted and complex as navigation

among these languages occurs through various acts of TL. Thus, among multilingual individuals, self-identity is greatly impacted through TL. TL plays a unique role in that it fosters the construction of identities (Ho & Tai, 2021). What is unique to multilingual individuals is that self-identity should not be considered as just one, but multiple identities in correspondence to their multilingual abilities. This view on multiple identities constructed through TL has been supported by many scholars (Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Li & Zhu, 2013; Nguyen, 2019; Poza, 2019). Bilingualism is an important aspect of one's identity (Li, 2011). "Language is a key factor in the construction of identity—as emergent bilinguals develop and refine their language practices, they shape and construct their own identities" (Eller & Nieto, 2021, p. 91). As Peirce (1995) states, "the individual language learner is not ahistorical and unidimensional but has a complex and sometimes contradictory social identity, changing across time and space" (p. 26). In a study conducted on Arabic-Hebrew bilinguals in Israel, it was concluded that ethnolinguistic identities were shaped and reflected through their purposeful intermingling of Hebrew and Arabic in certain contexts (Dubiner, 2021). Thus, because of the strong link between language, social, and individual identity, when students are provided a TL space to fully utilize their linguistic repertoire, they are able to develop a positive bilingual identity about themselves. Parental decisions on language use can affect the identity of the children and influence their use of TL. Specifically, when parents support the use of TL in the home, they nurture not only bilingual proficiency development in their children but also help lead them to how they self-identify themselves culturally as individuals.

#### IV. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Much of the past research on TL has been situated in the classroom environment and conducted on students within the learning and pedagogical context (Cenoz & Santos, 2020; Garc á-Mateus & Palmer, 2017; Holdway & Hitchcock, 2018; Kafle, 2020; Kayi-Aydar & Green-Eneix, 2019; Kirsch, 2018, 2020; Lee & Garc á, 2020; Lio et al., 2020; Rajendram, 2021; Wang, 2020). Currently, there is no extant literature on the TL practices of Korean-English bilingual children in Korea from the perspectives of foreign fathers. Although the focus is on their children's linguistic practices, it is difficult for young children to properly express themselves in an interview situation. Therefore, the fathers were interviewed for this study. The author believes that the six foreign fathers can provide a unique perspective on the linguistic practices of their bilingual children as they experience language use first-hand from a minority father perspective in Korea.

This research attempts to address the major gaps in TL research among Korean-English bilingual speakers and their families. It is anticipated that the results of this research will bring greater insight into the TL practices of Korean-English bilinguals in Korea and how they are utilized in their daily lives at home, school, and in the community, and its impacts on self-identity development.

Hence, the purpose of this study on bilingual families residing in Korea was to answer the question: What are the Anglophone father's perceptions of the bilingual proficiency development and TL practices of their emergent Korean-English bilingual children in Korea? Specifically:

- 1) What are the beliefs and values of foreign fathers regarding family language policy?
- 2) What are the TL practices of emergent Korean-English bilingual children?
- 3) How does TL affect Korean-English bilingual children's self-identity?

#### V. METHODOLOGY

The method used for this study was a qualitative case study approach. According to Merriam (1998), a qualitative case study is defined as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon or a social unit" (p. 21). Thus, it allows for an in-depth, information-rich account of participants' lived-in experiences. A case study is appropriate for this study as it explores the TL practices of Korean-English bilingual families in Korea, a specific bounded context.

##### A. Recruitment and Participants

The participants and their emergent bilingual children are listed in Table 1 below. The six participants are Anglophone fathers residing in a major metropolitan city in Korea. The participants were recruited through the author's personal and professional networks. The participants were informed as to the purpose of the study and the requirements for participation. All of the Anglophone fathers are from major English-speaking countries and are married to ethnically Korean women. The children range in age between 5 to 16 years and were born and currently reside in Korea. The children attend school in Korea and are able to speak in both Korean and English in varying capacities.

TABLE 1  
DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Participant Fathers	Pseudonyms of Children and Age	Children's Nationalities	Parent's Perceived Korean Fluency Level of Children	Parent's Perceived English Fluency Level of Children
1	Amelia, (9.5)	Korean, Canadian	high-intermediate	intermediate
2	Mark (8)	Korean, Canadian	low-intermediate	low-intermediate
3	Nate (13)	Korean, Canadian	high-intermediate	basic
4	Helen (16)	Korean, Canadian	high-intermediate	intermediate
	Tim (12)	Korean, Canadian	high-intermediate	low-intermediate
5	Leonard (8)	Korean, New Zealander	low-intermediate	basic
6	Grace (5)	Korean, American	low-intermediate	pre-basic

### B. Data Collection

The data for this study were collected through purposeful sampling as this technique was most appropriate due to the need to identify and select information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015). A pilot interview was conducted with one of the researcher's colleagues and the questions were subsequently modified and improved for greater clarity and applicability. Subsequent semi-structured interviews were conducted on the six participant fathers. Some of the questions asked included:

1. How would you describe your children's English and Korean proficiency levels?
2. How important is it to you that your children maintain both languages?
3. Does your family have a Family Language Plan or Policy at home? Explain.
4. How do your children negotiate cultural and linguistic identity in your household?

Due to COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the interviews, all interviews were conducted online via video conferencing platform. Each interview lasted somewhere between 60 to 90 minutes. The researcher conducted, recorded, and transcribed all the interviews. Data accuracy and credibility was achieved through member checks of the interview transcripts and summaries. Triangulation was achieved through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and researcher field notes to ensure data validity and credibility. The questionnaires contained specific questions with regards to the parents' profiles and their parenting experiences in Korea. Researcher field notes were made based on the interviews in which the researcher's thoughts and impressions during the interview were made of the participants.

### C. Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded thematically using the qualitative analysis software MAXQDA22. Data were analyzed according to the three coding stages of open, axial and selective which are based on the grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In the first stage, initial themes emerged and were coded with labels in vivo and short descriptions based on key words in the transcripts. Over 50 codes were identified in the first stage. Such codes included CS, cultural negotiation, linguistic negotiation, and cultural identification. In the second stage, these codes were further reduced to create themes which included self-cultural identification, high value of bilingual proficiency, and identification with Korean culture. In the third stage, connections were made between the various categorical themes and the key concepts in the theoretical framework and literature review such as TL, family language policy, and self-identity. The categories were further analyzed and reduced until no new categorical themes were discovered and data saturation was achieved.

### D. Human Subject Protection

Throughout the data collection process, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants were adhered to at all times. In accordance with this, all six participants were labeled as "Participant #" and their children were provided with pseudonyms as indicated in Table 1 above. Participants were fully informed as to how the data would be collected and used for the purpose of research. All aspects of research protocol were conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013) concerning the ethical principles regarding human subjects.

## VI. RESULTS

The results of the analysis revealed three main themes and five subthemes.

### A. Bilingual Practices and Beliefs of Parents

#### (a). Implicit Family Language Policy

It was interesting to note that there was no explicit or overt family language policy or plan in each of the participating multicultural families. None of the families specifically stated that they had a family language policy in place at home. Furthermore, all of the children are from families with an implicit form of family language planning even though they did not label it as such. For instance, when asked if they have a family language plan, Amelia's father says, "We just go with the flow." With regards to Grace's family, her father stated, "We do some code switching. Grace is still in the developmental bubble right now." About family language planning, Leonard's father explains:

*We don't officially have a family language plan. Not specifically. I do bath time and there's a lot of English that goes on there. Our baths can take up to an hour. Lots of games. When we're playing our Minecraft, we talk about what we're doing. He helps explain to me. He needs to explain it to me so I can do it. This is what we do.*

Thus, it can be observed that although an overt family language policy is not enforced in the home environment, both the parents and their emergent bilingual children demonstrate the value of utilizing both languages in specific situations to convey particular information, knowledge and emotions through translanguaging practices. The implicit nature of the children's metalinguistic awareness, knowledge, and ability as well as the use of negotiation strategies is evident in the social interactions with family members at home.

#### (b). Importance of Bilingual Maintenance

Data analysis revealed that it was important to the fathers that their children grow up to be fully bilingual. For instance, Amelia's father, a strong proponent of maintaining both languages, elaborates on his feelings and thoughts about his desire for Amelia to be bilingual not just for academic success but also to develop and maintain her connection to her Canadian identity:

*I think it is important for her to maintain both languages. Not just academically but I think that it would be important for me at least that she gets to know my side of the family. It's hard because sometimes Amelia's a stranger to my own mom, you know? My mom doesn't really know a lot about her because she's 5000 km away and we don't really speak on the phone regularly. In the future, if Amelia wants to live in Canada, it's important that she maintains both languages.*

Likewise, Helen and Tim's father is also a strong proponent of his children maintaining both languages. We can observe based on his statement that he worries about the disadvantages that his daughter will encounter if she does not actively try to maintain both of her languages. He states:

*I would like them to be fully bilingual in both languages, but I see that's becoming less and less of an option. It's nice that I can speak with my son and he can respond to me in English and we can have those conversations. I'm a little more concerned about my daughter. But it's like well, at some point, she's got to make choices of her own. And I don't want to force her to do this. It's like she may regret not trying to keep up with it now. But at the same time, you gotta make these choices yourself. But it would be nice if they could speak both languages. But I know they're not going to be fluent in both. One's going to be their academic language their working language and the other will be the second language, I think.*

Based on the opinions of the foreign fathers, it can be stated that dual language maintenance is important for many reasons. Firstly, as Amelia's father mentions, it is important in terms of the children's self-identity because it allows them to develop a better understanding of who they are as bicultural individuals and allows bilingual children to stay connected to their family, permitting better intergenerational communication and the maintenance of stronger familial bonds. Furthermore, as explicitly mentioned by Participant #6, Grace's father, bilingual proficiency development is also important because of the benefits of bilingualism in their children's future career and employment. Thus, possession of English as a social capital in Korean society provides the children for greater opportunities of success in school and later on in life.

### B. Children's Motivations for Translanguaging

#### (a). Contextual Foregrounding Through Linguistic Repertoire

Among the emergent bilingual participants, TL was used in unique ways such as a source of contextual foregrounding. Through TL, participants utilized different aspects of their linguistic repertoires to communicate with family and friends on a level that allowed them to express themselves more fully with their developing linguistic ability. Different aspects of TL were used by the children depending on the contexts at home, school, and in public places. For instance, CS allowed the participants to fill in gaps in their linguistic repertoire in both languages. For example, when Amelia was younger, she did not know the English word for '사기' ('fraud') which she code switched with the Korean equivalent. Amelia's father explains:

*Last Christmas, my phone died. I said to my daughter, "Amelia, let's go to the cell phone shop. I need to change my phone. She said, "Dad, don't go by yourself. You're a foreigner." And she didn't know the word "fraud" but she knew the word "사기." I'm like, "What's 사기?" Amelia said, "Just look it up. I don't know what it is in English but it's 사기. You gotta go with grandma or uncle. Because there's going to be 사기. You're a foreigner. They're gonna take your money."*

Contrastingly, in Tim's family, certain words are used just in Korean. For example, the Korean word 'eemo' is used in lieu of the equivalent English word 'aunt.' Tim's father explains, "It has always been 'eemo.' My wife refers to 'eemo,' especially when she was talking to Tim as a baby. So, if I say 'aunt' instead of 'eemo,' it doesn't seem the same. So, we've always called her 'eemo.' So, that's who she is." Thus, we can see that for both the parents and the children, TL creates a specific kind of feeling which arouses certain emotions that are associated with a particular word. TL allows expression of particular emotions through specific terminology in a particular language. For Tim's

family, 'eemo' is reserved only for his mother's older sister who happens to be their closest relative in Korea and is symbolically representative of warmth, familiarity and love. Thus, specific aspects of the linguistic repertoires of the bilingual speaker are utilized to convey feelings and create an atmosphere while communicating with their family members to fully convey their thoughts, understandings, and desires. The bilingual children's ability to use their linguistic repertoire in diverse ways through TL allows for a greater range of vocabulary access and expression of feelings and emotions that cannot be fully expressed through a single language.

(b). *To Navigate Their Multilingual Reality*

TL was also used by the children to navigate their multilingual reality. For instance, some would utilize their linguistic repertoires metacognitively to avoid specific people and situations in their everyday life. For instance, Mark uses his English ability to pretend he cannot speak Korean so he doesn't need to talk to Korean strangers when they try to make conversation in Korean. His father explains:

*I think he's aware that he's a little bit different from most kids. He's also aware of his bilingualism. When people talk to him in Korean, if he wants to talk to them in Korean he will. But if he does not want to talk to them, he will switch to broken English. We're at a park and somebody runs up or you know a 할머니 (grandma) comes up to pat his head and if he wants to speak to them, he'll talk to them and speak in Korean right away and address them. But if he's uncomfortable with them, he pretends he's a 외국인 (foreigner) and cannot speak Korean.*

In the above situation, Mark uses TL through metacognition. He utilizes his metacognitive awareness and skills to avoid uncomfortable situations. Through a TL space, he chooses to reveal one aspect of his self-identity to strangers while preserving the other aspect of his reality. TL allows him to create a protective space in which he can comfortably avoid an uncomfortable communicative encounter with a stranger.

C. *Impact of Translanguaging on Self-Identity Development*

Self-Identifying With the Majority Culture and Language

All of the participant fathers feel that their bilingual children self-identify as mostly Korean. The older the children, the more strongly they self-identified as Korean and spoke mainly Korean, the majority culture and language. This trend is observed when comparing the younger and older children. As the children moved up in their education, the language of their schooling which is the majority language became their dominant language. They became more proficient and therefore, more at home in the dominant language, Korean. Thus, there is also a gradual progression towards using Korean, as their academic success is dependent on the majority language use. For example, siblings Helen and Nate demonstrate this movement. Their father concedes, "With me, they speak English. But with my wife, English and Korean. And with their friends, it's all Korean. Now, at church when they go to Sunday school, they're supposed to use English. But they don't really do that." Similarly, Leonard's father explains:

*I think if my wife speaks to him in English, he'll answer in English. If she speaks to him in Korean, he'll answer in Korean. Of course, his Korean's better. All his friends speak Korean, the whole outside world is essentially Korean. So, his Korean is much better. So, trying to keep his English up, that's the challenge.*

Thus, it is clear that as the children get older, the language of their schooling in the majority language, Korean, becomes their dominant language. They become more proficient and therefore, more at home in the dominant language. For example, Amelia displays a preference for speaking in Korean, the majority language. Her father says, "Because of my inability to speak Korean, my daughter resentfully speaks to me in English. My wife and I speak in English to Amelia and we use Korean with our extended family." Similarly, Tim's father says, "It's a forced method because I don't speak Korean. So, he is forced to function in English with me." Transitioning towards the majority language and culture is also evident in Nate's desire to continue to study and in the future, work in Korea. Thus, his predominant use of Korean has led him to culturally identify himself as being more Korean than Canadian.

Similarly, about his children, Helen and Nate's father states:

*They see themselves as Koreans with Canadian passports. They identify with Korean culture more than with Canadian culture. When I ask if they would like to live in Canada now or in the future, they say they only want to live in Korea. They never talk about any future in Canada.*

Thus, Helen and Nate have moved to self-identifying themselves with the majority culture and language in Korea and their Canadian identity is not a major aspect of their overall identity. Likewise, Amelia's father states:

*In Korea, Amelia identifies herself as Korean; she lived in Canada for a year, but that didn't change her sense of identity. While in Canada, she identified herself as both Korean and Canadian. And yet, Amelia was less enthusiastic about playing with non-Korean children, and she felt alienated without her Korean friends.*

Therefore, it appears that for the children the length and age of exposure in living in one culture and country can have a strong impact on self-identity formation. The longer the participants reside in one culture and country, the more they learn to self-identity with that culture and country. Interestingly, the fluid nature of self-identity formation can be seen in the changing shifts of what is one's majority language depending on the situational context. For example, Grace experienced this during a set period of time when she was predominantly exposed to her minority language, English, by spending most of her time with her father. According to her father:

*She spent three weeks now at home with daddy. So, now, she gets to speak English all day long. This has happened the previous two holidays when there's been COVID scares and the kindergarten shuts down. She gets three weeks with daddy and at that time, actually, English almost becomes her instinctual language. But once she's back at school for a few weeks, Korean seems to become her instinctual language again.*

Thus, the fluid nature of identity shows that it is never concrete and can change depending on the context, circumstance, and length of time exposed to a language. For the younger children, it appears that their identity is more fluid than the older children who maintain their use of the majority language under most circumstances.

In summary, according to the foreign fathers, Korean is becoming the dominant language and culture at both school and home. For the younger children, up until the first year of elementary school, English is used in almost equal capacity as Korean but regarding who they culturally identify as is not as certain because they are too young to be self-aware of themselves and have yet to more fully develop their metacognitive abilities.

## VII. DISCUSSION

It was found that in the Korean-English bilingual families in this study, TL is generally the norm and is practiced in everyday life which is in line with previous studies (Garcia & Wei, 2014; Kwon, 2022). The findings of this study were also congruent with previous studies in that most families do not implement an explicit family language policy at home (Liang et al., 2022). Although the TL practices of Korean-English bilingual families in this study reveal that they usually don't have an explicit FLP, through some form of implicit FLP, each family uses both English and Korean, making TL a natural practice at home. This finding resonates with other research pertaining to TL on the fluid nature of TL practices of bilingual families (Karpava et al., 2019; Kwon, 2022). Similarly, none of the foreign fathers in this study had a strong proclivity towards 'linguistic purism' and monolingual perspectives regarding everyday language use like participants in other studies (Piller & Gerber, 2021). Also, the boundaries of the one-parent, one-language rule was not strictly adhered to by the families of the participants. This result is similar to a study conducted by Nguyen (2019) on Vietnamese ethnic minority students in Vietnam, in which it was discovered that participants preferred linguistic purism and monolingual perspectives when asked about their linguistic preferences. However, in everyday practice, they did the complete opposite and practiced TL, often mixing together Vietnamese and the minority language spoken at home as well as practicing other aspects of TL (Nguyen, 2019). Similarly, results of the current study further support previous research which has found that although parents state that their children being bilingual is very important to them, the actual FLP they implement in their homes is often inconsistent and uncertain (Lee et al., 2021; Piller & Gerber, 2021; Wilson, 2021). The current literature reveals the salient influence of parental decisions regarding FLP which differ depending on each family's varying needs and contexts (Lee et al., 2021). Thus, the results of this study further support the past research.

Furthermore, the purposes of TL by Korean-English bilingual children in this study are predominantly communicative, both inside and outside the home environment. Creese and Blackledge (2015) stated, "multilinguals translanguage to include and facilitate communication with others, but also to construct deeper understandings" (p. 27). Similar to previous studies, TL practices allow the bilingual children in this study to develop negotiation strategies during communication (Song, 2016). The use of negotiation strategies through TL in communication in certain social situations is evident in the case of Mark. Mark's use of Korean to avoid conversation with the elderly stranger is an example of what has similarly been observed in other studies where it has been found that "one of the pragmatic functions of code switching is that different languages might be used for social purposes: to include or exclude interlocutors in a stretch of bilingual talk" (Karpava et al., 2019, p. 628). Mark's purposeful use of pretending not to be able to speak Korean and only utilizing English to the elderly stranger was TL for specific communicative purposes. This demonstrates that the participants have excellent metalinguistic awareness and ability to manipulate the implementation of TL in particular contexts and situations (Karpava et al., 2019). The results of this study also further support the work of Li (2011) who states that multilingual individuals show different identities depending on the social context.

Likewise, the conclusion that there is an emotional attachment to certain words in a language is also supported by this study. According to Wei (2018), "in bilingual first language acquisition where cross-linguistic equivalents are learned, the child additionally learns to associate the target word with a specific context or addressee as well as contexts and addressees where either language is acceptable, giving rise to the possibility of code-switching" (p. 25). For example, Participant #3's family's use of 'eemo' for the word 'aunt' when speaking in both Korean and English shows that 'eemo' is emotionally and personally meaningful to them while the English word 'aunt' has no emotional connection. This emotional connection with words in a specific language is similar to past studies in which TL is utilized due to one's desire to express emotions or feelings that can only be expressed in a particular language (Karpava et al., 2019). In other words, the word 'eemo' communicates the exact range of nuance needed (Lamanna, 2021) to convey the emotionally meaningful label and identity of 'aunt.'

Finally, the outcomes of this study have shown the effects of TL on identity development and support previous studies that co-construction of identity and positionality within a certain context occurs through linguistic interaction (García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017). The results of this study contribute to the current research on TL practices in which the effects of TL on Korean-English bilingual children indicate that a discrepancy forms between the proficiency of the

two languages, with one language becoming more dominant over the other. For example, Participant #4's children Tim and Helen's communication with each other is in the majority language Korean which aligns with past studies in that the older sibling's language preference becomes the language used to communicate with the younger sibling (Cho, 2018; Lee & Garc ía, 2020). Among the older participants, TL at home led to greater use of the majority language over time, as with results found in past studies conducted in other countries (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017; Nesteruk, 2010).

### VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study sheds new light on the TL practices of Korean-English bilingual families in Korea. However, there are some limitations associated with this study. One is that as a qualitative case study, the results cannot be generalized to the entire bilingual population in Korea as it is specific to only six families of Korean-English bilingual children. In terms of future research directions, it would be interesting to do a similar study to investigate how TL occurs in bilingual families other than Korean-English within and outside of Korea. Likewise, interviewing both parents and not just the fathers would bring an interesting perspective to future studies as well. This would provide more insight on the similarities and differences of bilingual families in different countries and cultures. Likewise, a longitudinal study that investigates a larger number of bilingual families over a longer period of time would provide more insight on the TL practices of families to determine any factors that are common among those families where individuals are able to achieve near equal bilingual proficiency in both languages.

### IX. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, TL practices in emergent Korean-English bilingual families in Korea are pivotal in the development and maintenance of bilingual ability, communicative interactions, and self-identity. The results of this study further elucidate and support the salience of TL within bilingual children as an essential aspect of their bilingual fluency. When bilingual families are able to fully utilize their linguistic and cultural repertoires through the process of TL, they will engage in more meaningful dialogues (Kwon, 2022). The active use of TL is the greatest scaffold leading to the edification of bilingual children's bilingual proficiency and self-identity. In order to establish bilingual sustainability, three important factors need to be considered: an immersive TL home environment, school's understanding and incorporation of TL pedagogy for the classroom, and government support of bilingual/multilingual families. Addressing the needs of bilingual children in Korea is becoming ever more pertinent as the multicultural school-aged population is steadily on the rise. For these reasons, government support is invaluable as funding and teacher training need to be integrated into the current curriculum in Korea's public school system. A strong collaboration between parents and teachers are needed in order to support bilingual children (Lee et al., 2021). The government also needs to promote emergent bilingual children's bilingual development to create a more just and fair society. The current needs of bilingual children in Korea are not being met. The Ministry of Education should create laws to ensure that language and identity development needs are supported for bilingual household children in Korea. It is imperative to create a space that allows bilingual children to engage in TL practices that are culturally-rich and multimodal in order to further develop and sustain their bilingual fluency (Kwon, 2022). It is also important to encourage pride in bilingual individuals' home language and TL practices (Alvarez, 2014). It is by supporting and encouraging these TL strategies that positive developments will occur with regards to bilingual children's flourishing fluency and self-identity. The numerous affordances and benefits with regards to encouraging the use of TL in bilingual Korean-English families make the challenges of maintaining TL practices worthy of the time and effort.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was supported by Woosong University Research Funding 2022.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Alvarez, S. (2014). Translanguaging tareas: Emergent bilingual youth as language brokers for homework in immigrant families. *Language Arts*, 91(5), 326–339.
- [2] Berlianti, D. G. A., & Pradita, I. (2021). Translanguaging in an EFL classroom discourse: To what extent it is helpful for the students? *Communications in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(1), 42–46.
- [3] Cenoz, J., & Gorter, D. (2017). Minority languages and sustainable translanguaging: Threat or opportunity? *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 38(10), 901–912. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2017.1284855>
- [4] Cenoz, J., & Santos, A. (2020). Implementing pedagogical translanguaging in trilingual schools. *System*, 92, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102273>
- [5] Cho, H. (2018). Korean–English bilingual sibling interactions and socialization. *Linguistics and Education*, 45, 31–39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2018.03.004>
- [6] Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2015). Translanguaging and identity in educational settings. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, 20–35. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000233>
- [7] Dubiner, D. (2021). 'We don't think about it, we just mix': language choice and ethnolinguistic identity among Arabic-Hebrew bilinguals in Israel. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 24(2), 191–206. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2018.1452893>

- [8] Eller, S., & Nieto, D. (2021). Idiolect and identity: Fourth grade students' translanguaging comprehension, and self-identity. *Association of Mexican American Educators Journal*, 15(3), 88–106.
- [9] Garc ía, O., & Wei, L. (2014). Translanguaging and education. In O. Garc ía & L. Wei (Eds.), *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 63–77). Berlin: Springer.
- [10] Garc ía-Mateus, S., & Palmer, D. (2017). Translanguaging pedagogies for positive identities in two-way dual language bilingual education. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 16(4), 245–255. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2017.1329016>
- [11] Higgins, C. (2019). The dynamics of Hawaiian speakerhood in the family. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2019(255), 45–72. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2018-2003>
- [12] Ho, W. Y. J., & Tai, K. W. H. (2021). Translanguaging in digital learning: the making of translanguaging spaces in online English teaching videos. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2021.2001427>
- [13] Holdway, J., & Hitchcock, C. H. (2018). Exploring ideological becoming in professional development for teachers of multilingual learners: Perspectives on translanguaging in the classroom. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 75, 60–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.05.015>
- [14] Kafle, M. (2020). “No one would like to take a risk”: Multilingual students' views on language mixing in academic writing. *System*, 94, 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102326>
- [15] Karpava, S., Ringblom, N., Zabrodskaia, A. (2019). Translanguaging in the family context: Evidence from Cyprus, Sweden and Estonia. *Russian Journal of Linguistics*, 23(3), 619–641. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-9182-2019-23-3-619-641>
- [16] Kayi-Aydar, H., & Green-Eneix, C. (2019). Shared identities through translanguaging practices in the multilingual mariachi classroom. *TESOL Journal*, 10(4), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.502>
- [17] King, K. A., & Fogle, L. W. (2013). Family language policy and bilingual parenting. *Language Teaching*, 46(2), 172–194. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444812000493>
- [18] Kirsch, C. (2018). Young children capitalising on their entire language repertoire for language learning at school. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 31(1), 39–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2017.1304954>
- [19] Kirsch, C. (2020). Opening minds to translanguaging pedagogies. *System*, 92, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102271>
- [20] Kwon, J. (2022). Parent–child translanguaging among transnational immigrant families in museums. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 25(2), 436–451. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2019.1689918>
- [21] Lamanna, S. (2021). A qualitative analysis of translanguaging by Colombian migrants in North Carolina. *Languages*, 6(2), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages6020064>
- [22] Lee, C., & Garc ía, G. E. (2020). Unpacking the oral translanguaging practices of Korean-American first graders. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 43(1), 32–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2019.1703844>
- [23] Lee, H., Pang, M. E., & Park, J. H. (2021). Translanguaging and family language policy: An investigation of Korean short-term stayers' language practice at home. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2021.1979400>
- [24] Li, W. (2011). Moment analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(5), 1222–1235. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2010.07.035>
- [25] Li, W., & Zhu, H. (2013). Translanguaging identities and ideologies: Creating transnational space through flexible multilingual practices amongst Chinese university students in the UK. *Applied Linguistics*, 34(5), 516–535. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amt022>
- [26] Liang, L., Wu, D., & Li, H. (2022). Family language policy and bilingual parenting in multilingual Singapore: Latent profiles and its predictors. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2056190>
- [27] Lio, J. E., Lo, Y. Y., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2020). Translanguaging pedagogy in teaching English for academic purposes: Researcher-teacher collaboration as a professional development model. *System*, 92, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102276>
- [28] Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach* (1st ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- [29] Nesteruk, O. (2010). Heritage language maintenance and loss among the children of Eastern European immigrants in the USA. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 31(3), 271–286. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630903582722>
- [30] Nguyen, T. T. T. (2019). Translanguaging as trans-identity: The case of ethnic minority students in Vietnam. *Lingua*, 222, 39–52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2019.02.010>
- [31] Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 42(5), 533–544. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- [32] Park, S., & Lee, Y. (2016). Factors that affect suicide attempts of adolescents in multicultural families in Korea. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 13(12), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.3390/IJERPH13121184>
- [33] Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9–31. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587803>
- [34] Piller, I., & Cho, J. (2013). Neoliberalism as language policy. *Language in Society*, 42(1), 23–44. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404512000887>
- [35] Piller, I., & Gerber, L. (2021). Family language policy between the bilingual advantage and the monolingual mindset. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 24(5), 622–635. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2018.1503227>
- [36] Poza, L. E. (2019). “Los Dos Son Mi Idioma”: translanguaging, identity, and social relationships among bilingual youth. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 18(2), 92–109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2018.1504682>



- [37] Rajendram, S. (2021). Translanguaging as an agentive pedagogy for multilingual learners: Affordances and constraints. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2021.1898619>
- [38] Richards, J. C., & Wilson, O. (2019). On transidentifying. *RELC Journal*, 50(1), 179–187. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688218824780>
- [39] Said, F. F. S. (2021). Arabic-English bilingual children's early home literacy environments and parental language policies. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 29(3), 424–440. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2021.1928724>
- [40] Seo, Y. (2021). Parental language ideologies and affecting factors in bilingual parenting in Korea. *English Teaching*, 76(1), 105–124. <https://doi.org/10.15858/engtea.76.1.202103.105>
- [41] Song, K. (2016). “Okay, I will say in Korean and then in American”: Translanguaging practices in bilingual homes. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 16(1), 84–106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798414566705>
- [42] Statistics Korea. (n. d.). *2021 Population and Housing Census (Register-based Census)*. Retrieved July 28, 2022, from <http://kostat.go.kr/portal/eng/pressReleases/8/7/index.board?bmode=read&bSeq=&aSeq=419981&pageNo=1&rowNum=10&n avCount=10&currPg=&searchInfo=&sTarget=title&sTxt=>
- [43] Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Sage Publications.
- [44] Wang, D. (2020). Studying Chinese language in higher education: The translanguaging reality through learners' eyes. *System*, 95, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102394>
- [45] Wei, L. (2018). Translanguaging as a practical theory of language. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(1), 9–30. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx039>
- [46] Wilson, S. (2021). To mix or not to mix: Parental attitudes towards translanguaging and language management choices. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 25(1), 58–76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367006920909902>
- [47] World Medical Association. (2013). Declaration of Helsinki. *JAMA - Journal of the American Medical Association*, 310(20), 2191–2194. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2013.281053>
- [48] Yang, S., Kiramba, L. K., & Wessels, S. (2021). Translanguaging for biliteracy: Book reading practices in a Chinese bilingual family. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 44(1), 39–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2021.1907486>
- [49] Zhao, S., & Flewitt, R. (2020). Young Chinese immigrant children's language and literacy practices on social media: A translanguaging perspective. *Language and Education*, 34(3), 267–285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2019.1656738>



**Christina D. Jung** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Child Welfare at Woosong University in Daejeon, Republic of Korea. She received her Doctorate in Education from the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. Her current research interests include multiculturalism in Korea, translanguaging practices in the home and classroom environment, environmental education in the EFL context, and language learning motivation.

# An Investigation Into the Appropriateness of a Procedural Negotiated Syllabus for Adult Vocational Learners

Mohammad A. Assaf

English Department, Emirates Schools Establishment, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Mohammad I. Zabadi

English Foundation Unit, Gulf University for Science and Technology, Mishref, Kuwait

Emad A. S. Abu-Ayyash

Faculty of Education, The British University in Dubai, Dubai, UAE

**Abstract**—The present mixed-methods study investigated the readiness of teachers and adult learners at a vocational centre in the United Arab Emirates to implement a negotiated English syllabus. The study addressed two main questions: 1) are teachers and learners at the Vocational Training Centre ready to implement a negotiated syllabus? And 2) does the negotiated syllabus implementation lead to improvement in learners' motivation? Results showed the significant potential of a negotiated syllabus in enhancing learners' motivation by making them part of the decision-makers' circle regarding the components of an intended English syllabus. On the other hand, learners, teachers and management systems face challenges that must first be overcome to succeed in implementing negotiated syllabi. The findings of this study support the value of involving learners in classroom decisions, which is expected to make them feel responsible for their learning.

**Index Terms**—motivation, negotiated syllabus, syllabus, vocational learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Negotiating classroom decisions, with regard to the components of an intended English syllabus, with learners may enhance their motivation to develop academically and personally. Discussing this claim requires exploring the issue of empowering learners to be active participants in classroom decision-making. Thus, it is essential to identify a syllabus that ensures learners' involvement in making decisions about what, when, why and how they are taught (Peyvandi et al., 2019). It is equally significant to account for the learners' various needs as a reference point in designing that kind of syllabus.

The English department at the Vocational Training Center (VTC), United Arab Emirates, has tried different product-based syllabi. However, results have not met the benchmarks defined by the VTC. The centre caters to those students who are disengaged from mainstream education through an alternative program of a vocational nature. It aims to meet the needs of the business market. The VTC follows the Australian competency-based framework implemented by Australia's leading vocational education and training provider, Technical and Further Education (TAFE). Thus, the VTC places an emphasis on what a person is able to do in the workplace, rather than what they know (Abu-Ayyash & Assaf, 2016; Hill et al., 2011). The present mixed-methods study investigated the readiness of teachers and learners to implement a negotiated syllabus (NS) at VTC. This research paper addressed two main questions: 1) Are teachers and learners at the VTC ready to implement a negotiated syllabus? and 2) Does the negotiated syllabus implementation lead to improvement in learners' motivation?

### A. Statement of the Problem

The selected textbook, considered as syllabus, is VENTURES, which is cyclical since the same themes appear in the different series. Learners have nine periods (40 minutes each) of English every week. The Key English Test (KET) is the benchmark to graduate from the VTC. Learners are expected to be at the level of "A1" according to the European Common Framework of Reference (CEFR). Despite the efforts exerted in teaching English since the establishment of the VTC in 2007, learners show no quantifiable improvement as demonstrated by final exam results, KET scores or teachers' remarks. The limited English level of learners affects their chance to advance in their studies and work. This issue, therefore, is a cry for English teachers to take a stance on how to design a syllabus that can motivate demotivated and disengaged adult learners to enable them to pass the KET.

### B. Purpose and Research Questions

The study aimed to provide the English teachers at the VTC with a real opportunity to explore the possibilities and

effectiveness of implementing an NS. It was hoped that they will embark on a discussion that helps to engage other teachers and syllabus designers at the VTC to design a plan to implement an NS if it is found to be appropriate and effective. Specifically, this study forwarded two research questions: 1) Are teachers and learners at the VTC ready to implement a negotiated syllabus? and 2) Does the negotiated syllabus implementation lead to improvement in learners' motivation?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Adult Education

An adult is defined according to his/her role in the society and his/her understanding of responsibility towards learning (Knowles, 1980; Ayish & Deveci, 2019). This definition matches with the definition given to adult education by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982, p. 9) as “a process whereby persons whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills”. UNESCO (2016) adopted a more comprehensive definition of adult learning and education (ALE) that considers most definitions. ALE is defined to incorporate all “formal, non-formal and informal or incidental learning and continuing education (both general and vocational, and both theoretical and practical) undertaken by adults” (UNESCO, 2016, p. 28). In brief, these definitions offer a framework that shows what and how adults learn.

Although Knowles' definition is meant to be inclusive for any adult, many UAE's adults do not share all of its features. Due to the high economic standards of many adults in the United Arab Emirates, their understanding of responsibility differs from adults in western and developing countries. However, adult learners at the VTC consider themselves responsible citizens since they leave their families and spend weeks and sometimes months away from their homes for training purposes. Studying in a boarding centre entails being responsible for some daily routines that are usually done by drivers, maids, and siblings.

### B. Adult Learning Theories

Elias and Merriam (2005) compare seven adult education philosophies: Liberal, progressive, behaviourist, humanist, radical/critical, analytic, and postmodern. It is unclear if the 250 teaching and administrative staff at the VCT hold a common philosophy due to the staff's different nationalities and educational backgrounds. This situation is beneficial because it enriches the staff's experience through creating an environment which encourages sharing and the negotiation of ideas. A mixture of radical, progressive and humanistic philosophy exists, but a humanistic/constructive view is dominant. This view supposes that a highly motivated and self-directed learner assumes responsibility and self-development, whereas teachers are seen more as facilitators in a co-learning process.

The theory of andragogy highlights the belief that adults are quite different from school children. Knowles (1980, p. 27) states that “the primary and immediate mission of every adult educator is to help individuals satisfy their needs and achieve their goals”. Thus, an effective teacher has the skills to recognise and meet learners' desires (Jarvis, 2010; Sieglöva, 2019). The principles and conditions of adult learning and teaching proposed by Knowles (1980) have been proposed and recommended by TAFE. Furthermore, TAFE and other universities in Australia employ an updated version of principles:

1. Adults need some kind of respect and safety (physically and emotionally).
2. Adults can and will utilise their senses to learn.
3. Adults learn more efficiently when they can apply new information to their existing perception.
4. Adults should practice recently learned skills and implement first-hand knowledge.
5. Adults best recollect the beginning and end of a learning session.
6. Adults can verify their own accomplishments when they receive feedback on their work.
7. Adults need to be actively involved in the learning process. (Hill et al., 2011, p. 93).

This study considers the seventh principle to be a turning point in helping teachers and learners to implement an NS because it empowers learners to make decisions about intended syllabi.

### C. Satisfying Learners' Needs

The satisfaction of one's needs has been emphasised by several scholarly investigations. Sullo (2009, p. 38), argues that human beings try to achieve the following established basic needs: to survive and be safe and secure, to connect and belong, to gain power and autonomy, and to play, enjoy and have fun. On the other hand, Maslow's theory of self-actualisation stresses that even if all the primary or physiological needs are satisfied, “we may often (if not always) expect that a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop unless the individual is doing what he is fitted for” (Stephens, 2000, p. 261). Consequently, adults, who like to take control of their own learning (Loeng, 2020), generally become involved in what they do well, hence they like to re-do it, and put in more effort (Littlejohn, 2001).

### D. Demotivated Learners and Negotiated Syllabus

McCall (2003, p. 113) indicates a number of characteristics of disengaged learners, which can be used to describe the learners at the VTC: behavioural dysfunction, need for academic remediation, social dysfunction, family conflict and

chronic absenteeism. In addition, learners at the VTC lack the skill of self-regulation, defined as “self-generated thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that are oriented to attaining goals” (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 65). Since self-regulated learners “monitor their behaviour in terms of their goals and self-reflect on their increasing effectiveness ... [it is expected that] [t]his enhances their self-satisfaction and motivation to continue to improve their methods of learning” (Zimmerman, 2002, p. 66).

Ma and Gao (2010) studied the effect of an NS on promoting students' autonomy in Dalian University of Technology, China. They found that “negotiation of purposes, content, ways of working and evaluation [enable] students [to] become highly motivated and wholeheartedly involved and take on greater responsibility for their own learning” (p. 901). Further, Tuan (2011, p. 13) studied whether “task negotiation could accommodate students' learning needs and increase their learning effectiveness”. He came to the conclusion that task negotiation enhances learners' motivation, involvement, and achievement. Similarly, Pakdaman et al. (2022) concluded: “that using a negotiated syllabus can filter language anxiety and significantly improve students' motivation for learning” (p. 35).

Another evidence comes from the action research study by Dalby (2010), who investigated the impact of a process syllabus on increasing “self-perceived student level, student use of learning strategies, and students' course satisfaction” (p. 10). The study indicated that the majority of students expressed position opinions about the motivating outcome of negotiating.

### *E. Types of Syllabi*

The literature on syllabus design draws a broad distinction between two contrasting types: product-based and process-based. Nunan (1988) and White (1988) categorise syllabi into two forms: product/synthetic/type “A” vs. process/analytic/type “B” respectively. According to Wette (2011), a product syllabus is developed externally, and teachers have to follow it, while a process is one that “results from explicit negotiations with learners about their needs and wishes” (p. 137).

### *F. What Is a Negotiated Syllabus?*

In the context of learning, negotiation has something to do with “the discussion between all members of the classroom to decide how learning and teaching are to be organised” (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p. 1). Negotiated syllabi are also called “process syllabi” which consider the questions of “who does what with whom, or what subject matter, with what resources, when, how, and for what learning purpose (s)” (Breen, 1984, p. 56). That is to say, the process model relies on learner wishes, goals and improvement processes (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

Breen and Littlejohn (2000) identify three types of negotiation: personal, collaborative and procedural. The former occurs when people use a complex mental process to understand what they read or hear and be understood. On the other hand, interactive negotiation occurs when people express their understanding or when they fail to get the point of a particular conversational interaction. The “primary focus of procedural negotiation is less upon meaning than upon reaching agreement” (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p. 9). They highlight that “the primary purpose of procedural negotiation is managing teaching and learning as a group experience” (p. 8). The outcomes of a procedural negotiation explain the nature of a process syllabus which is the cornerstone of any NS or curriculum.

The concept of negotiation is evident in the emergence of four strands: humanistic and open language teaching, learning stratagem research, learner independence and syllabus negotiation (Tudor, 1996). These strands emphasise the centrality of learners in the “language-learning process and the learner's affective, cognitive and linguistic needs should all play a role in determining the content and implementation of whatever syllabus type is decided upon.” (Clarke, 1991, p. 16). Similarly, Nunan (1988, p. 20) asserts that “humanistic education [...] reflects the notion that education should be concerned with the development of autonomy in the learner”. Nunan's assertion shows that the VCT has the capability of implementing an NS since many teachers at the VCT believe in the effectiveness of humanistic education.

Breen and Littlejohn (2000) list seven situations where an NS is possible: teachers and learners have different backgrounds, course duration is short, a need to find common ground among diverse learners, a needs analysis is not likely, no main textbook, learners' past experiences is a reference point, and an open-ended and exploratory course. Although these situations are important, the readiness of learners, teachers and the management system to implement an NS are decisive factors. What do learners and teachers need if we want them to be part of a negotiated cycle? Is the management system ready to empower teachers and syllabus designers to make critical decisions concerning syllabus design? Are syllabus designers well qualified to make the necessary changes to implement an NS? Positive answers to these questions seem to outweigh the importance of the seven listed situations.

### *G. Negotiated Classroom Decisions*

The range of decisions subject to negotiation is “any and all decisions that need to be made in the ongoing creation of the language curriculum of a particular class or group of learners” (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p. 30). Teachers and learners work together to reach an agreement on four aspects of the curriculum: purpose(s), content, methods, and evaluation. According to Breen and Littlejohn (2000, p. 31), seeking an agreement on these four aspects can be achieved through negotiating the following questions: Why are we learning the language? What should be the focus of our work? How should the learning work be carried out? And how well has the learning proceeded?

Meanwhile, asking and answering the four questions has to be seen as part of a cycle that facilitates future decisions.

The negotiation cycle indicates three steps that describe its sequence. At step 1, teachers and learners negotiate the four questions and jointly make decisions. At step 2, decisions are acted upon, and a number of actions take place in order to form the practical experience of the learners. At step 3, the outcomes of the actions are evaluated by teachers and learners.

Involving learners in classroom decision making (henceforth DM) has to be gradual. Breen and Littlejohn (2000, p. 286) illustrate what they call the “curriculum pyramid”, which includes six levels as shown in Figure 1.

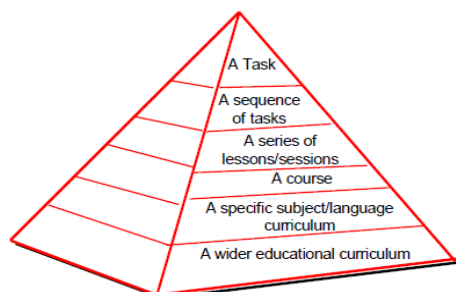


Figure 1: The Curriculum Pyramid: Levels of Focus

These levels include immediate, moment-by-moment decisions (tasks), what to teach (syllabus) and what and how learners will learn (language curriculum).

To sum up, the negotiation cycle illustrates the four areas subject to negotiation and the curriculum pyramid, which shows the seven progressive levels to which the cycle can be applied, and offers a framework for a process syllabus. Figure 2 summarises the structure of a process syllabus.

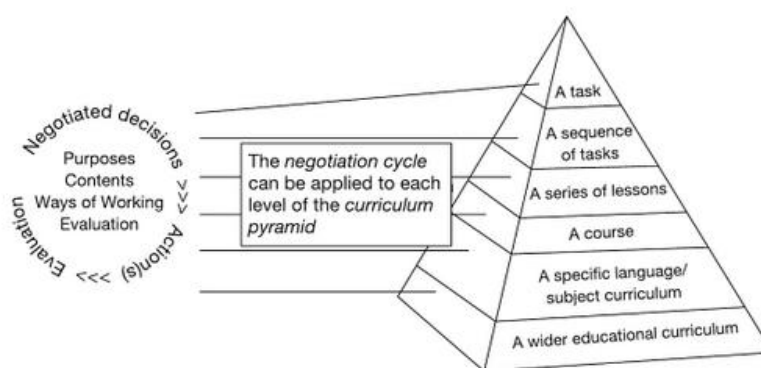


Figure 2: A Process Syllabus (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p. 287)

#### H. Arguments for Procedural Negotiation

The case for employing a procedural negotiated syllabus is supported by a considerable number of references and studies. For instance, Breen and Littlejohn (2000, pp. 19-29) identify six advantages of an NS:

1. It is a means for responsible membership of the classroom community;
2. It can construct and reflect learning as an emancipatory process;
3. It can activate the socio-cultural means of the classroom group;
4. It enables learners to exercise their active agency in learning;
5. It can enrich the classroom as a resource for language learning;
6. It can inform and extend the teacher's pedagogic strategies

Additionally, Nation and Macalister (2010, p. 156) emphasise that an NS responds to learners' needs, enhances motivation, creates meaning-focused activities, and develops learners' awareness of language-learning activities. Similarly, Kaplan & Renard (2015) highlight the effectiveness of engaging learners in the process of two-way learning through negotiating the syllabus to increase their “commitment and motivation to fulfil its components” (p. 419). Furthermore, Ansary and Babaii (2002) emphasise the importance of negotiation since it facilitates the process of finding a textbook that responds to the different needs of learners.

#### I. Factors for Successful Implementation of an NS

Like all other types of syllabi, the negotiated syllabus has its own limitations. White (1988) considers a process syllabus as a utopian proposal, causing problems for those who want to implement it in the world of everyday affairs. White (1988, pp. 101-102) suggests considering the following constraints:

1. A lack of formal evaluation in practice;

2. Demands a high level of competent teachers;
3. Inadequate provisions for relating the syllabus to its context;
4. Redefinition of power and authority in the classroom would be culturally inappropriate in some societies;
5. The need for a supply of materials and learning resources if a single textbook is not used;
6. The focus on procedures rather than on results may constrain learners' achievement of intended goals.

Long and Crookes (1992) list four drawbacks of an NS: language form is not addressed, lack of a theoretical reference or research in SLA, arbitrary selection of tasks without prior needs identification, and the absence of clear criteria for grading and sequencing tasks. Additionally, Nation and Macalister (2010) talk about two types of disadvantages. The first results from a lack of knowledge or experience with this type of syllabi. The second is that implementing a fully negotiated syllabus requires teachers that are highly skilled in syllabus design and producing resources. They mention the following disadvantages as examples of the two types: learners' reluctance to negotiate, learners' ignorance of the range of options they could choose from, teachers' fear of loss of power and status, and difficulty in reaching an agreement with ill-behaved learners.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

Given the purpose of this study, which is to explore the possibility of implementing an NS at the VTC, the use of a mixed-methods descriptive single-case study method is the most appropriate methodology because describing teachers' views involves the collection of extensive data in order to gain insights into phenomena of interest (Gay, 1996, p. 11). Equally, the researchers collected numerical data in order to further explain the learners' responses.

#### B. Sampling

By using a table of random numbers, fifty male learners (25%) were selected as a sample to represent 200 learners at the VCT. The average age of the sample is 19 years. The majority of learners (90%) were beginners with six years of school study at state schools. Around 50% were without formal education for three years before joining VCT. In addition, three male English teachers: Ali, Ahmad and Khaled (Aliases), who teach English to all learners at the VCT, were interviewed. They were recruited from different countries to enrich the cultural experience of learners. They are from Egypt (MA in TESOL), Iraq (MA student in TESOL) and South Africa (BA in English). Two of them have been teaching English for more than twenty years while the third one has ten years of experience.

#### C. Data Collection and Instruments

The data were collected at the VTC where learners were studying. An interview and a survey questionnaire were employed to collect teachers and students' views on implementing an NS. A brief description of how the researchers collected the data is discussed in the next sections.

##### (a). Teachers' Interview

The three teachers attended a 90-minute session to be familiar with an NS (definition, model, outcomes and challenges). Prior to asking the focus group (Ali, Ahmad and Khaled) to answer the question, three teachers of English from another department at VCT were asked to answer a set of open-ended questions for piloting purposes. They suggested that some changes be made in order to make the questions clearer and to aid in answering the main questions of the paper. The interview agenda consisted of the following questions:

1. Are the conditions at VTC appropriate for implementing an NS? Explain.
2. What are the potential advantages of an NS?
3. What are the potential disadvantages of implementing an NS?
4. Would you suggest that other teachers implement an NS in other subjects? Why?
5. Have you got any recommendations related to the implementation of an NS?

The interviewees asked for a copy of the interview questions to discuss them before the real interview. They were happy with the questions, and they did not have any comments on them. Then, one of the researchers interviewed them as one group to "produce more legitimate claims to the validity or credibility of data" (Hobson & Townsend, 2010, p. 234). They took part in a 60-minute semi-structured interview by answering open-ended questions.

##### (b). Learners' Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in the study was adapted from Nunan (1988) and derived from the literature review of the proposed process model of an NS (see Appendix A). It aimed to explore learners' opinions about learning English and towards implementing an NS. After piloting the questionnaire with three learners, the researchers made the necessary changes. The questionnaire contained a combination of Likert-type scale and true/false questions. Specifically, five areas of research questions are addressed: (1) reasons for learning English; (2) methodological preferences; (3) learning thinking skills; (4) learners' involvement; and (5) motivation and negotiation. The learners were assured of the anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses by completing a consent form.

#### D. Data Analysis

After data collection, the qualitative and quantitative data were analysed separately. Data from teachers' interviews were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. The focus of the questionnaire was on collecting descriptive data through quantitative data to get a clear picture of the learners' perceptions. Therefore, descriptive statistics were used to represent and discuss the learners' responses. The results of the questionnaire are depicted as tables and charts.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

##### A. Learners' Responses

To explore the learners' attitudes and opinions about learning English, fifty questionnaires were distributed to learners, of which, a total of forty (80%) were completed and returned. Learners' responses to the questionnaire are provided below.

##### Part I: Reasons for learning English

Fifty percent of the learners did not mention any reason for learning English. In other words, they did not want to learn English because they think they can get a job in the army without a good command of English language. Of course, there are other possible reasons, mainly negative attitudes towards learning English because of issues related to the school environment, teachers, syllabus, etc. The rest of the responses fall into four categories: enjoyment (20%), communication (12.5%), employment (5%) and social needs (12.5%) as shown in Figure 3.

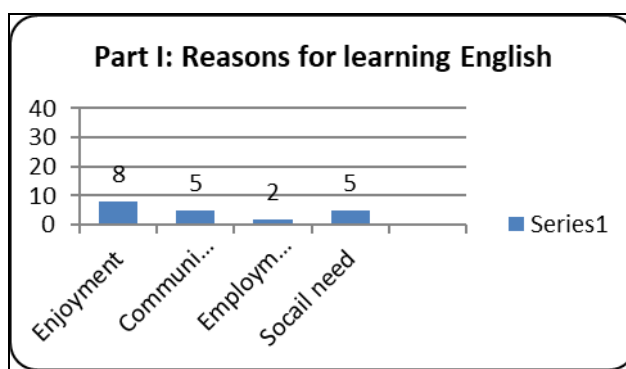


Figure 3 Question 1: Why Do You Learn/Want to Learn English?

The responses indicate that learners do not place any value in learning English for academic purposes. Teachers need to identify the learners' needs and interests as illustrated by Knowles (1980, p. 27) who states that "the primary and immediate mission of every adult educator [one educates adults] is to help individuals satisfy their needs". Thus, syllabus designers at the VCT need to include the learners' four areas of interest in the syllabus.

##### Part II: Methodological Preferences

Figure 4 shows that learners prefer learning individually to being in one large group. Eighteen learners favour learning in a small group while twenty-six learners strongly disagree to work in pairs. In addition, the thirty-five learners who were neutral (N) in their replies said that their neutral replies were due to their belief that all learning\teaching patterns yield the same results.

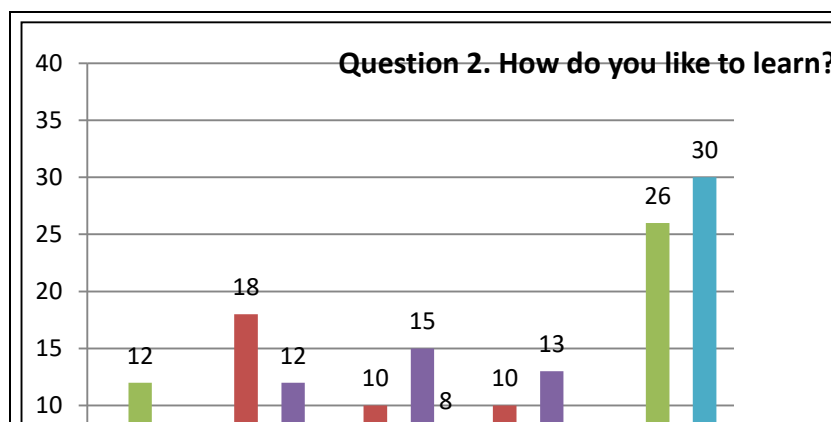


Figure 4 How Do You Like to Learn?

It is likely that learners fear being unsuccessful when they work in pairs or groups. They think that working alone may help them to achieve a sense of "self-actualization" as affirmed by Maslow.

##### Part III: Content

All of the learners feel a need to learn thinking skills as shown in Figure (5).

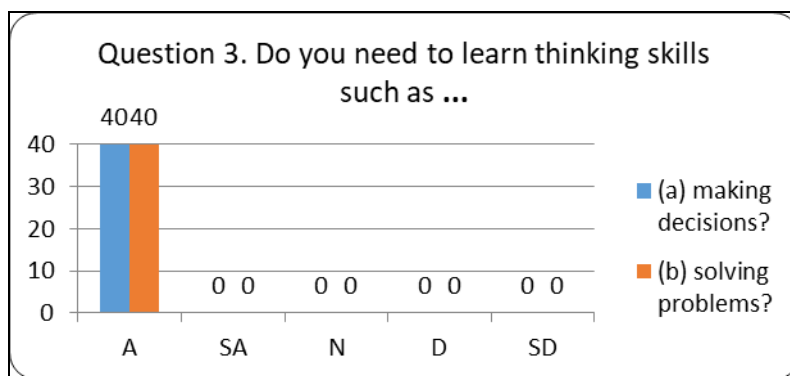


Figure 5. Do You Need to Learn Thinking Skills Such as DM and PS?

All learners are interested in learning how to solve problems and to make sound decisions. Mastering these skills is of primary significance for them since they experience social and academic problems. In addition, this interest is helpful for teachers to involve learners in DM about their learning.

#### Part IV: Negotiated decisions

Figure 6 shows that 100% of learners agree to be involved in DM on the methods of teaching. The same percentage of learners think that they need to take part in their assessment. Thirty-seven learners are keen on defining the purposes of learning English at the VCT. Some disagreement exists regarding their involvement in DM about the content of the syllabus. Twenty-five (62.5%) learners agree to play a role in selecting the content while eight are neutral and seven oppose giving learners any role in selecting the themes of the syllabus.

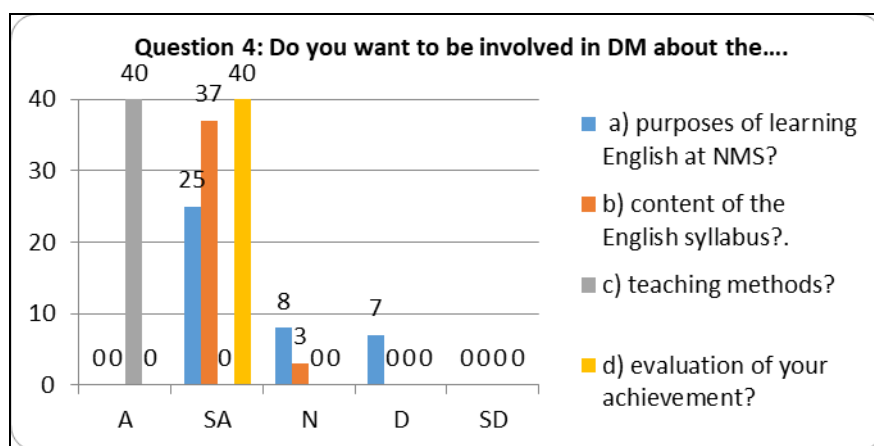


Figure 6. Do You Want to be Involved in DM About Learning English?

Learners are keen on having a role in DM about their learning since they see themselves as independent entities. This interest in having a say in their education matches Nunan's (1988) belief that humanistic education should help learners develop their autonomy.

#### Part V: Open questions (Questions 5 & 6)

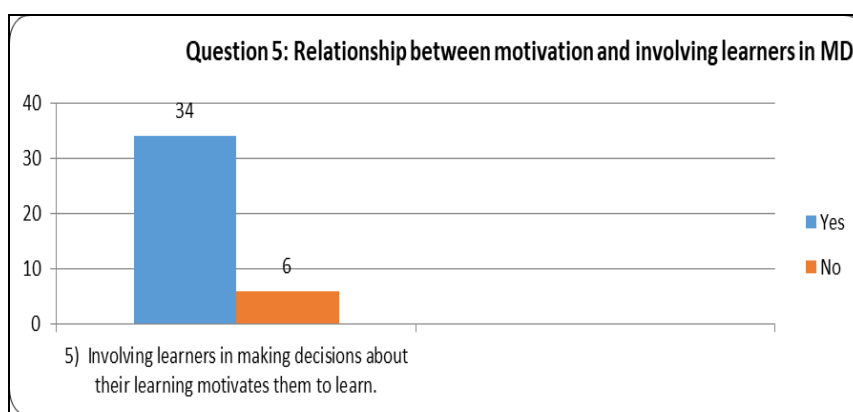


Figure 7. Relationship Between Motivation and Learner Involvement in MD

Thirty-four learners (85%) agree that making decisions about their learning motivates them to learn English while



15% stated they do not share this opinion without giving any justifications. Those who said “yes” gave a set of common justifications. Being part of the decision-making process makes them feel that they are respected and esteemed. In addition, they think that they can voice their concerns, interests and dreams. Finally, they will be motivated to learn what they choose rather than things imposed on them. These justifications agree with a study by Ma and Gao (2010), which shows that negotiation of purposes, contents, ways of working and evaluation enhances learners’ motivation.

In answering question six, 25 learners believe that an NS is suitable for the VTC (Figure 8). They think that adults need to be responsible for their learning. Furthermore, they will get rid of written tasks and exams which they dislike. Also, they will choose what suits their needs as adults who only want to be trained to get a job, for example, weapons, military principles, internet and communication. Five learners think that they can reduce the time of teaching because they are good at arguing for the sake of argument. It is worth noting not to think of negotiation as a bargaining process by teachers and learners; on the contrary, it entails cooperation and teamwork spirit to reach an agreement.

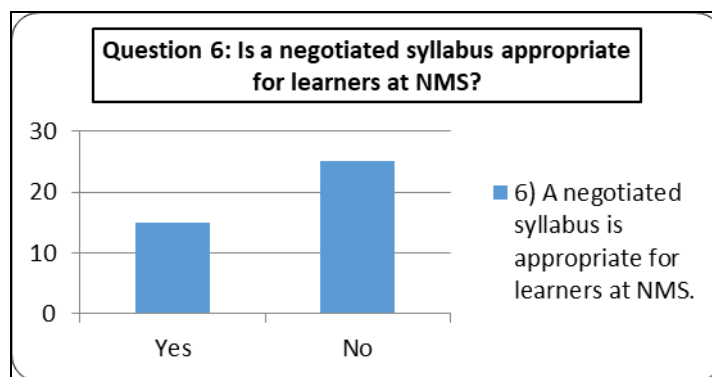


Figure 8. Appropriateness of NS for NMC

Conversely, 15 learners think that only teachers are qualified to choose what suits learners. Furthermore, since the majority of learners are low achievers, they will tend to choose very simple tasks which will not develop their language. Moreover, it is likely that it will be difficult to reach an agreement because learners have different and negative opinions about learning.

These responses show that learners are aware of the conditions for implementing an NS. They highlight the importance of motivation by involving learners in their learning. They believe that learners have a central role in helping teachers to implement new ideas. Besides, it is important for learners to be responsible for their learning by being part of the learning process. As adults, they need to control their learning rather than feel manipulated by someone else’s demands (Loeng, 2020).

#### B. Qualitative Thematic Analysis of Teachers’ Interviews

##### Question: 1. Are the conditions at the NMC appropriate for implementing an NS?

According to Mr. Khaled, the conditions are to some extent appropriate because of demotivated and careless learners’ low level of English, a top-down management system, and overloaded teachers. Conversely, Mr. Ali and Mr. Ahmad think that conditions are suitable because of qualified teachers, rich resources, the different backgrounds of teachers and learners, and absence of needs analysis. They think that since learners are adults, they do not support the learning of material imposed on them. Thus, negotiating the components of an intended syllabus with learners is a must. On the other hand, they think it would be problematic to implement an NS due to lack of adequate training in thinking skills for teachers and learners, the absence of a negotiation culture, different teaching methods, and lack of communication between teachers and syllabus designers.

Obviously, the VTC is not the ideal environment to implement an NS, although most of the conditions defined by Breen and Littlejohn (2000) exist. Demotivated learners, heavy teaching loads and hierarchical management system are barriers. On the other hand, it is recommended to try an NS gradually with advanced learners as highlighted in a study by Shamami (2010) who concluded that an NS is not effective with intermediate students.

##### Questions: 2&3. What are the most potential advantages and disadvantages of NS?

The teachers distinguish between advantages for teachers and learners. Teachers will have a good opportunity to develop their teaching and research practices by studying different syllabi to justify their choice of an NS. Negotiating with learners requires strong communication skills which can create a friendly environment in the classroom. Another advantage is promoting learning and practising productive thinking skills: DM and problem solving (PS). Finally, avoiding the drawbacks of using just a single textbook by considering other available resources is expected since no single textbook can meet the needs of all learners due to individual differences among learners.

On the other hand, a number of possible drawbacks of an NS were outlined. A high percentage of learners may not cooperate with the teachers. Some of them may be reluctant to negotiate their learning with teachers because they are careless. A second issue relates to the extra work required by teachers and administrative staff to acquaint themselves with this new syllabus. It is likely they prefer using current textbooks to be involved with reluctant learners in a long

journey of negotiation. Mr. Ahmad pointed out that only a few remarkable teachers can implement such an “ideal syllabus.” On the other hand, Mr. Ali believed that it is difficult to reach an agreement with curriculum and assessment units because they believe in standardised tests and ready-made syllabi to ensure fair assessment for all learners in different departments. Mr. Khaled envisaged behavioural problems if learners are given more freedom to negotiate their learning, “learners will dominate us” he said.

The teachers’ responses reflect the main advantages mentioned by Breen and Littlejohn (2000), Ansary and Babaii (2002), Dalby (2010), Nation and Macalister (2010), Ma and Gao (2010) and Tuan (2011). Examples include: motivating learners, enhancing academic achievement, reflecting learning as an emancipatory process, and enabling learners to be responsible for their learning. Similarly, the highlighted disadvantages match with what is mentioned in the literature review especially by White (1988) and Nation and Macalister (2010).

*Question 4. Would you suggest that other teachers implement NS in other subjects? Why?*

The teachers gave a conditional agreement to implement an NS. Mr. Ali agreed to try it with high-level learners who are interested in learning English and can communicate in English. He also asked for “semi-negotiated syllabus” where learners and teachers make decisions about content and teaching methods. Mr. Khaled called for “part-negotiated syllabus” with intermediate and high-level learners regarding the content where learners choose from a set of themes. On the other hand, Mr. Ahmad suggested “semi-structured negotiated syllabus” where learners make decisions about evaluation and content by choosing from a set of alternatives. They are against implementing a complete NS as suggested by Breen and Littlejohn (2000) because some conditions are not suitable, especially the level of learners and the top-down management system.

The teachers’ conditioned agreement to implement an NS harmonises with concerns by writers like White (1988), Clarke (1991), and Long and Crooker (1992). Nevertheless, it has two significant advantages: motivating learners and enhancing their sense of ownership. Ensuring that learners possess these two characteristics may solve many academic and social problems for these learners and the VTC.

*Question 5: Recommendations*

The interviewed teachers had the following recommendations:

1. Conducting action research to evaluate the best approach to implement an NS;
2. PD sessions on designing an NS for all subjects;
3. Training learners in PS, DM and negotiation;
4. Piloting with one class by each teacher;
5. Gradual implementation of an NS;
6. Implementing an NS first by the Arabic and Islamic teachers to overcome the language barrier; and
7. Spreading a culture of negotiation at VTC.

Implementing the suggested recommendations can help in overcoming many of the constraints of an NS. Providing teachers and learners with appropriate training in critical thinking skills and communication skills, especially negotiation is critical to a successful implementation of an NS.

## V. CONCLUSION

The theoretical literature review, learners’ questionnaire and teachers’ interview have shown that a negotiated syllabus serves many purposes and may have a positive impact on learners’ motivation, academic achievement, critical thinking skills and personal development. Yet, implementing a negotiated syllabus at the VTC will be a difficult task and this is mainly because of demotivated learners, overloaded teachers and the top-down management system. Nevertheless, these challenges should not prevent qualified, dedicated and creative teachers from being involved in implementing an NS. Gradualism and professionalism in the implementation process are keys to success.

The findings have implications for teachers and syllabus designers in the realm of TEFL in particular and adult vocational education in general. Teachers can help less motivated adult learners make decisions about their learning. Textbook writers, especially in the context of VTC, have to consider the needs of adult learners who are disengaged from school. A need for the inclusion of, and emphasis on, learning and teaching critical thinking skills is a necessity.

Since this current study is limited to three teachers and one military training centre, it has some limitations. Firstly, it is difficult to generalise the results since the size of the sample is relatively small: Fifty learners and three teachers. Secondly, none of the other core subject teachers took part in the study to validate the feasibility of the implementation of an NS in other courses. Lastly, the research has only focused on the military learners. However, it is necessary to investigate the potential of implementing an NS in other vocational departments to find out the possibility of generalising the findings of this study. There is a need for more comprehensive research on the impact and effectiveness of an NS on improving the four language skills and learners’ motivation. This research needs to demonstrate whether the NS approach can be successfully applied by other teachers and students in other schools.

It is the researchers’ belief that many teachers can implement an NS effectively if they comprehend its basic features and have the motivation and encouragement to be guides on the side rather than sages on the stage. We have no doubt that an NS could yield more fruitful results, especially if it is institutionalised.

APPENDIX A LEARNERS' SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE  
(Part I – Part III are adapted from Nunan 1988, pp. 322-325)

**PART 1: Reasons for learning English**

Question 1: Why do you want to learn English?

---



---



---

**INSTRUCTIONS:** For Part II to Part IV: Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements by checking (✓) the appropriate box. Agree (A), Strongly Agree (SA), Neither agree nor disagree (N), Disagree (D), Strongly disagree (SD)

Area	Indicator (item)	A	SA	N	D	SD
<b>PART II:</b>  Methodological Preferences (MP)	Question 1: How do you like learning?					
	(a) individually?	0	18	10	10	2
	(b) in pairs?	12	0	2	0	26
	(c) in small groups?	0	12	15	13	0
	(d) in one large group?	2	0	8	0	30
	Question 2: How would you like to spend the time in the classroom?					
	(a) Doing some kind of activity based on your personal and work experience and interests?	10	16	14	0	0
<b>PART III: Content (C)</b>	Question 3: Do you need to learn thinking skills such as					
	(a) decision- making (DM)?	40	0	0	0	0
	(b) problem-solving (PS)?	40	0	0	0	0
<b>PART IV: Negotiated decisions (ND)</b>	Question 4: Do you want to be involved in DM about the....					
	a) purposes of learning English at VTC?	0	25	8	7	0
	b) content of the English syllabus?	0	37	3	0	0
	c) teaching methods?	40	0	0	0	0
	d) evaluation of your achievement?	0	40	0	0	0

**PART V:** Please answer the following questions. Give reasons.

Question	Yes	No	Reasons
5) Involving learners in DM about their learning motivates them to learn.	34	6	
6) A negotiated syllabus is appropriate for learners at VTC.	15	25	

Thank you for your cooperation and wish you all success.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Abu-Ayyash, E.A.S. & Assaf, M. (2016). The impact of learning-style and task-based teaching of language on learners' achievement. *Journal of Education in Black Sea Region*, 2(1), 29–54.
- [2] 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.
- [3] Ayish, N. & Deveci, T. (2019). Student perceptions of responsibility for their own learning and for supporting peers' learning in a project-based learning environment. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 31(2), 224–237.
- [4] Breen, M. P. (1987). Contemporary paradigms in syllabus design: Part II. *Language Teaching*, 20(3), 157–174.
- [5] Breen, M. P., & Littlejohn, A. (2000). *Classroom decision making: Negotiation and process syllabi in practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Clarke, D. F. (1991). The negotiated syllabus: What is it and how is it likely to work? *Applied Linguistics*, 12(1), 13–27.
- [7] Dalby, K. (2010). The teacher decides all. Not!. *The English Connection*, 14(4), 1–12.
- [8] Darkenwald, G. & Merriam, S. (1982). *Adult education: Foundations of practice*. New York: Harper & Row.
- [9] Elias, J. & Merriam, S. (2005). *Philosophical foundations of adult education*. Malabar: Krieger Publication.
- [10] Gay, L. R. (1996). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- [11] Hill, D., Hill, T. & Perlitz, L. (2011). *Vocational training and assessment: A complete course for TAE 10 certificate IV in training and assessment*. Sydney: McGraw-Hill.
- [12] Hobson, A. & Townsend. A. (2010). 'Interviewing as educational research method(s)'. In D. Hartas (Ed.). *Educational research and inquiry: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. London: Continuum International, Publishing Group, pp. 222–238.
- [13] Jarvis, P. (2010). *Adult education and lifelong learning: Theory and practice*. London: Routledge.

- [14] Kaplan, D. M., & Renard, M. K. (2015). Negotiating your syllabus: Building a collaborative contract. *Journal of Management Education*, 39(3), 400-421.
- [15] Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*. New York: Cambridge, The Adult Education Company.
- [16] Littlejohn, A. (2001). Motivation: Where does it come from? Where does it go? *English Teaching Professional*, 19(1), 5-9.
- [17] Loeng, S. (2020). Self-directed learning: A core concept in adult education. *Education Research International*, 20(2), 1-12.
- [18] Long, M. H., & Crookes, G. (1992). Three approaches to task-based syllabus design. *TESOL Quarterly*, 26(1), 27-56.
- [19] Ma, Z., & Gao, P. (2010). Promoting learner autonomy through developing process syllabus negotiation: the basis of learner autonomy. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 1(6), 901-908.
- [20] McCall, H. J. (2003). When successful alternative students "disengage" from regular school. *Reclaiming Children & Youth*, 12(2), 113-117.
- [21] Nation, I. S. P., & Macalister, J. (Eds.). (2011). *Case studies in language curriculum design: Concepts and approaches in action around the world*. New York: Routledge.
- [22] Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus design*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [23] Pakdaman, A., Alibakhshi, G. & Baradaran, A. (2022). The Impact of Negotiated Syllabus on Foreign Language Learners' Language Anxiety and Learning Motivation. *Teaching English Language*, 16(1), 35-63.
- [24] Peyvandi, G., Azarnoosh, M. & Siyyari, M. (2019). The effect of negotiated syllabus on the reading comprehension of ESP students. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 9(4), 121-133.
- [25] Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [26] Sieglöva, D. (2019). From motivation to successful learning: Needs analysis for successful teaching. *Language Learning in Higher Education*, 9(2), 429-443.
- [27] Stephens, D. (Ed.). (2000). *The Maslow Business Reader*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- [28] Sullo, B. (2009). *The Motivated Student: Unlocking the Enthusiasm for Learning*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.
- [29] Tuan, L.T. (2011). Negotiating tasks in EFL classrooms. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(1), 13-25.
- [30] Tudor, I. (1996). *Learner-Centeredness as Language Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [31] UNESCO. (2016). *3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education: The Impact of Adult Learning and Education on Health and Well-Being, Employment and the Labour Market, and Social, Civic and Community Life*. Paris: UNESCO.
- [32] Wette, R. (2011). Product-process distinctions in ELT curriculum theory and practice. *ELT Journal*, 65(2), 136-144.
- [33] White, R.V. (1988). *The ELT Curriculum, Design, Innovation and Management*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- [34] Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory into Practice*, 41(2), 64-70.



**Mohammad A. Assaf** is an instructor of English at the UAE Ministry of Education. He holds a PhD in TESOL from The British University in Dubai. His main research interests include several areas, such as curriculum, writing and reading in L2 and thinking skills.



**Mohammad I. Zabadi** is an instructor of English at Gulf University for Science and Technology-Kuwait. He holds a PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Bristol-UK. His research interests lie in second language acquisition and literary translation studies.



**Emad A. S. Abu-Ayyash** is an assistant professor of TESOL at The British University in Dubai. His research interests include several areas, such as TESOL, discourse analysis and translation.

# EFL Students' Perceptions of the Effects of the Integration of Reading and Writing on Their Writing Skills

Cang T. Nguyen

Faculty of Foreign Languages, Kien Giang University, Kien Giang, Vietnam

**Abstract**—The present study aimed to investigate EFL gifted high school students' perceptions of the effects of integration of reading and writing on their writing skills. 103 gifted students of grade 11 from three gifted high schools in the Mekong Delta took part in this study. The study followed a descriptive, mixed method research design employing the questionnaire and semi-structured interview to collect quantitative and qualitative data about EFL gifted high school students' perceptions of the effects of integration of reading and writing on their writing skills. The findings of the study revealed that students highly perceived the positive effects of integrating reading and writing into writing lessons in regard to language, organization, content, communicative achievement, evaluation and effectiveness.

**Index Terms**—perceptions of integration of reading and writing, integration of reading and writing

## I. INTRODUCTION

English, together with technology, has been recognized as facilitating tools in accelerating the growth of global market and cooperation worldwide when it has helped to facilitate understanding among countries (British Council, 2013). Therefore, improving the students' ability of using English effectively has become one of the priorities in the education innovation programs. In the domain of language learning, writing is considered a difficult skill for learners to acquire (Ferretti, 2007). As a productive skill, writing requires learner's critical and creative thinking to convey their thoughts, ideas, expressions and feelings in readable texts (Richards & Renandya, 2002; Rao, 2017). The learners have to use a wide range of linguistic knowledge, the vocabulary choice and cohesive devices to compose essential blocks of texts (Hyland, 2003).

In Vietnam, for English majors at gifted high schools, writing is the requirement in exams. However, students face challenges in organizing their own words into a written organized paper due to lack of writing practice when it comes to reality that writing at high school has not been paid sufficient attention. More importantly, lack of lexical sources, ideas and structures brings about their failure in constructing a new composition (Rachel & Maslawati, 2019). Hence, some materials have introduced reading texts to writing lessons with the aim of providing comprehensible input for writing, which can help them explore more vocabulary and structures for writing. Reading texts provide information that can be used in writing production. Several studies have focused on the effectiveness of the integration of reading and writing to facilitate learners' writing skills. However, there has been little research conducted on students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills, and particularly on English majors of gifted high schools. Additionally, personal interviews with English teachers of gifted high schools revealed that reading integrated into writing lessons has received little attention. The current study is in an attempt to explore EFL gifted high school students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Reading

There has been a variety of definitions of reading. First of all, in Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistic, reading is cited as the process of interpreting the content of a written text. According to William and Fredicka (2020), reading refers to the ability to interpret information from printed texts coherently. From another perspective, reading is considered as the process in which there is combination of the text and the reader's own background knowledge to build meaning (Nunan, 2003). To be specific, reading can be seen as an interactive process between readers and the text of encoding a series of written symbols by using their knowledge to build, create and construct meaning. Reading can be claimed as a silent activity or the text can be voiced loudly.

### B. Writing

Byrne (1988) mentioned that writing is the process of decoding or interpretation of messages into language. The learners "produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and link together in a certain way" (Byrne, 1988, p. 2). In the same line, writing is recognized as "a process of complicated cognition that requires intellectual

effort over a considerable period of time" (Nunan, 1999, p. 273). It is not merely a process of transferring codes into the second language; it involves practice of several skills such as synthesizing, analyzing and criticizing (Omaggio, 2001; Rao, 2007). Writing is supposed as the mental work that requires generating and inventing ideas, expressing them and knowledge of organizing them into clear and coherent texts (Nunan, 2003). In this paper, writing is supposed as the production of communication of a message in written form to a particular reader for a purpose.

### C. Integration of Reading and Writing

It was noticed that "the teaching of language skills cannot be conducted through separate and discrete structural elements" (Corder, 1971, 1978; Stern, 1992) while in second language acquisition research and theory, reading is an essential source of comprehensible input for acquisition (Krashen, 1982). The only requirement "is that the story or main idea be comprehensible and the topic be something the student is genuinely interested in, that he would read in his first language" (Krashen, 1982, p. 164). However, for years, that reading and writing were taught in a traditional way in which they were separated skills were well-documented (Nelson & Calfee, 1998). Reading tasks focused on answering questions related to information in the reading text whereas writing ones were made of a short prompt given to the writers to write an essay. Likewise, grammatical accuracy and the composition outputs were highlighted more than the process in writing lessons. Gradually, learners faced many challenges when they began to write as they were not familiar with brainstorming ideas and vocabulary and inactive in organizing a whole new text. Lack of prior knowledge and lexical sources contributed to the learners' rejection of English writing while their poor writing performance is derived from insufficient writing materials (Asmari, 2013). Since writing deals with vocabulary, spelling, grammar and syntax, it needs to be exposed to a comprehensible input (Raimes, 1983).

Of the four English language skills, reading and writing have a mutual effect. The practice of integrating reading and writing emerged as the Whole language approach assumes English competences including reading, writing, speaking and listening should be acquired not in isolation, but in integration. The Whole Language movement strongly advocates the idea that that language should be taught as a whole. Rigg (1991) claims that "If language isn't kept whole, it isn't language anymore" (p. 522). Writing is a process of communicating and linking ideas, developing information and supporting arguments to readers in a well-written form. Nunan (2003) defines writing as the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into clear statements and paragraphs. It can be deduced from this definition that, since it involves mental work, an individual cannot just sit and put words together if he or she cannot invent an idea in relation to what has been read, and express it in meaningful sentences that can be read and understood. This definition proves that as learners read, there is a greater chance of reproducing the ideas derived from what has been read. Hence, it is inferred that writers need much information and language before writing (Kellogg, 2018). Meanwhile, Krashen (2012) claimed that writing ability is not from writing experience but from reading. Writers need knowledge about the world and the organization and structures to apply to writing (Aulls, 1985; Flood & Lapp, 1987). In this concern, Eisterhold (1990) regards reading as a relevant language skill from which learners' assumption in written texts can be made. In the same regard, reading is the basis for writing. "Reading materials are the thinking bank for writing" (Kennedy, 2011, p. 30). Reading materials before writing is supposed to enrich writing content. Stotsky (1983) reports:

*To summarize briefly, the collational studies show almost consistently that better writers tend to be better readers (of their own writing as well as other reading materials), and better writers tend to read more than poorer writers, and that better readers tend to produce more syntactically mature writing than poorer readers (p.636)*

Read-to-write model states that reading can enhance writing. When reading to learn or to integrate, writers analyze the model in terms of structure and context, and then make evaluation and selection of information, organization and language use to create their compositions (Kintsch, 1998).

In other words, reading belongs to receptive skills as reading can build knowledge of diverse genres on which writing can employ to create new texts. Brown (1987) asserts that "by reading and studying a variety of relevant types of text, students can gain important insights both about how they should write and about subject matter that may become the topic of their writing" (p. 331). We could make a confession that reading can support the learners with writing samples which they can initially imitate and then develop a new text world.

### D. Effects of the Integration of Reading and Writing on Writing Lessons

According to Krashen (1993), learners do not learn to write by writing; instead, they develop writing style through reading. Krashen (1984) theorized that a person's "writing competence comes only from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest and/or pleasure" (p.19) and added that "it is reading that gives the writer the 'feel' for the look and texture of reader-based prose" (p. 20). For the above-mentioned usefulness of reading, the effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in perspectives such as: language use, organization of writing, content of writing, communicative achievement of writing, evaluation of writing and effectiveness of writing are the focus of this article.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

This study is a descriptive, mixed method research design since it involves quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect and analyze data. Mixed research method is considered to make up for the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative method since applying only qualitative method may lead to biased interpretation and difficulty in generalizability of findings due to its limited sample size (Creswell & Plano, 2011). As noted by Choy (2014), a complementary combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches yields better results, providing a fuller picture of the research problem. In addition, mixed method design allows researcher to use more than one tools of data collection rather than only one alone, reducing restriction to type of data collection.

### B. Participants

103 participants aged from 16-18 years old from three English majored classes of grade 11 from the three gifted high schools in 3 provinces in the Mekong Delta were invited to fill in the questionnaires. They were assumed to be similar in terms of background knowledge since they followed the same syllabus. They were intentionally selected so that their qualities could fit the aim of the study. In Creswell's word (2014), this "will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (p.239).

In terms of genders, the number of female students was 68 (66%), outweighing that of male students which was 35 (34%). All the participants have been engaged in writing lessons in which reading and writing are integrated since Grade 10.

TABLE 1  
SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPANTS' PERSONAL INFORMATION

Personal information	Number (N=103)	
Gender	Male	35
	Female	68
Age	16	7
	17	95
	18	1

### C. Research Instruments

#### (a). Questionnaire

Questionnaire is defined as a series of questions or statements from which respondents could make their selection by choosing provided answers or write out their answer (Brown, 2001). Questionnaires allow the researcher to collect large amounts of data in a relatively short amount of time (Gray et al., 2012). Well-constructed questionnaires can enable processing data to be faster and easier (Dörnyei, 2003; Gillham, 2007).

In the current study, questionnaires were employed to investigate the students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing. The questionnaire comprises 2 main sections. In the first section, questions for students' personal information were expected to ask for the participants' background information related to their age and gender. The second section comprises questions which aimed at gaining the participants' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills. There were 21 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All the items designed in accordance with effects mentioned in the literature review in this section were categorized into five clusters. They are presented in the table below.

TABLE 2  
THE SIX CLUSTERS OF SECTION 2

Clusters	Items
1. Perceptions of effects in terms of language	1-4
2. Perceptions of effects in terms of organization	5-11
3. Perceptions of effects in terms of content	12-13
4. Perceptions of effects in terms of communicative achievement	14-15
5. Perceptions of effects in terms of effectiveness	16-21

#### (b). Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews are highly appropriated to seek new ways of seeing existing data and gaining insights into areas which are uncovered by quantitative methods. The semi-structured interviews allow interviewers to pursue a series of less structured questioning because the wording of the questions is flexible. Therefore, the semi-structured interviews allow for unanticipated issues emerging through the use of open-ended questioning, and the interviewer can make clarification (Berg, 2009), or "probe and clarify more easily" (Gillham, 2008, p. 21). The interview was administered to triangulate or strengthen the validity and reliability of the data gathered from the questionnaire as well as clarify some aspects not discovered in the questionnaire.

In this study, semi-structures interviews were designed in accordance with the questionnaire, aiming to gain insight into the students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills. Nine participants were invited to face-to-face interviews which were voice-recorded for later transcripts and analysis.

Three questions were included in the interviews. Question 1 aimed to investigate the participants' perceptions of writing. Question 2 investigated what is needed to have a good essay or paragraph. Their perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills were uncovered in question 3.

#### D. Data Analysis

##### (a). Analysis of the Quantitative Data

The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed by IBM SPSS Statistics 20. First, IBM SPSS Statistics 20 was used to encode the participants' responses. Next, a scale test was run to check the reliability of the questionnaire.

Another step involved running *Descriptive Statistics Tests* to calculate the total mean scores of students' perceptions of the integration of reading and writing on students' writing skills; the mean score of each cluster; the mean score and the percentage of agreement and disagreement of each item included in the questionnaire. Items in each cluster were analyzed in accordance with the percentage of agreement and disagreement.

*One-sample T-Tests* were subsequently performed to check whether the mean scores were different from the test value, aiming to measure the extent to which the students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills are statistically different from the test value. The test values are adapted from Oxford (1990) (see Table 3)

TABLE 3 INTERPRETATIONS OF TEST VALUES	
Test values	Interpretations
4.5 – 5.0	Very high
3.6 – 4.49	High
2.5 – 3.59	Medium
1 – 2.49	Low

Then, *Independent-Samples t-Tests* were conducted to check whether there is a significant difference between male and female students in perceptions of the integration of reading and writing on students' writing skills.

##### (b). Analysis of the Qualitative Data

The data collected from the semi-structure interviews were transcribed and translated into English then encoded by the researcher first. Next, thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The interview protocol to familiarize the themes was made. Similarities and differences among students' responses were recognized. Direct citation of students' answers was provided as evidence for each theme.

## IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### A. Findings from the Questionnaire

A *Descriptive Statistics Test* was conducted to analyze the mean score, maximum, minimum and standard deviation of students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills. The result indicated that the mean score of the students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills was above average ( $M = 3.81$ ,  $SD = .45$ ). The results are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF READING AND WRITING ON STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Effects Mean	103	2.39	5.00	3.81	.45
Valid N (listwise)	103				

A One-Sample T-Test was then performed to check whether students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills ( $M=3.81$ ;  $SD=.45$ ) are statistically different from the test value of 4.5, a very high level. The result revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean score ( $M=3.81$ ;  $SD=.45$ ) and the test value of 4.5 ( $t=-15.397$ ,  $df=102$ ,  $p=.00$ ). Therefore, it can be confirmed that students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills in terms of language, content, organization, communicative achievement and effectiveness were high.

TABLE 5  
ONE-SAMPLE T-TEST OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF READING AND WRITING ON THEIR WRITING SKILLS

	Test Value = 4.5		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df			Lower	Upper
Effects Mean	-15.397	102	.000	-.68995	-.7788	-.6011



An *Independent-Samples t-Test* was then run to test whether there is a difference between male ( $M_M=3.80$ ;  $SD=.49$ ) and female ( $M_F=3.81$ ;  $SD=.41$ ) students in perceptions of the effects of reading and writing on their writing skills. The results indicated that there was no difference between male ( $M_M=3.81$ ;  $SD=.49$ ) and female ( $M_F=3.81$ ;  $SD=.41$ ) students in perceptions of the effects of reading and writing on their writing skills ( $t=-.073$ ;  $df=101$ ;  $p=.942>.05$ ). It can be concluded that both groups held the same level of perceptions of the effects of reading and writing on their writing skills.

A repeated *Descriptive Statistic Test* was run to measure the mean scores of the six clusters of students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills in terms of language, content, organization, communicative achievement and effectiveness. The results were illustrated in the table below.

TABLE 6  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SIX CLUSTERS OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE EFFECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF READING AND WRITING ON THEIR WRITING SKILLS

Clusters	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1. Effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in terms of language.	103	1	5.00	4.10	.71
2. Effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in terms of organization.	103	1.86	5.00	3.77	.56
3. Effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in terms of content.	103	1.5	5.00	4.12	.78
4. Effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in terms of communicative achievement.	103	1.67	5.00	3.78	.69
5. Effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in terms of effectiveness.	103	2.29	5.00	3.64	.54

Table 6 shows that the mean scores of the six clusters of students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills ranged from 3.57 to 4.12 in the five-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree). It indicates that students tended to agree with clusters about the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills.

To investigate students' perceptions of specific aspects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills, *Frequency Tests* were performed on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of items included in the clusters.

(a). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Language*

A *Frequency Test* was performed on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of four items included in the cluster *language*. The results are illustrated in Table 7.

TABLE 7  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN TERMS OF LANGUAGE

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	Neu (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1. The integration of reading and writing provides me with a wide range of vocabulary for writing topics.	2.9	1.0	6.8	37.9	51.4
2. The integration of reading and writing provides me with language expressions, idioms and collocations for writing.	2.9	1.0	5.8	44.7	45.6
3. The integration of reading and writing provides me with a variety of grammatical structures that I can apply in writing.	1.9	1.9	10.7	53.4	32.1
4. The integration of reading and writing helps me to reduce grammatical mistakes when it comes to writing.	1.9	5.8	35.0	38.9	18.4

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, Neu = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

As presented in Table 7, a large proportion of the participants (90,3%) agreed that reading passages provided in writing lessons can be a great reference to provide them with language expressions, idioms and collocations for writing. Next, 89,3 % of the respondents affirmed that the integration of reading and writing could provide them with a wide range of vocabulary related to the writing topics. Additionally, 85,5% of the participants agreed that integrating reading and writing in writing lessons could introduce them various grammatical structures that could be applied in their writings. 57,3 % of them confirmed that they made fewer grammatical mistakes during writing thanks to integrating reading and writing.

(b). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Organization*

A *Frequency Test* was performed on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of seven items included in the cluster *organization*. The results are illustrated in Table 8.

TABLE 8  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATION

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	Neu (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
5. The integration of reading and writing provides me with the organization of ideas of different genres of writing.	1.9	7.8	22.3	36.9	31.1
6. The integration of reading and writing helps me to organize sentences in a paragraph logically.	2.9	2.9	33.0	43.7	17.5
7. The integration of reading and writing helps me to organize paragraphs in an essay coherently.	0.0	2.9	31.0	44.7	21.4
8. The integration of reading and writing helps me to write the introduction more easily and quickly.	1.9	7.8	40.7	28.2	21.4
9. The integration of reading and writing helps me to write the conclusion easily.	0.0	6.8	35.0	38.8	19.4
10. The integration of reading and writing provides with cohesive devices /transition words that I can use in my writing.	1.9	1.9	8.8	45.7	41.7
11. The integration of reading and writing helps me to obtain a better consciousness on how to use punctuation.	0.0	15.5	37.9	31.1	15.5

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, Neu = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Table 8 highlights the students' perceptions that integrating reading into writing lessons could offer them cohesive devices or transition words to build well-organized writings. The proportion of agreement on this item made up the highest with 87.4 %. More specifically, 68 % of the participants stated that providing reading texts in writing made them aware of the organization of ideas of different genres of writing. 66,1 % of them showed an agreement that reading texts in writing lessons could be a vehicle to guide them how to connect paragraphs into a coherent essay. Additionally, integrating reading into writing lessons was claimed to help the participants write well-organized paragraphs (61,2 %) while 58,2 % of the respondents agreed that they could write the conclusion more easily with the integration of reading into writing. The items with the least agreement included item 8 and the item 11. 49,6 % of the respondents affirmed that integrating reading and writing could help them write introduction more easily and quickly while the last perception of the effects of the integration was related to awareness of punctuation (46,6 %).

(c). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Content*

A *Frequency Test* was run on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of two items included in the cluster *content* (items 12 and 13). The results are illustrated in Table 9

TABLE 9  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN TERMS OF CONTENT

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	Neu (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
12. The integration of reading and writing provides me with more ideas for writing.	1.0	1.9	13.7	41.7	41.7
13. The integration of reading and writing enables me to come up with ideas when it comes to writing different topics.	1.9	5.8	17.5	37.9	36.9

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, Neu = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Regarding the third cluster that aimed to investigate the students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills in relation with *content*, item 12 received more agreement (83,4 %) than item 13, with 74, 8%. Most of the respondents (83,4 %) confirmed that reading passages provided could be a great source for them to pick up some ideas for their writings while 74,8% of the participants stated that reading could trigger them to think of new and better ideas related to writing topics.

(d). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Communicative Achievement*

A *Frequency Test* was performed on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of two items included in the cluster *communicative achievement*. The results are illustrated in Table 10.

TABLE 10  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS IN TERMS OF COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	NEU (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
14. The integration of reading and writing helps to orientate styles of writing.	1.9	4.9	28.2	46.6	18.4
15. The integration of reading and writing enables me to understand the requirement and purpose of writing tasks clearly.	1.0	4.9	25.2	49.5	19.4

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, Neu = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

As demonstrated in Table 10, 68, 9% of the respondents perceived that they could grasp the requirement and aim of the writing task if reading texts were introduced through some activities. Furthermore, 65% of the participants came into the conclusion that styles of different writings, like formal or informal style, could be presented clearly to them when they were introduced a reading text before writing.

(e). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Effectiveness*

A *Frequency Test* was conducted on the percentage of agreement and disagreement of 6 items included in the cluster effectiveness. The results are illustrated in Table 11.

TABLE 11  
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF THE INTEGRATION OF READING AND WRITING ON THEIR WRITING SKILLS IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	Neu (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
16. The integration of reading and writing improves my writing skills.	2.9	3.9	13.6	37.9	41.7
17. Integration of reading and writing helps to save time for writing.	1.9	11.7	28.2	35.9	22.3
18. The integration of reading and writing makes me feel more confident in my writing.	1.9	8.7	34.0	32.0	23.4
19. The integration of reading and writing makes me feel less stressed in writing lessons.	4.8	12.6	33.0	35.0	14.6
20. The integration of reading and writing makes writing lessons more interesting.	2.8	7.8	44.7	31.1	13.6
21. The integration of reading and writing makes writing lessons more interactive.	3.9	4.9	37.8	36.9	16.5

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, Neu = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

As presented in Table 11, a large proportion of the participants agreed that their writing skills could be improved if reading was provided as an input before they write. More specifically, nearly 80% of the respondents claimed that lexical sources and ideas from reading texts could facilitate them to write better. Moreover, more than half of the participants claimed that they could have more time for writing since integrating reading and writing saves much time for generating ideas and vocabulary, with 58.2%. The item 20 related to students' confidence received the third most agreement. To illustrate, 55.4% of the participants confirmed that they felt more confident to write if they were exposed to reading texts before writing. Additionally, more than half of them concluded that the writing lessons became more interactive when performing reading tasks, with 53.4%. This is understandable since students took part in some tasks for reading before writing. As a result, they had opportunities to interact with each other instead of writing immediately. However, nearly half of the participants admitted that their stress and anxiety reduced if they were provided input from reading texts, with 49.6%. The item that received the most neutral responses was item 22. Meanwhile, 47.7% of the participants did not decide whether integrating reading and writing could make writing lessons more interesting and attractive.

#### B. Findings From the Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 9 participants, which aimed to provide insights into students' perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills.

Firstly, when the participants were asked about their perceptions of English writing skills and a good paragraph or essay, all of the nine participants stated that writing is a difficult skill of the four main skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Some of them shared that:

*"In my opinion, writing is a difficult skill because writing requires combination of word usage and grammatical structures to fit the writing tone. In some cases, I find it rather difficult to choose the appropriate words so that they can meet the tone of the writing."* (Respondent 1)

*"I find it challenging to learn writing skills because I can learn other English skills by myself, but writing requires much effort to use relevant vocabulary. Therefore, to have good writings requires much language knowledge."* (Respondent 2)

In relation to requirements for a good paragraph or essay, they also shared that a logic organization, interesting ideas and a wide range of appropriate vocabulary could contribute to good compositions. Importantly, the clear viewpoint of the writer must be stated. They responded,

*"I believe a good writing must have a good organization to show the coherence of the ideas, which makes the writing more logic. Besides, I think word choice also plays an important part because it can contribute to the style of the writing (formal or informal style). Additionally, a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures is required."* (Respondent 1)

*"In my opinion, a good writing must be well-organized. Moreover, a good composition provides interesting and creative ideas as they can make the writing more attractive. Also, if we want to produce a good writing, we should employ more vocabulary and grammatical structures."* (Respondent 2)

##### (a). Students' in Terms of Language

The reading texts were supposed to be important sources for students to learn and pick up some appropriate words and grammatical structures. Given above significance of vocabulary in writing, the eight of nine participants (8/9) reported the role of reading passages as an enormous source for language use and a variety of grammatical structures. They emphasized that they were more aware of word choice to fit the writing contexts.

*"I believe the first benefit is reflected on enriching ideas for writing. For those who lack vocabulary range and grammatical structures can use vocabulary and structures for their writing, making it more interesting. The integration of reading and writing can place me in another view to the issue, because my own ideas are sometime biased."* (Respondent 3)

*"...integrating reading into writing could facilitate my writing skills because reading could provide me with lexical sources of various topics and grammatical structures so that I can use them for my writings..."*  
(Respondent 7)

(b). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Organization*

The effects in terms of organization were confirmed by the respondents. They concluded that positive effects of integrating reading and writing on writing skills were observed on providing ideas, vocabulary and grammatical structures. It also supported them in organizing the ideas and language in well-built texts. Genres of writing have their own organization, so the passage analyzed through tasks can reveal their format. Students can imitate the provided text to write their own introduction. Four of the participants claimed like the followings,

*"I find it easier and faster to write the introduction and conclusion if I am exposed to reading texts. Completing tasks of reading could help me to be aware of organization of ideas..."* (Respondent 4)

*"...I realize that teachers can give students some reading models so that the students can recognize the format of some genres, especially the format of a letter..."* (Respondent 8)

(c). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Content*

With regard to their perceptions of the effects of the integration of reading and writing on their writing skills in respect to content for writing, all of them revealed that reading texts provided in writing lessons can provide them with more interesting and relevant ideas for their own writings. Reading texts play an important role in helping them generalize the issue, learn new ideas and generate new ones.

*"In my opinion, the integration of reading and writing can provide more ideas for my writing .... Importantly, the ideas presented in reading texts can enrich ideas for my writing products."* (Respondent 1)

*"...Reading texts help me with preparing ideas, for writing. Moreover, I could learn some new words and grammatical structures that can be applied to my writings..."* (Respondent 9)

Specifically, two respondents modified that he could come up with more ideas related to the topic by reading. The ideas provided might evoke them to think of new ones. Two of them responded,

*".... I could grasp the requirement of the writing task, and come up with more ideas for my writing."* (Respondent 4)

*"Firstly, reading texts offer basic ideas for writing, and then, based on information in reading, I can think of more interesting ideas."* (Respondent 6)

(d). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Communicative Achievement*

In another view, reading passage can aid students in recognizing the styles of the target writing. Given a particular context, students need to engage in various writing styles such as formal or informal contexts. Additionally, performing integrating tasks before writing creates opportunities so that students can understand the writing task requirements, avoiding digression. Two of the three opinions are cited as follows,

*"...Moreover, taking part in integrating tasks, I could understand the aim of writing tasks so that I can make effort to achieve it."* (Respondent 7)

*"...Secondly, I could state that integrating reading into writing could facilitate me to stick to genres as well as the styles of target writing, guiding me to the topic."* (Respondent 8)

(e). *Students' Perceptions in Terms of Effectiveness*

Specifically, with regard to effectiveness, five of them emphasized that the integration of reading and writing can aid them in producing writings more easily and confidently. The reading texts provide them with ideas, language and structures, they find it easier to apply them to their writing products. Less pressure on writing is enormous encouragement for students. Three of the participants shared,

*"It depends on some situations. I myself find it easier to write with a writing model provided, but I also think the reading passage restricts my creative ideas."* (Respondent 1)

*"A reading text as a model could possibly make me feel more confident to begin writing."* (Respondent 5)

Additionally, that reading is integrated into writing lessons can create active learning. Four participants claimed that they felt more interested in writing lessons because the integrated tasks make their writing classes more interactive. Instead of being given a writing topic by the teacher, they engaged more in classroom activities before beginning to write. They stated,

*"In addition, completing the tasks from reading passage offers me opportunities to interact with my teacher and my friends more."* (Respondent 2)

*"I can have more interaction with my friends. Finishing integrating tasks in pairs or groups makes me connected with my classmates."* (Respondent 5)

## V. DISCUSSION

Concerning the effects of the integration of reading and writing on writing skills in relation to content, students showed a high level of agreement to the contribution of reading materials to writing. They confirmed that reading might

offer input of relevant ideas of the topics, and even helps them to generate new ideas when it comes to writing new and sophisticated topics. This supports the studies by Khaki et al. (2013), Al-Busaidi (2013), Hao and Sivell (2002), and Matsuda (2003) who stated in their studies that reading served as a means to enable students to form their initial ideas related to the writing topic and assist them to retrieve their personal background knowledge to develop and generate new ideas. Because reading and writing are interactive, students' writing competence might improve through reading (Krashen, 1993). In this nutshell, reading can be considered as a trigger to activate their schemata knowledge.

Regarding students' perceptions of the effects of reading on writing in terms of language, the findings indicated that reading might be a great source to learn relevant words and grammatical structures for writing products. These results are similar to those from the studies of Hao and Sivell (2002), Alkhawaldeh (2011), Tuan (2012), Khaki et al. (2013), Alqouran and Smadi (2016), Stella (2020). One explanation is that well-written reading materials offer a variety of vocabulary and syntactical knowledge Hao and Sivell (2002). It is consistent with a study by Hany (2006) who identified that reading as a model helped student expand their lexical capacity and grammatical structures that are essential for writing. It also confirms what was presented in Stella (2020), who claimed that the program with integration of reading and writing could enable students to get better awareness of vocabulary, to enhance vocabulary sources in relation with word choice and word usage. It might be the fact that students are able to pick up words, phrases and grammar points in the reading texts. Furthermore, reading and analyzing reading texts related to the writing topic enable them to acquire the usage of words in a particular context.

With regard to the effects in terms of organization of the writing texts, students believed they got better consciousness of organizing paragraphs or essays. It is also in line with the results of Alkhawaldeh (2011) and Al-Dosari (2016). Learners' competence of paragraph organization can be developed with the support of reading texts (Al-Dosari, 2016). The finding is in line with the one by Stella (2020) who concluded that learners also gained better awareness of punctuation and made improvement in paragraph development in writing. A possible reason is that when performing the designed tasks aiming to analyze the format of paragraphs might increase learners' perception of how sentences are put into a coherent paragraph. They learn principles and technique to structure well-written paragraphs, and technique in presenting a specific genre of writing. The results of this study were consistent with those by Saleem (2010), Alqouran and Smadi (2016) which found that reading could support learners to identify writing elements of coherent paragraph, paragraph unity, building topic sentences, supporting sentences and concluding sentences and the presentation of ideas in paragraphs. Additionally, the findings of this study are in line with Tuan (2012), who asserted that students performed better at connecting sentences as they received the modeled paragraphs from reading materials.

In terms of communicative achievement, the results of the current study indicated that reading had positive influence on guiding learners on how to write a text. Firstly, reading helps to understand the aim of writing task. This supports a study by Campel (1998), Alomrani (2014), who confirmed the role of reading passage as a vehicle to provide the information related to the writing task, importantly the requirement of writing task. Secondly, reading helps to orientate the styles of writing. It is relevant to the result of a study by Al-Dosari (2016) who claimed that students got better awareness of various writing styles and techniques to present a genre of writing.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS

On the basis of the results of the current study, several pedagogical implications can be proposed for both teachers and students.

### A. For Teachers

Firstly, EFL writing teachers should consider the proficiency levels of their students when choosing reading materials. The importance of source texts cannot be neglected. According to Krashen (1982), the input hypothesis mentioned that learners should be given the input that is slightly beyond their current level of language proficiency. Secondly, since reading serves as a model for writing, authentic texts should be in use in language teaching so that learners can have appropriate models to follow styles and genres of target writing. A variety of authentic materials could be extracted from print materials that students encounter in their daily lives. Thirdly, EFL writing teachers should regard the textbooks that should be used in EFL reading/writing classes. EFL textbooks designed to integrate reading and writing are highly recommended. Moreover, it is essential for teachers to conduct small study to explore in more depth the various methods used to integrate language skills in the classroom such as content-based and task-based. Implementing different teaching methods could facilitate students' communicative competence and make integration lessons more interesting and effective.

### B. For Students

Given the benefits of integrating reading into writing, students should develop reading habit that would hold their interest in reading. As mentioned before, reading acts as a vehicle to acquiring knowledge and language skills. Reading much helps accumulate knowledge in long-term memory. Training a reading habit might support students in learning, retention, and critical thinking in all content areas. The increased amount of written interaction that learners participate in throughout the day also enhances their engagement with the reading of the texts. They should be helped to approach sources of authentic reading materials that are appropriate for their level. Importantly, students should invest more time

improving their writing skills by various methods. Enriching vocabulary source and grammatical knowledge should be a priority since this knowledge could improve their paraphrasing skill.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The current study focuses on explore EFL gifted high school students' perceptions of the effects of integrating reading and writing on writing skills. The findings indicate that students highly perceived the effects of integrating reading and writing on writing skills in regard to language, organization, content, communicative achievement, evaluation and effectiveness. It is clear that reading has great influences on writing skills. Therefore, it is concluded that moving towards an integrated reading and writing approach would be very worthwhile.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Al Asmari, A. (2013). Investigation of writing strategies, writing apprehension, and writing achievement among Saudi EFL-major students. *International Education Studies*, 6(11), 130-143.
- [2] Al-Busaidi, S. (2013). The integration myth: Reading and writing. *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 21(3), 1231-1239.
- [3] Alkhawaldeh, A. (2011). The effect of EFL reading comprehension on writing achievement among Jordanian eight grade students. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 66(3), 352-365.
- [4] Alqouran, A. A., & Smadi, O. M. (2016). The Effect of reading-writing integration on Jordanian undergraduate students' writing performance. *Arab World English Journal*, 17(2), 177-189.
- [5] Aulls, M.W. (1985). Understanding the relationship between reading and writing. *Educational Horizons*, 64(10), 39-44.
- [6] Berg, B.L. (2009). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- [7] British Council, (2013). *The English Effect*. Retrieved from <https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/english-effect-report-v2.pdf> on September 25, 2022.
- [8] Brown, H. (1987). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- [9] Byrne, D. (1988). *Teaching writing skills*. London: Longman.
- [10] Campbell, C. (1998). *Teaching second-language writing: Interacting with text*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [11] Choy, L. T. (2014). The strengths and weaknesses of research methodology: Comparison and complimentary between qualitative and quantitative approaches. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 19(4), 99-104.
- [12] Corder, S. P. (1971). Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis. *IRAL*, 9(2), 147-160.
- [13] Corder, S. P. (1978). Language-learner language. In J. C. Richards (Ed.), *Understanding second and foreign language learning*, (pp. 71-92). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- [14] Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [15] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA Sage
- [16] Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [17] Eisterhold, J. (1990). Reading/writing connections: Toward a description for second language learners. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 88-101). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [18] Ferretti, R. P., Andrews-Weckerly, S., & Lewis, W. E. (2007). Improving the argumentative writing of students with learning disabilities: Descriptive and normative considerations. *Reading & Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*, 23(3), 267-285.
- [19] Ferris, D. R., & Hedgcock, J. S. (2005). *Teaching ESL composition: Purpose, process, and practice* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [20] Flood, J., & Lapp, D. (1987). Reading and writing relations: Assumptions and directions. In J. Squire (eds.), *The dynamics of Language Learning* (pp. 9-26). Urbana: National Conference in Research in English.
- [21] Gillham, B. (2008). *Developing a questionnaire* (2nd ed.). London: Continuum.
- [22] Gray, S., Shwom, R. & Jordan R. (2012). Using drama techniques in language teaching. In A. Sarinee (Ed.), *Language teaching methodology for the nineties. Anthology Series 24* (pp.230-249). Singapore: Regional Language Centre.
- [23] Hao, X., & Sivell, J. (2002). *Integrating reading and writing in EFL composition in China*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian association of applied linguistics, Humanities and Social Sciences, Congress, Toronto.
- [24] Hyland, L., (2003). *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [25] Kellogg, R. T. (2018). *The Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [26] Kennedy, M. L., & Kennedy, W. J. (2011). *Writing in the disciplines: A reader and rhetoric for academic writers* (7th ed.). London: Longman Publishing Group.
- [27] Khaki, N., Hessamy, G., Hemmati, F., & Iravani, H. (2013). Exploring EFL writers' attitudes towards reading-to-write and writing-only test tasks: A qualitative approach. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 10(1), 47-68.
- [28] Kintsch, W. (1998). *Comprehension: A paradigm for cognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [29] Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- [30] Krashen, S. (1993). *The power of reading*. Englewood, CO: libraries Unlimited.
- [31] Nelson, N., & Calfee, R. C. (1998). The reading-writing connection viewed historically. In N. Nelson & R. C. Calfee (Eds.), *Ninety-seventh Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (pp. 1-52). Chicago: National Society for the Study of Education.
- [32] Nunan, D. (1999). *Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

- [33] Nunan, D. (2003). *Language Teaching Methodology*. London: Prentice Hall International.
- [34] Omaggio, H. A. (2001). *Teaching language in context*. Boston, MA Heinle & Heinle.
- [35] Rachel, N. M. & Maslawati, H., (2019). Challenges Faced by Students and Teachers on Writing Skills in ESL Context: A Literature Review. *Creative Education*, 10, 3385-3391.
- [36] Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [37] Rao, Z. (2007). Training in brainstorming and developing writing skills. *ELT Journal*, 61(2), 100-106.
- [38] Richard, C. J. & Renandia, W. C., (2002). *Methodology in Language Teaching*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press
- [39] Rigg, P. (1991). Whole language in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 521-542.
- [40] Saleem, B. A. (2010). *Impact of extensive reading on literacy perceptions and on EFL writing quality of English major students at the Islamic university of Gaza*. Unpublished MA thesis Islamic university of Gaza. Retrieved from <http://minds.wisconsin.edu/handle/> on July 30th, 2022.
- [41] Stella, G. L. (2020). *The influence of reading on students' writing: A case of selected junior high schools in the Adentan municipality*. Unpublished MA thesis Islamic university of Gaza. Retrieved from <https://afribary.com/works/the-influence-of-reading-on-students-writing-a-case-of-selected-junior-high-schools-in-the-adentan-municipality> on September 25, 2022.
- [42] Stern, H.H. (1992). *Issues and options in language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [43] Stotsky, S. (1983). Research on reading/writing relationships: A synthesis and suggested directions. *Language Arts*, 60(5), 627-642.
- [44] Tuan, L.T. (2012). Teaching writing through reading integration. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3(3), 489-499
- [45] William, G., & Fredricka. L. S. (2020). *Teaching and researching reading* (3rd ed.) London: Pearson Education Longman.



**Cang Trung Nguyen** is now a lecturer at the Faculty of Foreign Languages – 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. He worked as a teacher trainer at Kien Giang Teacher Training College – Vietnam for over ten years before moving to Kien Giang University and has worked there since 2015 as a lecturer of English. His research interests are learner autonomy, curriculum evaluation, teacher education and curriculum development.

# The Effect of Communicative Language Teaching in Test Preparation Course on TOEIC Score of EFL Business English Students

Pallapa Lertcharoenwanich

Business English Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Buriram Rajabhat University, Thailand

**Abstract**—A high-stake standardized test (e.g., TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS) is one of essential indicators in determining students' English proficiency especially in the context of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Direct test preparation method is prevalent in test preparation course; however, negative washback could occur. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be effective teaching method which can diminish the negative washback and also increase both proficiency and test score. The purposes of this study were 1) to examine the effect of CLT on students' TOEIC score and 2) to explore students' attitude towards the use CLT in test preparation course. The sample was 68 Business English students selected by purposive sampling divided into experimental group and control group. The instruments were pre-test, the official TOEIC score and semi-structured interview. The data were analysed by using mean, standard deviation, t-test and content analysis. The results revealed that the official TOEIC score of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group which indicated that CLT in test preparation course yielded a positive effect on improving students' TOEIC score.

**Index Terms**—Communicative Language Teaching, Test Preparation Course, TOEIC Score

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the university context in many Asian countries, assessing students' English proficiency by using international standardized tests such as TOEIC, TOEFL and IELTS is prevalent (Harada, 2016; Sawchuk, 2013). Students need to pass the set score in order to graduate and the score can be used as an indicator of their English proficiency. Thus, the majority of the students prepare for the test by taking a test preparation course whether offered by the university or other tutoring institutions.

As one of the world's leading tests, Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) which is a multiple-choice standardized English proficiency test developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) is intentionally used to measure everyday English listening and reading skills required for working in an international environment of non-native speakers. The test score can be used to determine and qualify communication proficiency of the test takers in business context. The TOEIC listening and reading test comprises two main sections, listening and reading, in which the contents of the test simulate real-life situations relevant to the international workplace (Educational Testing Service, 2019b). In Listening Comprehension section, the test takers have to answer the questions based on the recordings. This part of the test measures how well the test takers understand spoken English as in the real workplace they might have to deal with various types of face-to-face communication, meetings, telephoning and videoconferencing. For Reading Comprehension section, the test takers need to have necessary knowledge in using proper English in terms of grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension skill which is essential for working in a global workplace which includes email, reports and business correspondence. As can be seen, the purpose of TOEIC is to measure the test takers' English proficiency in the real-life situation. Thus, the test takers must be equipped with proper communicative listening and reading skills in order to get a high score.

In Thailand, TOEIC is one of the tests that are said to be standardized and can be used as a benchmark for assessing individual English skill (Apichatrojanakul, 2011). Having a good TOEIC score is beneficial for the new graduates as it is considered to be a *ticket* for getting a good position and also to get a higher salary. The importance of good English skill is also emphasized by the announcement of Ministry of Education (2017) on Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF 1) that English and Business English major students must equip with English proficiency level at C1 (Proficient User) according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).



TABLE 1  
CORRELATION TABLE OF TOEIC SCORES AND THE CEFR LEVELS

Total minimum scores	CEFR Levels	
945	C1	Proficient user – Effective Operational Proficiency
785	B2	Independent user – Vantage
550	B1	Independent user – Threshold
225	A2	Basic user – Waystage
120	A1	Basic user - Breakthrough

Source: Educational Testing Service (2016)

From Table 1, it can be seen that in order to respond to the announcement, English and Business English major students must achieve minimum 945 out of 990. However, this regulation seems to be difficult to achieve as the average score of Thai TOEIC test takers in 2018 was only 485 which meant that their English proficiency was between A2-B1 according to CEFR level.

TABLE 2  
2018 AVERAGE TOEIC SCORES AMONG ASIAN TEST TAKERS

Country	Average Score (Out of 990)
1. Philippines	713
2. Malaysia	611
3. Myanmar	580
4. Vietnam	490
<b>5. Thailand</b>	<b>485</b>
6. Indonesia	471

Source: Educational Testing Service (2019a)

Specifically, at Business English Program, TOEIC score is also used as an exit test to determine students' English proficiency level. Preparation for TOEIC is a course offered as a compulsory subject for third year students in order to prepare them for taking the test and be able to achieve a good TOEIC score. As a teacher responsible for this course, finding a suitable and effective teaching method is crucial. Formerly, since academic year 2015, Preparation for TOEIC course has been taught by using direct test preparation method in which the students studied for the test by doing the past or mocking tests as much as possible and emphasized only on what will be in the test (i.e., grammar, vocabulary and so forth). The average TOEIC score of the students from 2015 until 2017 was 344.96 (N=162) which was far behind the goal set by the Ministry of Education. Thus, the effectiveness of this teaching method was questioned. In order to find out whether another teaching method would be more effective, the researcher, as a teacher of this course, interested in implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in test-preparation class; however, there has been very little research of using this teaching method in such class (Case, 2008; Littlewood, 2000, 2011). As a result, this study was conducted based on the following research questions:

- 1) Does CLT affect students' TOEIC score?
- 2) What are students' attitudes towards CLT in the test preparation course?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Testing in language learning is one of the assessment methods in measuring language proficiency level of the learners. According to Brown and Abeywickrama (2019), a certain proficiency test can be used to determine learners' performance and ability in mastering the target language and the test result is normally used as a 'gatekeeper' (p.11) in admitting or refusing someone to pass to the next level. In education field, standardized proficiency test (i.e., TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS) is considered essential in determining whether the learners have reached a specific standard, so the learners need to achieve the score which should be high enough to be accepted by institutions or potential employers. As taking a standardized proficiency test is considered high-stakes, the test users (test takers, students, teachers, employers, policy makers, etc.) are regarded as stakeholders (Hughes & Hughes, 2020). Thus, it can be said that this kind of high-stake test would have an effect on teaching and learning. The effect that the test has on language teaching and learning is regarded as backwash or washback (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Cheng, 2014; Hughes & Hughes, 2020).

The concept of backwash of high-stakes standardized test is important in worldwide instructional settings especially the effects of test preparation on instructional contexts (Chen & Liu, 2011; Xiao, 2014; Xie, 2015; Zhan & Andrews, 2014). In the western context, the impact of high-stakes standardized test can obviously be seen from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) policy which recently become the Common Core Standards in the United States (Gebriel & Eid, 2017). According to this policy, every state in America is required to use a high-stakes test in order to ensure the accountability of the students and the teachers to meet the academic standards. Hence, the schools have to set goals and test preparation course for their students in order to comply with the policy (Heubert & Hauser, 1999; Minarechová, 2012). In Asian context, Wang and Brown (2014) study Hong Kong students' perceptions towards high-stakes standardized test. The students reported that they were responsible for getting a high score on high-stakes standardized test in order to build family reputation and their self-esteem. In addition, Alam et al. (2011) examine the effects of the examination system in Pakistan and found that the pressure from taking the high-stakes standardized test can lead to negative results.

As a result, the implementation of high-stakes standardized test as a measurement of the students' proficiency forces students, teachers and schools to modify their teaching and learning to meet with the test items and content which can narrow down the curriculum.

Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is a standardized proficiency test aimed to measure the ability to communicate in English focusing on two language skills – listening and reading- which are required for working in an international environment of non-native speakers (Educational Testing Service, 2019). Although TOEIC is one of high-stakes tests which emphasizes on, as the name suggested, '*international communication*,' most of the teachers and learners prepare for the test by using direct test preparation method. According to Firestone et al. (2002), in response to the need of the students to gain high scores in the aforementioned standardized tests, teachers or tutors may apply different teaching methods and the most prevalent method for test preparation courses is the direct test preparation method. In implementing a direct test preparation method, the past tests are studied and analyzed. Brown (2006) stated that the majority of the students require studying for the test as they want to be well-prepared and the direct test preparation course offers them with the sense of *TOEIC-ness* (p.1177). They felt that they could pass the test after taking the course. Moreover, according to Robb and Ercanbrack (1999), the test takers usually prepare themselves before taking the test by reviewing the past tests in order to study for what can possibly appear in the test. This preparation for the test emphasizes only some specific topics and vocabulary which the test takers have to memorize in order to be able to gain a high score. In addition, Bessette (2007) also stated that it was beneficial for the test takers to become familiar with test items and format as it helped decrease anxiety and make them feel more confident in taking the test. Another view of direct test preparation method came from Kim (2010) who pointed out that most test preparation courses emphasized on improving score rather than English proficiency. Test-centered approach is implemented as the students sit in class and do the practice tests while the teachers explain the items. Besides, Harada (2016) examined the effects of the TOEIC course at a junior college in Tokyo in three continuous years. The researcher compared two teaching methods: section-balanced and section-focused which were both direct test preparation. It was found that the section-balanced teaching method was more effective than the section-focused one. Moreover, the use of vocabulary tests was essential in improving students' TOEIC score. As TOEIC changed the format and a new question style was used, a new teaching method should be made. Thus, as the test scores are emphasized, direct test preparation for preparing the students to take TOEIC is used by many teachers (Saglam & Farhady, 2019).

However, using a direct test preparation method in a test preparation course could be 'unethical' as it emphasized more on test-taking strategies which could narrow the curriculum (Miller, 2003; Pan, 2010). Brown (2006) suggested that skills-focused general English or business English classes could be as effective at improving TOEIC scores as direct test preparation classes and also other teaching methods, e.g., theme-based instruction (Saglam & Farhady, 2019), metacognitively-based approach (Pan, 2010) and audio-lingual method (Maliwan, 2018) in test preparation class were suggested by several researchers. One of the approaches that need more light to shed on is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which, suggested by Kim (2010), can be implemented in test preparation class to achieve the language teaching goal in terms of students' proficiency development and also boost up the test score. Apichatrojanakul (2011) also suggested that there should be some practical ways to teach TOEIC such as creating a balance between the teaching-centered approach and the child-centered approach by using pair work and group activities in teaching plans, using 4-mat approach (communicative approach), pointed out the benefits of getting high scores, or giving positive reinforcement to the students. Regarding section-focused instruction, Nishitani (2006) investigated the effect of test preparation instruction on TOEIC scores which focused on the grammar section. The data were collected from a TOEIC preparation class and a communicative grammar class. Pre- and post-test scores of the two groups were compared. The results suggested that the students from the TOEIC preparation class significantly outperformed the other group. Thus, it can be concluded that the test preparation class benefited students in terms of score improvement especially in the grammar section. It was suggested that further research should examine other settings and focus on other sections of the test.

There is little research on implementing CLT in test preparation courses especially in Thai context and the researcher believes that this approach has a potential to improve students' TOEIC score and also their proficiency. As a consequence, with regards to CLT, this study focuses on section-balanced instruction in which every section was taught equally and interactively. Communicative activities for listening and reading which were relevant to TOEIC were implemented, thus it is hypothesized that the students can learn the language and also receive the higher test score.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This quasi-experimental study employed non-equivalent (Pre-test and Post-test) control-group design in which the experimental group and the control group were purposively selected without randomization (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.168). Mixed-methods were adopted by integrating both quantitative and qualitative data.

#### A. Sample

The sample of this study was 68 third year Business English students who enrolled in 16-week Preparation for TOEIC course in the second semester of academic year 2019 at one local university in Thailand. As the course was offered specifically to Business English students in response to the aforementioned regulations given by Ministry of

Education, the sample was selected by purposive sampling. In order to examine the difference, the sample was divided into two groups: 30 students for the experimental group and 38 students for the control group. In addition, to make sure that they were homogeneous in terms of English proficiency level, their in-house placement test scores were analysed by using independent sample t-test.

TABLE 3  
STUDENTS' PLACEMENT TEST SCORES

Groups	N	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	S.D.	t	Sig
Experimental Group	30	30.26	8.83	.310	.87*
Control Group	38	29.57	9.36		

\*Statistically significant level of .05

Table 3 indicated that English proficiency level of the sample in experimental and control group was not significantly different at statistical level of .05 which showed that they were at the same English proficiency level. This can ensure the validity of the results.

For the semi-structured interview, ten samples were selected from the experimental group according to their official TOEIC score: five from the highest and five from the lowest. The semi-structured interview, which was conducted in Thai, aimed to explore their attitudes towards the use of CLT method in test preparation course.

### B. Instruments and Data Collection

In order to examine the effect that CLT method has on the samples' TOEIC score, the instruments used to collect the data were pre-test and the official TOEIC was used as a post-test. The placement test score was also used to ensure that the samples were at the same English proficiency level. TOEIC practice test 1 from Oxford University Press (2007) which was authorized by Educational Testing Service (ETS) was used as the pre-test since it had the same test format and test items as the official TOEIC. Then, a semi-structured interview was implemented at the end of the course to investigate students' view towards the teaching approaches in-depth.

The data were collected during December 2019-March 2020. The pre-test was implemented at the first session of the course and then, after finishing the last session, students took the actual TOEIC from Educational Testing Service (ETS). During the course, the experimental group was taught by CLT using the teaching materials from Cambridge Target Score by Talcott and Tullis (2007) which combined an active communicative approach and offered a variety of activities. The book is divided into 12 units in which listening, grammar, vocabulary, reading and discussion, TOEIC tips and communicative activities are also offered. Speaking activity such as a discussion and a negotiation which allow the students to practice English that they have learnt in each unit were also implemented. Moreover, the students had a chance to interact with others under the situation that they would face in the professional world. Even though TOEIC mainly aims to measure listening and reading skill, balanced attention to the four language skills was emphasized in CLT lesson. The communicative activities included, for example, applying TOEIC vocabulary in making a conversation, discussing and exchanging opinions about the reading passages, preparing for a job interview, participating in a discussion, making a product presentation, attending a meeting, buying and selling, negotiating a contract and taking part in a discussion.

On the other hand, the control group which consisted of 38 students was taught by using direct test preparation in which TOEIC practice tests were used as a teaching material. The items in the test were explained and the techniques in doing the test were emphasized which focused on knowledge about language rather than the ability to use language (Howatt, 2004). Moreover, grammar rules and vocabulary were explained explicitly through translation and the teacher dominated the class. Students were also given the past test and participated in drilling and practice doing the test without any discussion activities. Table 4 showed the comparison of the activities between the two teaching approaches.

TABLE 4  
CLT AND DIRECT TEST PREPARATION

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)	Direct Test Preparation
Teacher-student interaction in English	Explanation of grammar rules
Activities similar to real-world tasks	Illustration of grammar rules
Constant exposure to new language input	Explanation of texts sentence by sentence
Communication in English among students	Analyzing of sentences in texts
Reading and writing about various topics	Contrastive analysis of Thai and English
Listening and speaking about various topics	Explicit and direct correction of learner errors
Pair and small group work	Teacher-centered instruction
Peer feedback and evaluation	Translation and Grammar exercises

### C. Data Analysis

In order to answer research question one, the official TOEIC scores of the sample in the experimental group were compared with those from the pre-test and the official TOEIC scores were also compared between the experimental group and control group to examine the difference. For research question two, a semi-structured interview was implemented at the end of the course to investigate students' view towards the teaching approaches in-depth. Statistics

used to analyze the data were mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), standard deviation, Paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test. Content analysis was used to analyze the data gained from the interview.

#### IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results from the study can be divided into two parts according to the research questions. In order to examine the effect of CLT on students' TOEIC score, pre-test score and official TOEIC score of the experimental group were compared as illustrated the following table:

TABLE 5  
PRE-TEST AND OFFICIAL TOEIC SCORE OF EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Score	N	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	S.D.	t	df	Sig
Pre-test	30	368.33	127.75	3.667	29	.00*
Official TOEIC	30	417.83	116.15			

\*Statistically significant level of .05

Table 5 showed that mean score of the official TOEIC ( $\bar{x}$  = 417.83, S.D. = 116.15) was significantly higher than the pre-test ( $\bar{x}$  = 368.33, S.D. = 127.75) at statistically significant level of .05. Thus, it can be said that CLT can positively help enhance TOEIC scores of the experimental group.

In order to compare the effect of CLT and direct test preparation on students' TOEIC score, an independent sample t-test was implemented to compare the difference of official TOEIC score between students in control and experimental group. The result can be seen in Table 6 below:

TABLE 6  
COMPARISON OF THE OFFICIAL TOEIC SCORE OF THE TWO GROUPS

Groups	N	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	S.D.	t	Sig
Experimental Group	30	417.83	116.150	2.712	.00*
Control Group	38	352.37	82.754		

\*Statistically significant level of .05

It can be seen in Table 6 that the official TOEIC score of the students in the experimental group who received CLT method was higher than those in the control group at statistically significant level of .05. Hence, the result from this table indicated that students who were taught with CLT outperformed the students taught with direct test preparation method.

As a consequence, the quantitative data indicated the positive effect that CLT had on students' TOEIC score. The official TOEIC score, which was used as a post-test, of the experimental group significantly increased compared to the pre-test. Likewise, when comparing the official TOEIC score between the experimental group and the control group, the score of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group. Thus, it can be concluded that CLT helped enhance TOEIC score of the students.

Regarding students' attitudes towards CLT in the test preparation course, the data gained from the semi-structured interview were analyzed by using content analysis. The transcribed data showed that the high score students (HS) had a positive attitude towards the implementation of CLT method in the way that it made the lesson more engaging:

*"Communicative Language Teaching method is very interesting and fun. I used to study for the TOEIC by doing past exam items and memorization which is boring."*

Furthermore, every respondent from the high score group suggested that CLT promoted an active environment in class which motivated their learning not only for the test but also other skills like speaking and writing:

*"I have never taken test preparation course that contained activities like this before. The normal test preparation course I used to take was just sitting at the table and drilling on the test items. I have a chance to speak and express my opinion."*

They agreed that CLT provided them a chance to apply the test knowledge in other activities that they can face in their real life:

*"The activities like 'preparing for the interview' and 'buying and selling' were not only useful for taking the test but also in my real-life situation."*

On the other hand, students from the low score group (LS) seemed not to prefer CLT. A majority of them reported negative attitude towards the use of the approach:

*"I just wanted to learn about the rules and the vocabulary from the mock test without doing the activities that were not related to the test"*

Likewise, four of them expressed their concern about the test score:

*"I just want to know what will be in the test so that I can get a higher score."*

In conclusion, from the results, even though the score of the students was significantly improved, attitudes between the two groups of respondents differed. This was quite interesting because they had the same English proficiency level. These issues related to this will be discussed in the following section.

## V. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the effect of CLT method on TOEIC test score and to explore students' attitude towards this teaching method. The result of the research revealed that CLT positively affected students' TOEIC score as the experimental group's official TOEIC score was significantly higher than the pre-test and also their official TOEIC score was significantly higher than the control group. The beneficial effect of CLT in test score improvement is consistent with the study of Kim (2010) who observed two test-prep classes in Honolulu which implemented CLT and found that this approach can improve students' proficiency and also boost up the test score. Another study conducted by Pan (2010) also suggested that the utilization of communicative activities rather than "teaching to the test" (p.87) provided a chance for the learners to both learn the language from the test and get a higher test score. In addition, as CLT focused more on students' interaction which provided them more chance to practice English, the students got used to receiving and producing English in the real context which can help improve the overall proficiency (Hu, 2005).

Regarding the qualitative result, the attitudes between the two groups of respondents differed. For the high score group, the positive attitudes towards the use of CLT were reported in the way that CLT was engaging and motivating. This result conforms to the study of Kim (2010) that CLT creates a lively and active atmosphere in test preparation class which can be resulted in promoting students' interest and active learning that eventually leads to the improvement in terms of proficiency and test score. Moreover, the finding is also similar to the study of Apichatrojanakul (2011) and Liu (2014) who found that the participants preferred to have group work, discussion and integrated activities in the TOEIC preparation class and also, they would like to practice speaking and writing in class. Furthermore, the high score group opined that CLT gave them a chance to use the language that is similar to the real situation. This is also similar to what Kim (2010) suggested in her study that the teachers should provide students a chance to collaborate and negotiate the knowledge gained from the test preparation class to practice with their peers. This can develop students' proficiency and test score.

Nonetheless, the respondents from the low score group preferred studying with the direct test preparation method. They reported that they were worried about the test score. This could be because TOEIC, which is considered as a high-stake standardized test, is an important indicator for their future. In this research context, they are required to get 945 out of 990 which is very high. This may be a main reason why they preferred to study for the test in order to memorize the elements that were possibly found in the test. According to Kohn (2004), this scoring system creates an authoritarian atmosphere and eventually negative washback and test anxiety are promoted. As Green (2013) suggested, negative washback distorts the curriculum since the teaching and learning focus on testing criteria. This is in line with the study of Bessette (2007) who stated that the majority of the test takers would prefer to become familiar with test items and format as it helps decrease anxiety and make them feel more confident in taking the test. Likewise, Harada (2016) also examined the effects of the TOEIC course on Japanese students by using direct test preparation. It was found that the TOEIC course significantly influenced students' score.

From the result, although CLT proved to be effective in boosting TOEIC scores of the students, other confounding variables may contribute to the diverse attitudes of the students. From the interview, it can be seen that the high score students had a positive attitude while the low score students did not prefer to be taught with CLT. This may be because of the difference in their proficiency level which may affect test anxiety. This issue was also suggested by Culler and Holahan (1980) that poor academic proficiency correlates to test anxiety. Students who have low academic skill tend to have a high test-anxiety as they do not have enough or proper knowledge in taking the test both in terms of test content and test-taking strategies. Moreover, Akram and Mahmood (2010) investigated the relationship between academic achievement and test anxiety of post graduate students and found that test anxiety is one of the factors that contribute to students' underachievement and low performance. Hence, the ability to control test anxiety can be an important element for the student in taking the high-stake standardized test.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATION

The results of this study confirmed that CLT in test preparation class proved to be effective in improving students' TOEIC score. By implementing this approach, students had a chance to practice the things that they learned in the context similar to the test and the real-life situation which resulted in score improvement. Thus, it is clear that communicative test preparation activities integrated in this teaching method should be implemented in test preparation class. By doing so, teachers can prepare the students for the test and student can both achieve their target score and improve their English proficiency. This implication is in line with the recent trends in language assessment, e.g., assessment for learning and assessment-driven learning (Black & Wiliam, 2009; Wall & Horák, 2011). However, the attitudes of the students towards the implementation of CLT differed according to their gained score. This indicated that test anxiety plays a critical role in affecting test takers' perception and performance. It is recommended that students should participate in a training program in order to know how to deal with factors causing test anxiety. The anxiety may be due to pressure and stress that the students have which could lead to negative attitude towards assessment and instruction. Thus, as test anxiety unexpectedly played a role in this study, further study should consider this and also other influential factors in order to get a well-rounded perspective. Some limitations of this study were given here. As this study was conducted with only a limited number of participants without randomization and was done in one setting,

it was far from generalization. Also, other confounding variables should be concerned, e.g., test anxiety and students' learning style. Students' proficiency should also be examined in more details by using other form of assessment such as speaking and writing test. Besides, questionnaire should be implemented in the future studies in order to investigate overall attitude of the students. Moreover, other high stake standardized tests, e.g., TOEFL and IELTS are also worth exploring. All in all, this study can be used as an alternative guideline for those, teachers and educators, who teach the test preparation course and would like to integrate activities other than drilling and memorizing the test items in order to arouse students' interest and participation.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Akram, R. R., & Mahmood, N. (2010). The relationship between test anxiety and academic achievement. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 32(2), 63 - 74.
- [2] Alam, M., Lodhi, F., & Aziz, S. (2011). The effects of examination assessment on education by the registered science teachers of secondary board of education in Sindh. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 3(8), 1135-1144.
- [3] Alderson, J. C., & Wall, D. (1993). Does washback exist? *Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 115-129.
- [4] Apichatrojanakul, P. (2011). The washback effects of the TOEIC examination on the teachers and students of a Thai business school. *Language Testing in Asia*, 1(1), 62-74.
- [5] Bessette, A. (2007). TOEIC: Uses and misuses. *Journal of Poole Gakuin*, 47, 35-45.
- [6] Black, P., & William, D. (2009). Developing the theory of formative assessment. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 21(1), 5-31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-008-9068-5>
- [7] Brown, H. (2006). Learner perceptions of TOEIC test results and language skill improvements: "I don't want to study English, I want to study TOEIC". *ResearchGate*, 1176-1181.
- [8] Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education.
- [9] Case, A. (2008). *15 most interesting TOEIC lessons*. Retrieved July 10, 2018, from <http://edition.telf.net/ides/exams/interesting-toeic-lessons>
- [10] Cheng, L. (2014). Consequences, impact, and washback. In A.J. Kunnan (Ed.), *The Companion to Language Assessment* (pp. 1130-1146). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- [11] Chen, Y., & Liu, D. (2011). *Washback effect of CET-4 and new college English teaching model exploration*. Retrieved July 10, 2018, from [http://en.cnki.com.cn/Article\\_en/CJFDTOTAL-HLXB201101054.htm](http://en.cnki.com.cn/Article_en/CJFDTOTAL-HLXB201101054.htm)
- [12] Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- [13] Culler, R. E., & Holahan, C. J. (1980). Test anxiety and academic performance: The effects of study-related behaviors. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 72(1), 16-20.
- [14] Educational Testing Service. (2016). *TOEIC Listening and Reading Test Scores and the CEFR Levels*. Retrieved July 15, 2018, from <https://www.etsglobal.org/content/download/768/12037/version/8/file/TOEIC+L%26R+Descriptors-MAR089-LR.pdf>
- [15] Educational Testing Service. (2019a). *2018 Report on Test Takers Worldwide*. Retrieved July 15, 2018, from <https://www.ets.org/s/toeic/pdf/2018-report-on-test-takers-worldwide.pdf>
- [16] Educational Testing Service. (2019b). *Examinee Handbook-TOEIC Listening and Reading Test*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- [17] Firestone, W. A. et al. (2002). The Ambiguity of Test Preparation: A Multimethod Analysis in One State. *Teachers College Record*, 104(7), 1485-1523.
- [18] Gebril, A., & Brown, G. T. L. (2014). The effect of high-stakes examination systems on teacher beliefs: Egyptian teachers' conceptions of assessment. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy, and Practice*, 21(1), 16-33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2013.831030>
- [19] Green, A. (2013). Washback in language assessment. *International Journal of English Studies*, 13 (2), 39-51.
- [20] Harada, S. (2016). Effects of the TOEIC course on students' TOEIC scores. *Rikkyo Jogakuin Junior College Bulletin*, 48, 1-17.
- [21] Heubert, P., & Hauser, R. M. (1999). *High Stakes: Testing for Tracking, Promotion and Graduation*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences
- [22] Howatt, A.P.R. (2004). *A history of English Language Teaching*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [23] Hu, G. (2005). CLT is best for China - An untenable absolutist claim. *ELT Journal*, 59(5), 64-68.
- [24] Hughes, A., & Hughes, J. (2020). *Testing for Language Teachers*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [25] Kim, J. (2010). Effective communicative language teaching in a test-preparation class: is it possible? *Hawaii Pacific University TESOL Working Paper Series* 8, 1(2), 39-43.
- [26] Kohn, A. (2004). *What Does It Mean to Be Well Educated?* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- [27] Littlewood, W. (2000). *Communicative Language Teaching*. 20<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [28] Littlewood, W. (2011). Communicative language teaching: An expanding concept for a changing world. In E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Volume II (pp. 541-547). New York: Routledge
- [29] Liu, T. Y. (2014). Washback effects of the TOEIC washback of the TOEIC examination: a study of adult learner's attitudes toward English exams, learning and teaching in a TOEIC preparation. *Chaoyang Journal of Humanities and Sociology*, 12 (2), 217-246.
- [30] Maliwan, S. (2018). TOEIC preparation course for aviation personnel development institute students. *Kasem Bundit Journal*, 19(special edition): 234-243.
- [31] Miller, L. (2003). Developing listening skills with authentic materials. *ESL Magazine*, 6(2), 16-18.
- [32] Minarechová, M. (2012). Negative impacts of high-stakes testing. *Journal of Pedagogy*, 3(1), 82-100. <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10159-012-0004-x>

- [33] Ministry of Education. (2017). *Announcement of Ministry of Education on Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF 1)*. Retrieved June 7, 2018, from [http://www.mua.go.th/users/tqf-hed/news/data6/Bachelor%20in%20English\\_r.pdf](http://www.mua.go.th/users/tqf-hed/news/data6/Bachelor%20in%20English_r.pdf)
- [34] Nishitani, A. (2006). Teaching grammar for the TOEIC test: Is test preparation instruction effective? *Glottodidactica*, 32, 139-146.
- [35] Pan, Y. C. (2010). Enhancing students' communicative competency and test-taking skills through TOEIC preparatory materials. *TESOL Journal*, 3, 81-91.
- [36] Robb, N.,T., & Ercanbrack, J. (1999). A study of the effect of direct test preparation on the TOEIC scores of Japanese university students. *TESL-EJ*, 3(2), 1-21. Retrieved June 15, 2018, from <http://tesl-ej.org/ej12/toc.html>
- [37] Saglam, A. L. G., & Farhady, H. (2019). Can exams change how and what learners learn? Investigating the washback effect of a university English language proficiency test in the Turkish context, *ALLS*, 10(1): 177-186. Retrieved July 12, 2018, from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1216992>
- [38] Sawchuk, B. (2013). Using TOEIC preparation to assess English language skills. *Journal of Business and Languages*, 1(2), 9-11.
- [39] *Tactics for TOEIC Listening and Reading Test: Practice Test 1*. (2007). Retrieved July 7, 2018, from [https://doe.go.th/prd/assets/upload/files/bkk\\_th/0d6730a87776461f171f85ba791ca768.pdf](https://doe.go.th/prd/assets/upload/files/bkk_th/0d6730a87776461f171f85ba791ca768.pdf)
- [40] Talcott, C., & Tullis, G. (2007). *Target score: Student's book*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [41] Wall, D., & Horak, T. (2011). *The impact of changes in the TOEFL exam on teaching in a sample of countries in Europe: Phase 3 and 4. TOEFL research report (RR-11-41)*. Princeton, NJ: ETS.
- [42] Wang, Z., & Brown, G. (2014). Hong Kong tertiary students' conceptions of assessment of academic ability. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 33(5), 1063-1077.
- [43] Xiao, W. (2014). The Intensity and direction of CET washback on Chinese college students' test-taking strategy use. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(6), 1171–1177. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.4.6.1171-1177>
- [44] Xie, Q. (2015). Do component weighting and testing method affect time management and approaches to test preparation? A study on the washback mechanism. *System*, 50, 56–68. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.03.002>
- [45] Zhan, Y., & Andrews, S. (2014). Washback effects from a high-stakes examination on out-of-class English learning: Insights from possible self-theories. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 21(1), 71–89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2012.757546>



**Pallapa Lertcharoenwanich** received Master of Arts degree in English in 2016 from Khonkaen University, Thailand. She is currently pursuing a PhD in English Language Teaching at Language Institute, Thammasat University, Thailand. Her research interests include ELT pedagogy, corpus linguistics, test preparation course and second language acquisition of syntax. She is currently a lecturer at Business English Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Buriram Rajabhat University, Buriram, Thailand.

# The Use of Passive Voice in News Reports for Political Purposes

Yazan Shaker Almahameed

Department of English Language and Translation, Amman Arab University, Jordan

Khaleel Bader Al Bataineh

Department of English Language and Translation, Amman Arab University, Jordan

Raeda Mofid George Ammari

Department of Basic Sciences and Humanities, Amman Arab University, Jordan

**Abstract**—This study aims to identify the purposes of passive construction in political news reports. The study also examines how the use of passive voice affects readers' attitudes towards political issues. The use of passive voice can lead to ambiguity, affecting the clarity of meaning by hiding the identity of the doer of the action. However, being vague about the doer of the action is primarily deliberate in political news to serve particular purposes. To collect data, the researchers refer to three newspapers, namely The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and The Guardian. Some articles discussing political issues were carefully chosen from those newspapers. The analysis of the results reveals that the passive voice is used in the selected political news reports to fulfill four main purposes; first, when the journalist emphasizes the action rather than the doer of the action, he omits by phrase, replacing it with marginal information. Second, when the subject of the sentence is the core of the discussion, the journalist ends the passive sentence with by phrase. Third, passive construction is used when political news writers avoid assigning responsibility to anybody. Fourth, the passive is used in political reports with modal auxiliaries when the writers want to express their opinion clearly about what is possible, necessary, or prohibited. The analysis of results also reveals that the use of passive voice can contribute actively to changing the attitudes and views of the recipients.

**Index Terms**—passive construction, political news, by phrase, modal auxiliaries

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language researchers indicate that the relationship between a subject and a verb is manifested in two main forms, namely, the causative form which involves the presence of a subject participant, causing the action, and the inchoative form which rules out the subject "doer of the action", substituting it for the object so that the action is viewed as spontaneous (Almahameed et al., 2018; Dziemianko, 2006). The inchoative structure in the English language and passive voice is deemed a two-sided coin because of their similarity in inverting the syntactic positions of the subject and the object. Both constructions place the object in the position of the subject, and the subject is viewed as slightly or never participating in the action (Tabib-Zadeh, 2006).

Passive voice is the grammatical construction where the subject of the sentence, the head of a noun phrase, becomes the recipient of the action rather than the doer of the action so that the action is performed upon it and the object occupies the syntactic position of the subject (Amadi, 2018). Syntactically speaking, constructing a passive voice sentence requires a noun phrase subject and noun phrase object inversion in which the object noun phrase moves to the position of the subject noun phrase. The passive voice is expressed in English in two major forms; the first form is constructed by using auxiliary (verb to be or verb to have) followed by past participle verb. The second form is exhibited in the use of (get passive) followed by the past participle verb. The two forms of passive voice are illustrated in the examples below.

1-The flowers in the garden were destroyed by the wind. (Standard passive)

2- The employee has worked at the company for five years, but he got sacked. (get passive)

It is noticed that the passive in sentence one is formed by placing the object in the place of the subject and using the verb to be (were) followed by the past participle (destroyed). In sentence two, the passive is formed by employing (got) followed by the past participle (sacked). Passive voice does not appear in all tenses in English, meaning that constructing a passive sentence is illicit in present perfect continuous, future continuous, future perfect continuous, and past perfect continuous. This can be attributed to the fact that having two auxiliaries in a row is confusing to the speaker and the listener equally. A sentence like " The plants have been being watered by the farmer" sounds odd, poorly constructed, and awkward because of using two forms of the verb to be (been/ being) (Cowan, 2008; Biber et al., 1999; Celce-Murcia & Freeman, 1999).



Two types of passive voice can be distinguished; viz. the long passive, using a "by phrase" that aims at revealing the doer of the action. The long passive is chiefly utilized when the speaker/writer prefers to highlight some information at the end of the sentence. In addition, the long passive assigns less responsibility to the object, giving it little attention. The other type is the short passive, in which the subject is implicit and unspecified. The short passive is more commonly used in academic and scientific writing than any other genre because it helps keep distance between the researcher and his findings (Biber et al., 1999). The two examples below illustrate the case of the short passive.

3- The Mercedes is manufactured in Germany.

4- Cotton is grown in Egypt.

The short passive is utilized in language to draw the attention of the reader to the action itself rather than the doer of the action as exhibited in examples three and four. In sentence three above, there is no mention of the subject or the persons who manufacture Mercedes cars as the main emphasis is placed on the action of manufacturing rather than the causers of the action. In a similar vein, sentence four reveals only the action of growing cotton in this sentence the "by phrase" which shows the doer of action is unnecessary.

The use of passive voice in English is not always a favorable choice, as passive is illicit with some verbs even if they are transitive. In English, state verbs such as *belong, have, lack, resemble, suit, consist, die, seem, and more* cannot be made passive (Azar, 1989). On the contrary, some verbs in English only appear in the passive form such as *"be born, be deemed, and be located"*. In addition, some expressions in English are only used in the passive voice, as in the following examples.

5- I have no idea where Tom is. He is lost.

6- I am done with my housework.

7- Where is my mobile phone? It is gone.

It is obvious in the examples that the idiomatic expressions "he is lost, it is gone, and I am done" are only used in the passive voice construction in English.

The use of passive voice prevailed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century because of the growing need for scientific research to be objective, unbiased, and fair. Researchers were heavily dependent on the use of passive voice as it helped keep a considerable distance between the researcher and his/her conclusion, as scientific research should focus on the findings and conclusions of the work rather than the researchers. This is in line with a study conducted by Alvin (2014) who states that most students who participated in a survey about the use of passive voice believe that passive voice should be the prevailing norm of academic writing. He adds that the participants in the study argue that passive voice helps the writers become more objective and professional.

Nowadays, passive voice is the favored choice in many language genres, particularly academic writing, and news reports (Unver, 2017). One of the fields where passive voice is commonly used is media in the sense that passive forms are used on television programs, in news reports, and on social media networks. In the media, a news reporter intentionally deletes the doer of the action, changing the word order to make facts obscure and unclear (Qassim, 2016).

In some situations, the use of passive voice is preferred over active voice. Oluikpe (1981) reveals three cases where the passive form is the favored option. First, when the subject of the sentence is unknown or cannot be easily identified as in the sentence "A child was kidnaped". Second, when the subject of the sentence is easily identified from the context as in the sentence "The singer was praised". Third, when a sense of emotion is needed as in the example "We should have been informed". Also, the passive can be used in the following situations:

First, to discuss a general truth.

Example: Regulations might be violated

Second, to focus on the object or recipient of the action rather than the subject.

Example: Mona Lisa was painted a long time ago.

Third, to attempt to be vague about the person responsible for an action.

Example: Mistakes have been made. Others will be blamed.

Fourth, to conform to the norms of writing in academic papers, news reports, and instructions.

Example: The study was carried out to investigate the correlation between the two variables.

Within media context in general and news reports in particular, passive voice is very common. Qassim (2016) argues that passive voice is used when the identity of the doer of the action is unimportant as in the example below.

Example: Oil spills are often cleaned up with large snakes that are made with a combination of lyophilic and hydrophilic used fibers.

In addition, passive voice is a favored option in news reports when the emphasis is placed on the action or the process itself rather than the doer of action as in the example below.

Example: Processes have been developed whereby soft-drink bottles which are made from the same chemical materials.

Passive voice can also be used to impose the power of law or regulations upon employees, students, and citizens as illustrated below.

Example: Littering is forbidden.

Passive voice is used in news reports when the journalist avoids assigning responsibility to anybody as in the following example.

Example: Shao Jiang, 47, a pro-democracy activist, was arrested in the street outside Mansion House.

Based on this overview of passive voice in terms of its forms, types, and usage in all language genres and in news reports this study attempts to highlight the use of passive voice in some selected newspapers for political purposes and to determine the reasons for utilizing this construction.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study raises two research questions:

Q1- Do newspapers use the passive voice to fulfill political purposes? If yes. How?

Q2 How does the use of the passive voice for political purposes affect the attitudes of the reader?

## III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Passive voice occurs when the writer or speaker deliberately omits the doer of the action, replacing it with the object of the sentence. Passive voice is used in all fields including the political field. The use of passive form in politics occurs chiefly when political news writer avoids assigning responsibility to anybody. Such use of passive voice in political news reports does not enhance understanding of the text because of its lack of clarity. The problems resulting from using passive voice led some researchers to call for using active voice in all fields.

This is consistent with Kirkman (1975), who argues that utilizing the passive voice makes the language abstract, difficult to understand, and ponderously roundabout.

This notion is well expressed by Alvin (2014, p. 1), who states that "Many writing guides favor the use of the active voice for reasons of clarity and conciseness". It is fitting to indicate that the use of passive by news reporters is mostly intentional, making the language of reports blur and vague to serve specific purposes related to focusing on the event itself rather than the doer of the action. It is of paramount importance to indicate that most previous studies examined the use of passive voice in terms of errors committed by language learners when using this language structure (Yannuar et al., 2014; Unver, 2017; Princess et al., 2018; Amadi, 2018) excluding Qassim (2016) who investigated the use of passive and active voice in news language. However, none of the studies has been devoted to exploring the use of passive voice for political purposes, which is the main concern of this study.

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

A wide range of research has been implemented to examine the use of passive voice. These studies aim primarily at exploring the difficulties that second language learners encounter when using passive voice, in the sense that those studies come up with statistics and figures pertinent to the correct use of passive by the learners (Yannuar et al., 2014; Unver, 2017; Princess et al., 2018; Amadi, 2018).

Moreover, other studies investigated the use of passive in the corpus of academic and scientific fields (Alvin, 2014; Qassim, 2016). The current literature review displays some previous studies conducted on the passive voice and the most prominent conclusions.

Yannuar et al. (2014) examined the use of active and passive voice forms by Indonesian students. As a secondary purpose, the study attempted to explore the implications resulting from active and passive constructions. To collect the data required for the study, the researchers referred to a corpus of theses written by undergraduate students in the Department of English Language at the State University of Malang during the academic years 2011-2013. The researchers found that using of active voice accounts for (64.8%) of all constructions outperforming the passive voice. The study suggests that the overuse of active construction can be attributed to the fact that Indonesian students are influenced by their native language.

In line with this study, Unver (2017) conducted a study on passive and active voice constructions. The study aimed primarily at investigating the methods that assist second language learners' understanding of voice and raising their awareness of the correct use of active and passive voice in written and spoken language. The results of the study indicated that the incorrect use of active and passive voice by the learners can be ascribed to native language interference, which stems from the differences between the first and the second language. Besides, the improper use of active and passive voice also results from the fact that the learners are unaware that passive and active voice cannot be used interchangeably all the time.

In a parallel way, Princess et al. (2018) explored the use of passive construction in the academic writing of university students. The study examined the errors the respondents committed when writing about academic subjects. The study also attempted to categorize the types and the causes of errors made by the respondents. A total of nineteen second-year English students participated in the study. The collection of data was based on the theory of Surface Structure Taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982). To find out the causes of errors, the researchers adopted the theory proposed by James and Brown. The findings of the study revealed that the students committed a total of 369 errors: 59% of errors were omission errors, 28% misinformation errors, 9% addition errors, and 4% disordering errors. The researchers concluded that interlingual and intralingual interference are the main factors responsible for the occurrence of errors.

To investigate the difficulties that Nigerian learners of English encounter in learning English passive voice, Amadi (2018) conducted his study on Nigerian university students. The impetus for implementing this study was that most university students in Nigeria are heavily dependent on the use of active construction rather than passive construction. The sample of the study consisted of (30) students from the department of English and Communication Arts at the University of Education. To collect data, the participants were instructed to write a composition about the problems of their daily lives and how they overcome them. The research shows that the participants encounter great difficulty with the passive voice and the greatest difficulty is with tense changes of the voice.

To explore the use of active and passive voice in news reports, Qassim (2016) carried out a study. The study aimed primarily at examining the purposes for using this construction in news reports. The researcher referred to a corpus of articles to collect data for the study. More specifically, the researcher selected (20) articles from some British newspapers: the Independent, the Guardian, and the Morning Star. The results of the analysis revealed that journalists use passive construction for many reasons and to perform several functions in discourse. These reasons can be briefed as follows; 1- when the doer of the action is unimportant, 2- when concentrating on the action in place of the subject, 3- to impose authoritative power, and 4- when the doer of the action is very well known.

All of these studies (Yannuar et al., 2014; Unver, 2017; Princess et al., 2018; Amadi, 2018), excluding (Qassim, 2016) placed emphasis on the use of passive voice among foreign learners of English and focused on the difficulties they encountered when using passive voice. However, Qassim (2016) investigated passive and active voice from another angle, that is news reports. Qassim (2016) aimed at gaining insight into the reasons for utilizing the passive in news reports. It is worth mentioning that the present study expands the scope of this investigation by looking into the purposes and functions of using the passive voice in news reports from a political perspective, which has rarely been the subject of previous studies.

## V. METHODOLOGY

Extensive critical analysis for utilizing the means of passive construction in news reports is carried out. The analysis of the use of passive voice is made with the aim of determining the reasons for employing this structure in the news. The analysis of data was qualitative in nature. Qualitative analysis is defined by Ulhoi and Neergaard (2007, p.383) as "a study that focuses on understanding the naturalistic setting or everyday life of a certain phenomenon or person". In qualitative research, the researchers are required to get close to a certain phenomenon and attempt to understand it. In this study, a deep and thorough analysis of the passive voice in news reports is conducted to clarify the reasons for its use. In collecting the data for this study, the researchers referred to articles in the following papers: The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and The Guardian. The selection of articles was based on two criteria.

- 1- The article discusses a political issue.
- 2- The article contains many instances of the use of passive voice.

Having selected the needed articles, examples of passive voice constructions in each article were listed and then analyzed.

## VI. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The critical analysis related to the use of passive voice in news reports for political purposes starts with revealing the results pertinent to research question one. The analysis of results depicts instances of passive use from the selected articles. In addition to revealing the cases of passive voice in those articles, a deep analysis of the purposes for its use is made.

### A. Results Pertinent to Research Question One

The first research question is formulated as follows;

*Do newspapers use the passive voice to fulfill political purposes? If yes. How?*

The beginning of the analysis is with an article chosen from Washington Post that discusses the US presidential elections in 2020.

*"Many said that any candidate should be allowed to request election reviews as many times as they want".*

Modals in the English language are normally utilized to express a person's opinion, perspective, attitude, or mood about what is probable, permissible, and prohibited. In the example, the passive phrase "should be allowed" expresses the notion of mild necessity. In other words, it is the reporter's opinion or somebody else's about the necessity for secretary of state candidates to request election reviews.

*"The election results could continuously be called into question with no end in sight".*

In this example, the passive with modals is also used "could continuously be called into". The writer uses the modal *could be* with the passive form to express the possibility of election fraud. The writer attempts to express his opinion about interference in the election. In other words, the writer tries to change voters' minds about the validity of the election by using the passive construction "could be called into question".

*Mark Finchem, is a leading driver of a conspiracy theory that the election was stolen in Arizona's second-largest county, Pima County.*

In this example, the passive form *"the election was stolen"* is used because the doer of the action is obviously known. In other words, the supporters of the former president of the United States, Donald Trump, strongly believe that the results of the election were fraudulent, and the people who changed the results are the Democrats. Thus, the use of the passive form rather than the active form in this sentence is a suitable option.

*Trump's false election-fraud claims were underpinned by citing the changes to how people voted in 2020.*

In this example, the writer uses the passive form because he wants to focus the reader's attention on the action rather than the performer of the action. The claims of election fraud are more significant and are prioritized over the identity of those who support such claims.

*Raffensperger declined and got threatened by Trump and received death threats from Trump's supporters.*

In this example, the writer uses the passive with the verb *got*. As mentioned previously, the passive voice appears in two forms: the auxiliary+ past participle and *get*+ past participle. In this example, the passive *got threatened* is used together with a *by phrase* because the writer wishes to draw attention to the performer rather than the action. For the writer, placing emphasis on the identity of the doer of the action is prioritized over the action. In doing so, the writer exposes the person who threatened Raffensperger.

The second article in this critical analysis of passive voice is selected from The Wall Street Journal. The article covers the issue of American airstrikes against the Syrian regime in 2019, which killed women and children.

*U.S. strike in Syria that killed dozens of people, including women and children, but that wasn't publicly acknowledged by the military until this year.*

In this sentence, the writer uses the passive phrase *"wasn't publicly acknowledged"* alongside *by phrase* to highlight the doer of the action. The writer wants to communicate the notion that despite the military's killing dozens of women and children, there was no public acknowledgement of the event until this year. In this quote, the emphasis is on the military as the body responsible for the action.

*The military was "not unreasonable" and no international laws were violated.*

The passive construction is employed in this example for two reasons: first, to emphasize the notion that laws were not violated, and second, to avoid assigning responsibility. More precisely, the passive form is used because the writer does not want to blame the US army for killing women and children in Syria, and in so doing violating international law.

*It is unclear whether the new report will be released upon completion.*

In this sentence, the use of passive voice is justified because the doer of the action is obvious and needless to reveal. As previously mentioned in the article, the army defense chief led the investigations and issued the report.

The third article, discussing issues related to Pegasus spyware, appeared in The Guardian.

*Government agencies in Mexico are believed to have been among NSO's early customers.*

The passive construction *"are believed"* is used in this sentence because the writer highlights the action rather than the causer of the action. The passive implies that it is unimportant to know "who believes"; the importance is knowing the names of the countries benefitting from this technology.

*And those governments – it can be assumed – make predictably heinous uses of it.*

The passive expression *"it can be assumed"* is used because the writer thinks unveiling the identity of the "assumer" is not of paramount importance or because the writer does not want to assign any responsibility to the assumer.

*The Israeli government is outraged about this, possibly because of revelations that phones of Palestinian human rights defenders have been "Pegasused".*

The passive construction in this sentence *"have been 'Pegasused'"* is used to focus the reader's attention on the action, spying on Palestinian activists. In addition, the passive voice is also used because the perpetrator is Israel.

For this analysis, one more article was selected from *The Guardian*, discussing the new amendments to the laws of protest in Britain.

*Anyone who resists being searched could be imprisoned for – you guessed it – up to 51 weeks.*

In this sentence, the writer uses the passive with the modal *"could be imprisoned"* because the doer of action can easily be identified, and the use of the modal expresses the notion of possible imprisonment. Thus, the passive is used because the performer, the police, is known.

*Black and Brown people, who are six times as likely to be stopped as white people.*

In this example, the writer employs the passive *"to be stopped"* to draw attention to the action. The writer believes revealing how heinous and scandalous the action is much more important than focusing on the performer, who can be easily determined. Therefore, highlighting the act of detaining people based on their color takes priority.

*Protesters have tried valiantly to draw our attention to this tyrant's gambit, and have been demonised for their pains.*

With the aim of being vague about revealing the identity of those who demonize the protesters, the writer uses the passive voice. The writer does not want to bear the responsibility of revealing the identity of the doer of action whether it is the police or the media.

*When driven by fear of losing the support of his core vote, the prime minister is unpersuaded that human rights law, or moral obligation to desperate people.*

One of the most prominent methods of placing emphasis on a specific part of discourse is called *fronting*. In this example, the writer fronts the *phrase* "by fear" in the passive construction as it is the part of the sentence, the writer wants to draw attention to. Besides, not only is the *by phrase* fronted but also the whole passive construction is fronted

and reduced for the purpose of emphasis. The passive construction in this example is reduced the subject of the sentence together with the auxiliary are omitted.

As illustrated, the passive voice is commonly used in news reports to serve political purposes depending on the writer's intention and attitude. Having answered the first research question, it is fitting to respond to the second research question.

### B. Results Pertinent to Research Question Two

#### *How does the use of the passive voice for political purposes affect the attitudes of the reader?*

The use of passive voice in politics is very frequent and fulfills several objectives based on the writer's perspective. Many news reporters use the passive voice with modals when the writer desires to interfere in the events and expresses his opinion to change the reader's mind. This is consistent with Qasem (2016, p.164), who argues that "The journalists in writing news reports do not only convey the information, but they also express their points of view, such as necessity like should, must ....., or possibility like can, could, or prediction by using will, would, or probability as may, might". The meaning of the sentence "Smoking must be forbidden in here" is deferent from the sentence "Smoking might be forbidden". In both sentences, the writer expresses his opinion about what is necessary or possible by using modals.

Based on the discussion related to research question one, reporters use passive forms with *by phrase* and other times without. This fact can be attributed to the desire of the journalists to emphasize some truths and hide others. More specifically, whenever the writer uses *by phrase*, he wants to draw the attention of the reader to the doer of the action rather than the action itself, and when *by phrase* is omitted, the action is the focus. Such employment of a *by phrase* in the passive voice aims at changing the reader's behavior or opinion by focusing on one thing and ignoring another.

Journalists also attempt to influence their audience or changing viewpoints by being vague about the doer of the action in the sense that they hide the identity of the doer of the action to shift emphasis to the action itself. This is done by omitting a *by phrase* and replacing it with the preposition with+noun as in the example below.

- The bank was robbed yesterday with guns and knives.

In the above sentence, the writer tries to shift the attention of the readers from the doer of action to the action itself. In this sentence, nothing is said about the robber, instead, the focus is on the robbery and the weapons used in the robbery. Such use of passive voice immerses the reader in details while neglecting the doer of the action, which is understood.

Thus, the passive voice is not used aimlessly in political news reports, but, rather, journalists use it to serve several purposes such as focusing on one part of the discourse and ignoring another or avoiding assigning responsibility to anybody. Consequently, the ultimate purpose of using the passive is to affect the perspective of society towards a specific issue.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The present study aims chiefly at identifying the purposes of using passive construction in political news reports. The study also attempts to explore how the passive voice contributes to changing the mind of readers of news reports. It has been shown that the passive voice serves multiple purposes in political news reports, and journalists use it as an alternative to the active voice to fulfill these purposes. The use of passive construction in political news reports contributes actively to affecting or changing the minds of readers by shifting the emphasis from the action to the doer of the action or vice versa.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors are grateful to Amman Arab University for the use of its services, facilities and expected to fund the article.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Almahameed, Y, Alajaleen, M & Ahmad, K. (2018). Causative-inchoative Alternation in the Language of Jordanian EFL Learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*.7(6), 176-183.
- [2] Alvin, L. (2014). The passive voice in scientific writing. The current norm in science journals. *Journal of Science Communication*. 13(1), 1-16.
- [3] Amadi, S. (2018). Learning the English Passive Voice: Difficulties, learning strategies of Igbo ESL learners and pedagogical implications. *International Journal of English and Literature*. 9(5), 50-62.
- [4] Azar, B. (1989) *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, 2d ed. USA. Pearson Education.
- [5] Bataineh, K. B., & Tasnimi, M. (2014). Competency-Based Language Teaching. *Express, an International Journal of Multi Disciplinary Research*, 1(7).
- [6] Biber, D., Concord, S., & Leech, G. (2003). *Longman student grammar of spoken and written English*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Ltd.
- [7] Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D., & Goodwin, J. M. (2010). *Teaching pronunciation: A course book and reference guide* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- [8] Celce-Murcia, M., and D. Larsen-Freeman. (1999). *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course*. 2d ed. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle
- [9] Cowan, R. (2008). *The Teacher's Grammar of English*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- [10] Dziemianko, A. (2006). *User-Friendliness of Verb Syntax in Pedagogical Dictionaries of English*. Germany. Lexicographica Series Maior.
- [11] Kirkman, J. (1975). That pernicious passive voice, *Phys. Technol.* 6: 197–200.
- [12] Oluike, B. (1981). Agreement. In: B.O.A. Oluike (Ed.). *The use of English for higher education*. Onitsha: African-FEP Publishers.
- [13] Princess, P, Saun, S& Adnan, A (2018). An Analysis of the Second Year English Department Students' Errors in Using Passive Voice in the Academic Writing Subject of Universitas Negeri Padang. *Journal of English Language Teaching*. 7(3). 181-189.
- [14] Qassim, S. (2016). The Use of Active and Passive Voice in the News Language. *AL-USTATH*. 1(18), 157-172.
- [15] Tabib-Zadeh, O. (2006). *Verb capacity and basic sentence constructions in Modern Persian*. Tehran: Markaz Publication
- [16] Ulhoi, J. and Neergaard, H. (2007). *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Entrepreneurship*. UK. MGP Books Ltd.
- [17] Unver, M. (2017). On Voice in English: An Awareness Raising Attempt on Passive Voice. *European Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*. 2(3), 17-28.
- [18] Yannuar, N, Shitadevi, I, Basthomi, Y &Widiati, U.(2014). Active and Passive Voice Constructions by Indonesian Student Writers. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 3(7). 1400-1408.



**Yazan Shaker Almahameed** is an associate professor of Linguistics at Amman Arab University in Jordan/ Department of English language and translation. He published research papers in areas of syntax, semantics, stylistics and discourse and attempts to keep pace with all fields of Linguistics for the sake research.



**Khaleel Bader Al-Bataineh** works as an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at Department of English Language and Translation at Amman Arab University, Jordan. His research interests are applied linguistics, e-learning, blended learning, language in use, language analysis, speech acts and their role in communication and sociolinguistic behavior. He has presented several papers at international conferences.



**Raeda Mofid Ammari** is an Assistant Professor of English born in Amman -Jordan. She taught English for 23 years in various institutes. She received her master's (2010) and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Jordan (2018). Currently, she works at Amman Arab University. Her main research interests focus on corpus linguistics, teaching strategies, and sociolinguistics. She finished her 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.

# Assistive Technology in the English Language Classroom: Reality and Perspectives

Jamila Al Siyabi

Centre for Preparatory Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Victoria Tuzlukova

Centre for Preparatory Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Khalid Al Kaabi

Centre for Preparatory Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

Mohammad Hadra

Centre for Preparatory Studies, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman

**Abstract**—The Oman Vision 2040 Policy aims to create a system of high-quality education where human capabilities are empowered and where learners of a wide range of ability feel welcome and their learning is invigorated. However, research reveals that educators still need to improve their knowledge of how to access valuable insights into such education practice, and there are many ideas that need to be sharpened and elaborated in academic and public discussions. In the context of Oman's higher education, besides English language learning and communicative skills' enhancement, there is inclusive language education as one of strategic directions and priorities. Suggesting that foreign language acquisition understood as a complex cognitive and social process can be facilitated by assistive technology used for enhancing English language achievement of the learners who lack some of its essential aspects, this paper explores the reality of integrating assistive technology in the English language classroom that includes students with visual impairments. It also outlines future perspectives involving the authors' understanding of assistive technology as practice that has the capacity for increasing language learners' autonomy, participation, and, simultaneously, advancing their academic standing. The shared insights will provide language educators with ideas on how using assistive technology can enable more efficient language teaching and learning experiences of visually impaired students, empower them and, consequently, strengthen their academic success.

**Index Terms**—assistive technology, English language classroom, higher education, inclusive education, visually impaired students

## I. INTRODUCTION

One of the features of modern educational systems and governmental policies worldwide is a move towards inclusive education and creation of inclusive educational settings (Bellacicco & Farinella, 2018) which support a full involvement of students with different learning needs and abilities and adapt their structures, policies and practices in order to accommodate such needs (Hutchinson et al., 2002). In the Sultanate of Oman, inclusive education is among the national strategic directions and priorities in the areas of education, scientific research and national talents. These are developed for a purpose to achieve a high-quality educational system that empowers human capabilities (Ramzi, 2019). Further, in Oman, inclusive education practice, especially in the context of higher education, is and has always been in the national public discourse (Albright, 2018; Rezaeian & Bagheri, 2017), social and institutional initiatives. The Disabilities Unit Project at the College of Arts and Social Sciences of Sultan Qaboos University set up in cooperation with Oman LNG joint venture company is one of the examples. The project includes a laboratory of assistive technologies equipped with the latest computer equipment and systems such as the most recent electronic devices, Braille sensors that facilitate students' learning, access to knowledge resources and digital content of the courses without relying on others (Disabilities unit project launched at SQU, 2019). In compliance with the governmental policies and initiatives, the academic research has also extended its boundaries to focus on innovative teaching and learning practices for the inclusion of special needs' undergraduate English language learners (Al Ghafri, 2015; Al-Busaidi & Tuzlukova, 2018). Assistive technology is one of such practices, having the capacity for increasing students' autonomy, participation, and simultaneously advancing their academic standing (Bellacicco & Farinella, 2018). Assistive technology is also understood as "any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities" (What is assistive technology, n.d, n.p.). However, while the reported practices appear to be valuable for Oman's academic and educational community in general, there are still many ideas related to inclusive education and use of assistive technology that need to be further elaborated, and

“... yet there’s still the challenge of how to access valuable insights into ways to assist teachers to learn, share and network ...” (Hock, 2015, p.7). To illustrate, Chakraborty (2001) argues that “various socio-economic, cultural, contextual, medical, personal, and family-related factors determine the feasibility and outcomes of using assistive technologies” (p.1).

Also, foreign language acquisition is a complex cognitive and social process that requires attention, auditory, visual perception, decoding, memory, mechanical skills and effort (What is assistive technology, n.d.). Students who lack any of these aspects may face difficulties in meeting their aspirations and desires in language learning. The problem is of course intensified in contexts where there are insufficient opportunities for language support. The learning experience is also affected by the perceptions held by teachers and indeed by all those responsible for program development and delivery that are sometimes mistaken and stem from the lack of knowledge about the theory and practice of using processes and resources to enhance students’ functional capacities (Al-Busaidi & Tuzlukova, 2018). This paper inquires the reality and perspectives of assistive technology’s integration and its application to enhance learning in the inclusive English language classroom in the context of Sultan Qaboos University and its Centre for Preparatory Studies.

## II. BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research in the area of inclusive education indicates that pedagogical change needs to take place where technology is deemed as “as both a tool and a catalyst for change” (Wen et al., 2017, n.p.). Waddell (2015) argues that “students should embrace technology for them to benefit”, and while emphasizing the central role of technology, encourages teachers to be “open to introducing technology into the classroom to improve and innovate their teaching practice” (n.p.). Rezaeian and Bagheri (2017) maintain that applying technology in the field of knowledge networks and education can promote a culture of inquiry, communication processes, and creative exploration. A study that explored English language educators’ perceptions of practices for promoting the inclusion of visually impaired students in the Omani undergraduate context stresses the potential of technology and innovative ideas, and that they are essential areas which impact student teaching and learning (Al-Busaidi & Tuzlukova, 2018). Al-Busaidi and Tuzlukova (2018) report that higher education institutions in the Omani context, just like other higher education contexts, are equipped with technologies, professional practitioners and supportive environments; however, the context of the visually impaired teaching, learning and technology facilities still persist to be a challenge for these institutions. This challenge is attributed to the inadequate knowledge and expertise of practitioners regarding technologies and innovative ideas (Al-Busaidi & Tuzlukova, 2018), and lack of the targeted professional development that can bridge the gap created by teacher’s limited knowledge and experience with innovation and technology that can enhance change and effectiveness in pedagogy and improve effectiveness in the teaching and learning of visually impaired students can indeed be of vital significance (Al-Busaidi & Tuzlukova, 2018). This resonates with the studies conducted on teacher professional development, a prominent concept that is widely understood as a process of enhancing teacher participation in the teaching practice for the purpose of expanding teachers’ knowledge and beliefs in their work environments (Driel et al., 2001; Guskey, 2000). It also corroborates with research that illustrates student and teacher-perceived difficulties with integrating technology into education (Emam et al., 2017; Ertmer et al., 2012, Al-Ani et al., 2020). Furthermore, Sze (2004) argues that technological interventions are non-specific. They are scattered, vague and incomprehensive. Also, teachers’ “comfort level of assistive technology in an inclusive classroom remains low” (p.1).

## III. STUDY METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted with an aim to identify the impact of assistive technology on possible shifting practices and perspectives of English language teaching to being universally accessible, equally usable, more inclusive and tailored to student needs. It also aimed at examining teaching and inclusive education practices currently in place at Sultan Qaboos University’ Centre for Preparatory Studies, which mission involves its commitment to developing students’ knowledge, attitudes, language, technical and life skills necessary for them to enter, participate and thrive in their academic undergraduate programs (CPS mission, objectives and values, n.d.).

Semi-structured interviews were adopted by the research team as a tool that probes into the practices of teachers and lab technicians in order to gain ‘insights into or understanding of opinions, attitudes, experiences, processes, behaviors, or predictions’ (Rowley, 2012, p.261) related to the integration of assistive technology in inclusive higher education classroom setting. The interviews specifically explored how the participants perceived their experiences and practices related to the use of assistive technologies for the visually impaired students in the English language classroom/the lab as an integral part of classroom teaching just like any other teaching tools adopted in classroom. The interviewed participants were two decision makers at the Centre for Preparatory Studies, one special needs coordinator, two English language teachers who have had the experience of teaching students with visual impairments, and two lab technicians at the Centre for Preparatory Studies and the College of Arts and Social Sciences. Both technicians manage labs that concern special needs students including visually impaired students.

Through interviews, large qualitative data sets were obtained by the research team, and thematic analysis was identified as “an apt qualitative method” (Nowell et al., 2017) for providing detailed data account (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Moreover, qualitative research, as explained by Nowell et al. (2017), is “a valued paradigm of inquiry” (n.p.).



However, “the complexity that surrounds qualitative research requires rigorous and methodical methods to create useful results” (Nowell et al, 2017, n.p.), and one of such methods is thematic analysis which is used across a range of research questions and epistemologies.

The analysis involved data management, description, and searching for themes understood as abstract entities bringing meaning, capturing and unifying “the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole” (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000, p. 362). Most of themes matched the interview questions and the researchers’ interest in more detailed data analysis of the aspects of the reality of integrating assistive technology in the English language classroom that includes students with visual impairments.

#### IV. STUDY FINDINGS

The identified themes connected substantial portions of the data and appeared to be significant concepts (DeSantis & Ugarriza, 2000) related to the study participants’ perceptions and experiences of integrating assistive technology in English language teaching and learning of visually impaired students. The main themes derived from the thematic analysis of the interviewed participants’ responses are four: technology, professional development, management, and teaching and learning.

Below is a detailed account of each theme.

##### A. *Technology*

Under the theme ‘technology’ come three subthemes, namely, role of technology, types of technology and limitations.

##### (a). *Role of Technology*

Assistive technology is important, and without technological devices and tools the process is going to be very challenging and almost impossible. Sze (2004) maintains that “assistive technology can play an important role in special education because many students with disabilities need special instructional treatment” (p.3). The participants in the study stated that without the use of technology, it is almost “impossible” to integrate visually impaired students into the classroom and help them to be successful. As emphasized by the study participants, providing these students with the right technology will lead to them being more independent and increase their functional ability. Concurrently, because of the use of assistive technology, teachers will have less burden in helping students to complete their tasks and assignments. Further, development in technology is another area that was brought up by the participants as they stated that it can significantly impact the “quality” and the “method” of learning for students with visual impairments. Providing suitable magnifiers, for instance, that are available for use at the Centre for Preparatory Studies of Sultan Qaboos University, helps low vision students “learn better and faster”. Another effective way is converting the learning materials into audio format. This can make it “more accessible for blind students to interact with the materials” that their classmates use for the course. Besides, converting the graded readers used by the English language students of the foundation program courses to take quizzes on the M-reader.org site into audio materials can be very helpful for visually impaired students. They, for example, can listen to the reading and then do the activity or the quiz.

##### (b). *Types of Technology*

Visually impaired students who take courses offered by the Centre for Preparatory Studies and Sultan Qaboos University are provided with technology facilities according to their needs. To illustrate, the participants mentioned a number of technological devices used by this cohort of students. These devices are, for example, magnifiers, audio materials, screen readers and laptops with screen readers.

Low-vision students are also provided with enlarged hard copies of teaching materials and soft copies for teaching and learning purposes. Copies are in the PDF format, so they can enlarge them on a computer, mobile phone or digital magnifiers. Visually impaired students are also entitled for some exam accommodations as they receive extra time, and sometimes a scribe is provided during assessment sessions.

##### (c). *Limitations in Technology*

With the integration of technology there is the “fear of the unknown”, as expressed by most of the participants. Some teachers resist being “assigned” students who have some kind of vision loss and related challenges. They believe, for example, that this experience can pose a situation that they are not familiar with due to their lack of experience teaching these students. Besides, as perceived and indicated by all the study participants, it can be “overwhelming for teachers” to teach special needs students if they have not gone through the experience or if they don’t know anything about it.

There are also challenges that concern financial resources as buying expensive equipment requires big budgets. Braille, for instance, is insufficient, as all the participants stressed. Braille system does not support pictures, charts and tables. The teacher has to rely on descriptions, classmates’ support or one-to-one support.

##### B. *Professional Development*

The data analysis also revealed issues that can be categorized under the umbrella of professional development. These issues are training on technology, familiarization sessions for teachers and technical staff pre-service training.

### (a). *Training on Technology*

All the participants emphasized the significance of different forms of professional development. Such response corroborates with other studies in other educational contexts. To illustrate, according to a study by McGregor and Pachuski (1996), when asked to rate both the importance and availability of specific technology supports, teachers rated training most highly. Laarhoven et al. (2012) maintain that lack of expertise and adequate professional development programs are among the largest barriers in effective integration of assistive technology in teaching.

The participants in this study stated that with assistive technology comes training as teachers, and technical staff need to be “trained on the right technology”. They also propose that fortunately this situation is “much better” than what it is used to be. It, however, can be made “better”. Technical staff need training workshops to “qualify” them and “familiarize them with best practices to deal with the special needs”. Besides, teachers need to be “acquainted with the use of devices”. One of the participants narrated an anecdote indicating how lack of training could lead to dire consequences:

*I did not know that these magnifiers can be used to take pictures and save them. So, during quizzes, I allowed a student to use magnifiers because she needed to enlarge the quiz. To my surprise, she was scanning the texts and taking pictures of the whole text. This obviously violates the security of the test. This is because I was ignorant. No one told me about this before: what this device can do and cannot do.*

### (b). *Familiarization Sessions*

Some of the interviewees indicated that if teachers have “familiarization sessions” where they are “familiarized with the kind of support or accommodations” that they can give to the visually impaired students to help them learn the materials, this at least gives the teachers some “relief” to the teacher. When one deals with the students with visual impairments, “especially for the first time”, they may be “willing to help, but they do not know how”. Familiarization sessions may help reduce this tension created by merely the teacher’s lack of “awareness” can help the students who are partially or completely blind be integrated more effectively in the classroom environment. In addition, inviting speakers to “raise awareness” about the inclusion of this group of students and to allow teachers to “open up” about their “fears and concerns in a safe atmosphere” under the umbrella of professional development is another form of familiarization. Also, if different teachers who are involved in teaching visually impaired students “share their experiences with a wider interested community of teachers”, teachers will learn to improve the “process of inclusive education of language learners”.

Further, technical staff also need to be trained on the “best practices” because the technical staff are “a great support for the teacher and the student for the whole process” as they are a “key element of success”. One cannot “just rely on the fact that they know how to do it”. They are not normally provided with the training on “how things can be done”.

### (c). *Pre-Service Training*

As maintained by Laarhoven et al. (2012), increase of the assistive technology integration into teacher education programs worldwide has been recommended by many prominent researchers and practitioners in the field of assistive technology. However, two of the teacher participants argued that even though teachers normally “study psychology” and “how to deal with different students and individual differences” during their pre-service training, these programs do not include special needs education. There is a pre-service program on “preschool education at Sultan Qaboos University”, but there is no “special education program”. In a special education program, teachers can “learn” about “how to deal with students who have special needs in terms of psychology and how to help reach the same learning outcomes”.

## C. *Management*

Management in the area of integrating technology in the English language teaching context is a third theme that emerged out of the data analysis of the interviews. This theme can be classified into lengthy process, clarity of the process, gaps in the process, strategic planning, leadership, communication and physical environment.

### (a). *Lengthy Process*

All of the teacher participants proposed that the process of integrating technology in class is “time consuming”. To them, this process involves “preparing” and “writing” materials and making “accommodations” in terms of teaching and testing. This finding corroborates with the results of a study by Johnson et al. (2016) on adopting new educational technologies and the time-consuming nature of the process.

### (b). *Clarity of the Process*

According to the three teachers, integrating technology is a “lengthy” process; it goes to the course teacher, to the course leader, to the assistive technology specialist and to the student. Besides, the “clarity of the process for all the parties involved” is “very important” because if the integration process is clear to the students, teachers, test writers, coordinators and technical staff, then one can assert that there is “a clear process”. In this regard, one of the teachers argued when everyone is aware of the process,

*They will accept it more. If they don't know it, if it is too mysterious for them, it will be very difficult for them to accept it.*

(c). *Gaps in the Process*

All of the teacher participants and one of the lab technicians thought that there were “gaps” in “the process”. This is because, according to one of the teachers, teachers “find themselves assigned roles without any preparation”. One teacher suggested that “shadowing” a faculty member with a significant role in inclusion is very important. Another argued further that

*the understanding of this inclusion has to change into a more formal system run by a team of people. So, it is not just scattered roles here and there.*

A third teacher recommended that with the “establishment” of a committee for the special needs, including the students with visual impairments, it is “great”, but there “still needs to be more formal”. She proposed further,

*teacher training needs to be a must. Technical staff training is a must. Shadowing people of a key role is a must. You need a system. So, if the person disappears, the system does not get affected.*

(d). *Strategic Planning*

All the participants proposed that there needs to be “more strategic planning” on preparing faculty members with “the educational qualification” or [attract]ing faculty members with the “right qualifications” and “experiences”. The administration of the university and its Centre for Preparatory Studies “should start looking at” the next fifty years: “where we want to go and what point we want to reach”.

As Sultan Qaboos University “admits more and more visually impaired students annually”, all programs “have to have ready materials for this kind of students”. One of the teachers problematized what is being done at the Centre for Preparatory Studies when visually impaired students get accepted at the University stating that,

*the current practice is once one of these students joins the program, arrangements are made, and most of them depend on the individual teacher and course leaders. Such arrangements sometimes vary from one program to the other, and that affects the quality of learning experience the students get.*

Further, all of teachers and technicians stated that the issue of understaffed lab technicians as well as the understaffing of qualified members in the special needs Lab. Teachers and technicians all proposed that the institution needs to look into “employing additional people” or “assistive technology specialists” who can “provide” their “full attention” to the institution and the visually impaired students, especially as the number of such students increases every year

(e). *Leadership*

One of the teacher participants stressed the significance of “leadership qualities” in the process of managing “very smoothly” the integration of assistive technologies for the students with visual impairments in the English language classroom. She reflected on this matter saying:

*I felt the difference with the establishment of the Special Needs Committee, with the person in charge with very good leadership qualities. The communication improved. The coordination improved. I think the whole process improved with a person who was able to coordinate it very well to facilitate the different commination between the different parties.*

With good “leadership” and “administrative” traits, this teacher contended further that when teachers and lab technicians work in harmony and “in a very smooth way”, they will be no problems with “registration”, “teacher allocation”, “testing”, “invigilation” or “materials”.

(f). *Communication*

The three teachers proposed that having a “report” about each student's “experience, accommodations, assessments” which the student with any kind of vision loss has received at school would “help” his/her teachers” greatly. A teacher suggested that it is essential to have a “system tracing students' progress, challenges, needs, teachers' end of semester notes” once the student is accepted at Sultan Qaboos University where future teachers should be able to access this “record” when a student with visual impairments is enrolled in their courses. Another teacher contended that teachers need to be “trained” and made “aware of other institutions' successful experiences” in inclusion of such students. Also, according to this teacher, the administrative staff should always “keep up-to-date information” about “recent technology serving” visually impaired students and “effective methods” to suit their “needs”.

Unfortunately, this is “currently missing” in the practice of the Centre for Preparatory Studies, one of the teachers argued. Very few tertiary education institutions in Oman admit visually impaired students with a “personal assistant” provided by his family, a teacher stated. This teacher's “knowledge” was “derived from” her “curiosity” and “effort to ask questions”. That is why, the teacher added, a “dialogue on a higher level” needs to be created to facilitate communication and coordination between institutions, between students and teachers. Another teacher recommended that a “dialogue” between the Special Needs Committee, the teachers and students at Sultan Qaboos University should be created where teachers' “views on the challenges and achievements” are shared between the different stake holders.

While acknowledging “great efforts spent to support these students”, a third teacher proposed that higher education institutions need to “listen” to the students with visual impairments to be able to “support them better”.

(g). *Physical Environment*

One challenge that the student with visual impairments encounter at higher educational is the physical environment of the institutions. The three teachers expressed their perceptions about how this factor can impact the level and quality of inclusion of visually impaired students in mainstream classes. One of the teacher-participants stated that ten years ago, when then the “inclusion started”, the physical environment was not “friendly enough” to “accommodate” the blind students and the students with low vision. Currently, another teacher proposed, the environment at higher education institutions needs to be “much easier to use and more accommodating”.

D. *Teaching and Learning*

(a). *Individual Differences of Visually Impaired Students*

All teachers contended that visually impaired students differ in their language proficiency, reading Braille and attitudes. One of the teachers proposed that “each individual” student has “totally different needs” than the other student who has “the same disability”, and therefore, each one “requires special attention and accommodations”. Another participant stated that some “blind students” have the ability to “read Braille”. According to this study participant, this is because they did their high school studies in Omar bin Al Khattab Institute. In this educational establishment, they were exposed to materials written in Braille. On the contrary, other visually impaired students graduated from regular government schools where they received no training on Braille. A third teacher also suggested that some students with visual impairments have positive attitudes to learning English, whereas others develop negative attitude to English leaning, and, therefore, approaching students with the same disability will differ due to these differences.

(b). *Course Materials and Copyright*

One of the lab technicians contended that “access” to course materials is “the most important” part in the process of integrating visually impaired students into mainstream English language classroom. He argued saying that if the “availability of the academic content” is not “well prepared for the student, learning will be “affected negatively”. For this cohort of students, he continued, the materials should be prepared in Microsoft Word format. However, he noted that “due to copyright issues, the institution cannot obtain digital versions of the course textbooks and materials from publishers”. In this regard, the lab technicians supervised a project, With My Hand I Read, the special needs lab in the College of Arts and Social Sciences. With the help of more than 400 university student volunteers, more than 25,000 pages of textbooks were retyped, formatted and made available for teaching and learning purposes.

(c). *Availability of Laptops with Installed Screen Readers and Textbooks in Braille*

According to all the participants, visually impaired students who join the university are provided with a laptop that has an installed screen reader that allows them to read electronic material. Students are provided with Braille devices too, a situation that requires the availability of all materials in an electronic format so that they would have equal access to the course content just like their peers. According to all the participants, most of the teaching materials are now available in electronic format. Many of the in-house and commercial textbooks have been scanned, proofread and made available into electronic format.

There have been “challenges”; however, and the “biggest” challenge is that “most” of the course textbooks are “commercial” books which, according to the two lab technicians, are particularly of a challenge and most likely “will continue” to be. This also applies to some in-house textbooks that are not available as digital copies; nevertheless, these are luckily “less of a challenge” because most of them are available in electronic format.

(d). *Support*

Students with visual impairments receive a wide range of support when they join the university. Through the Deanship of Student Affairs of Sultan Qaboos University, they are assigned student “mentors” who assist them outside the classroom. The mentor is usually “introduced” to the student's teachers in order to be sent important information about assignments, deadlines, practice tests, student's incidents of missing classes or exams. In addition to the administrative support they receive, some visually impaired students who cannot read Braille “depend heavily” on their mentors to “reinforce” what they have learnt in the class. These students are also provided with the course materials in PDF format and taught how to use the ‘read’ function to go through the materials. In spite of this, teachers believe that still there is a lack of information available to them about students’ ‘diagnostic profile’ and/or prior experience at school. However, each visually impaired student is a unique case and, therefore, requires a different type of support in teaching and learning.

(e). *Achievement*

Despite all of the concerns and challenges, there have been noticeable teachers’ shifts in understanding the university’s initiatives focused on the needs of students with disabilities, as well as appreciating the services that are provided and individual efforts taken. According to study participants, for example, there are currently “more

cooperative” teaching staff, and some of them go “the extra mile” in making the atmosphere more inclusive for the visually impaired students.

## V. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Foreign language context is a cognitively and socially complex process that involves developing auditory, visual and mechanical skills. When students encounter difficulty with any of these skills, they face challenges learning the language. When there are obstacles in the process of creating supportive inclusive environments that attempt to provide learning and teaching opportunities that lessen the impact of students’ disabilities, learning experience becomes a burden. Moreover, they more likely lead to the learning environments that are inefficient, discouraging for achieving maximum productivity and failing to make the best use of available resources and efforts. The quality of the learning and teaching experience of the visually impaired students is also influenced by how decision makers, teachers and technicians perceive the experience of inclusive pedagogy for the students with visual impairments. An essential part of the inclusive experience that is appropriate to students’ needs, supportive, engaging and inviting is the integration of assistive technology. Using assistive technology enables more efficient language teaching and learning experiences of visually impaired students, empowers them and, consequently, enhances their academic success.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank Sultan Qaboos University and its Centre for Preparatory Studies. This work was supported by an internal grant from Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Al-Ani, W., Al Musawi, A., Al-Hashmi, W. & Al-Saddi, B. (2020). Status of using assistive technology by students with disabilities at Sultan Qaboos University. *International Journal of Technology and Inclusive Education (IJTIE)*, 9 (2), 1606-1619.
- [2] Albright, A. (2018). The promise of inclusive education. *Times of Oman*. Retrieved February 15, 2021, from <https://timesofoman.com/article/138687/Opinion/Columnist/The-promise-of-inclusive-education>
- [3] Al Ghafri, M. (2015). The challenges that visually impaired students at Sultan Qaboos University face in learning English. *Proceeding of the 3rd Global Summit on Education GSE 2015*, 9-10 March 2015, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Retrieved February 6, 2021, from <http://worldconferences.net/proceedings/gse2015>.
- [4] Al-Busaidi, S., & Tuzlukova, V. (2018). Teachers’ perceptions of practices and challenges of innovating for the inclusion of special needs university English language learners in Oman. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies*, 12, (4), 659-671. Retrieved January 21, 2021, from <https://journals.squ.edu.om/index.php/jeps/article/view/2796/2499>.
- [5] Bellacicco, R., & Farinella, A. (2018). ICT in higher education. The review process of an assessment tool of technological competences of students with visual impairments. *Form@re - Open Journal Per La Formazione in Rete*, 18(1), 346-356. Retrieved January 2, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.13128/formare-22502>.
- [6] Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- [7] Chakraborty, S. (2001). Assistive technologies: Addressing the divide between the developed and developing world. *Journal of Science Policy & Governance*, 16(2), 1-7. Retrieved December 14, 2021, from [https://www.sciencepolicyjournal.org/uploads/5/4/3/4/5434385/chakraborty\\_jspg\\_v16.2.pdf](https://www.sciencepolicyjournal.org/uploads/5/4/3/4/5434385/chakraborty_jspg_v16.2.pdf).
- [8] *CPS mission, objectives and values* (n.d.). Retrieved January 12, 2022, from <https://www.squ.edu.om/cps/About-Us/Mission-Vision>.
- [9] DeSantis, L. & Ugarriza, D. (2000). The concept of theme as used in qualitative nursing research. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 22, 351–372. doi:10.1177/019394590002200308
- [10] Disabilities unit project launched at SQU (2019). *Anwaar*. Retrieved December 21, 2021, from <https://anwaar.squ.edu.om/en/2019/10/09/disabilities-unit-project-launched-at-squ/>
- [11] Driel, J. H. V., Beijard, D., & Verloop, N. (2001). Professional development and reform in science education: The role of teachers’ practical knowledge. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*. 38(2), 137-158. Retrieved July 21, 2021, from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/>.
- [12] Emam, M., Al-Abri, K. & Al-Mahdy, Y. (2017). *Assistive technology competencies in learning disability program candidates at Sultan Qaboos University: A proposed model*, 2017 6th International Conference on Information and Communication Technology and Accessibility (ICTA), 2017, 1-6. doi: 10.1109/ICTA.2017.8336014.
- [13] Ertmer, P.A., Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A., Sadik, O., Sendurur, E., & Sendurur, P. (2012). Teacher beliefs and technology integration practices: A critical relationship. *Computers & Education*, 59, 423-435.
- [14] Guskey, T. (2000). Grading policies that work against standards and how to fix them. *NASSP Bulletin*, 84, 20-29.
- [15] Hock, R. (2015). Book review: Hayes, D. (Ed.) (2014). *Innovations in the continuing professional development of English language teachers*. *LC Forum*. Sultan Qaboos University Press.
- [16] Hutchinson, J. S.O, Atkinson, K & Orpwood, J. (2002). *Breaking down barriers: Access to further and higher education for visually impaired students* (5th ed.). Cornwall: Stanley Thornes.
- [17] Johnson, A. M., Jacovina, M. E., Russell, D. E., & Soto, C. M. (2016). Challenges and solutions when using technologies in the classroom. In S. A. Crossley & D. S. McNamara (Eds.) *Adaptive educational technologies for literacy instruction* (pp. 13-29). New York: Taylor & Francis. Published with acknowledgment of federal support.

- [18] Laarhoven, T. Van, Munk, D.D., Chandler, L. K., Zurita, K., & Lynch, K. (2012). Integrating assistive technology into teacher education programs: Trials, tribulations, and lessons learned. *Assistive Technology Outcomes and Benefits*, 8 (1), 32-47.
- [19] McGregor G & Pachuski P. (1996). Assistive technology in schools: Are teachers ready, able, and supported? *Journal of Special Education Technology*. 1996;13(1):4-15. doi:10.1177/016264349601300102.
- [20] Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>.
- [21] *Oman Vision 2040* (n.d.). Retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://www.2040.om/en/national-priorities/>.
- [22] Ramzi, N. (2019). *Educational reform in Oman: System and structural changes*. Retrieved September 16, 2020 from <https://www.intechopen.com/online-first/educational-reform-in-oman-system-and-structural-changes>.
- [23] Rezaeian, A., & Bagheri, R. (2017). Modelling the factors affecting the implementation of knowledge networks. *Business Information Review*, 34(4), 178–186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0266382117735981>
- [24] Rowley, J (2012) Conducting research interviews. *Management Research Review* 35(3/4), 260-271.
- [25] Sze, S. (2004). *A literature review: An investigation of various types of assistive technology (AT)*. Retrieved January 2, 2022, from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED490347.pdf>.
- [26] Waddell, J. (2015). *The role of technology in the educational process*. Green & Write. Retrieved July 26, 2021, from <https://education.msu.edu/green-and-write/2015/the-role-of-technology-in-the-educational-process/>.
- [27] Wen, Z., Biedroń, A., & Skehan, P. (2017). Foreign language aptitude theory: Yesterday, today and tomorrow. *Language Teaching*, 50(1), 1-31. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-teaching/article/foreign-language-aptitude-theory-yesterday-today-and-tomorrow/E3D97F0293117DF5EDC307E694ABFB5>.
- [28] *What is assistive technology* (n.d.). Retrieved January 10, 2022, from <https://www.atia.org/home/at-resources/what-is-at/>.



**Jamila Al-Siyabi** has a MA in Applied Linguistics from Queensland University, Australia, a MSc in Educational Research from Exeter University, UK and a PhD in Education from Exeter University, UK in cohesion and coherence in EFL academic writing. She currently teaches at the Centre for Preparatory Studies at Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman.

She teaches advanced grammar and academic writing to EFL undergraduate students. She is the author and co-author of a number of publications, including an article in the Journal of Second Language Teaching and Research on Omani EFL undergraduate students' knowledge of and attitudes towards essay writing (2018).

Dr. Al Siyabi is a peer reviewer of Oman's Research Council (TRC) in Oman and a reviewer of the research proposals and curriculum projects at the Centre for Preparatory Studies. Her main research interests include writing, semantics communication and culture. She received two best researcher awards (in 2013 and 2022) at Sultan Qaboos University and an award by the Omani Embassy in the UK in 2019 for her academic achievements.



**Victoria Tuzlukova** obtained her PhD in Applied Linguistics from Pyatigorsk University of Foreign Languages in Russia. She has also held a PhD in Comparative Linguistics from Moscow State University since 2002.

She has about 40 years teaching and research experience in Russia and Oman. Currently she is on the faculty at the Centre for Preparatory Studies of Sultan Qaboos University in Oman, which she joined in 2006. During her time at the Centre she has been involved in a number of research projects and initiatives. Her research interests focus on sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, foreign language acquisition and the role of culture in foreign language teaching and learning.

Dr. Victoria Tuzlukova has presented and published in a broad variety of international conferences and

journals



**Khalid Al Kaabi** received his MA in Applied linguistics from Queensland University in Australia in 2005. He has been teaching English as a foreign language at the Centre of Preparatory Studies at Sultan Qaboos University for the last nineteen years.

He has been involved in a number of research projects and occupied different positions related to teacher professional development at his current workplace. Khalid's research interests include teacher professional development, organizational learning, teacher identity, and foreign language acquisition.

Khalid Al Kaabi has presented in several international conferences.



**Mohammad Hadra** obtained his M.Sc. in Computer Science from the University of Khartoum in Sudan in 2004. He has more than 15 years of teaching experience in Sudan, Saudi Arabia and the Sultanate of Oman.

He joined Sultan Qaboos University as an information technology lecturer in 2014. During his work in its Center for Preparatory Studies, he was engaged in many e-learning projects and delivered a number of professional development sessions related to qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

Mohammad's research interests are in advanced data analysis techniques and modern teaching and learning technologies.

# Effects of the Instruction With *Liushu* on Mandarin Learners' Chinese Character Achievement and Motivation

Qing Li Guo

Department of Language and Literacy, Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Fong Peng Chew

Department of Language and Literacy, Education, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Yin Yin Yeoh

Department of Chinese Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Abstract**—This study examines the effects of instruction with *Liushu* on Chinese character achievement and motivation of Mandarin learners through an experiment. A total of 133 Mandarin beginner learners from Laos were assigned to the experimental group (37 male students, 31 female students) and the control group (42 male students, 23 female students). *Liushu* was used to conduct Chinese character teaching for ten weeks in the experimental group. It was found that instruction with *Liushu* has a positive effect on learners' Chinese character achievement, especially the ability to infer the meaning and pronunciation of Chinese characters. Also, it motivates Mandarin learners' Ideal L2 Self and L2 Learning Experience more than conventional instruction. As a final contribution to this study, we presented a correlation analysis between Chinese character achievement and motivation as well as some insights.

**Index Terms**—effect, *Liushu*, mandarin learners, Chinese characters achievement, motivation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese characters play a significant role in influencing Mandarin learners' confidence, advancement, effectiveness, and level in Mandarin learning since it serves as a starting point for Mandarin learning and supports the Mandarin learning process (Li, 2009). However, Chinese characters are difficult to learn, which has always been a problem that Mandarin teaching has faced since Chinese characters differ from alphabetic characters (Li & Ruan, 2012). In response, more and more research is being conducted regarding the methods for teaching Chinese characters.

Chinese characters, the written symbols used to record Mandarin, are ideograms, meaning that Chinese characters are a combination of sound, meaning, and glyph. The relationship between the glyphs of Chinese characters and their meaning is revealed by *Liushu* (the six ways to create Chinese characters) (Chen & Fu, 2014). The teaching method based on *Liushu* is therefore acknowledged as an efficient method of learning Chinese characters, particularly for the understanding of the pronunciation and meanings of Chinese characters. There have recently been some studies (e.g. Qi, 2017; Su, 2016; Su & Li, 2019; Wang, 2017) aimed at using *Liushu* to teach Chinese characters, showing that *Liushu* can improve Chinese character achievement, which mainly reflects the ability to recognize Chinese character meaning and pronunciation. Also, the theory of *Liushu* can reflect the cultural knowledge carried by Chinese characters (Chen & Fu, 2014), which can enhance the interest and strengthen the learning motivation of Mandarin learners (Li, 2018; Liu 2011). A crucial factor in second language acquisition (SLA) is motivation, which is defined as the effort students make to learn another language out of their needs or desire (Ellis, 1994, p. 509) (Dörnyei, 2005). However, there has been little attention paid to the changes in motivation under the intervention of *Liushu* through experiments.

According to reports, countries in Southeast Asia are becoming more and more interested in studying Mandarin. For instance, with the assistance of the Confucius Institute Headquarters, learning Mandarin has progressively become a significant component of higher education in Laos since the early twenty-first century (Zhang et al., 2021). Nevertheless, Tao et al. (2020) stated Mandarin teaching methods still need to be improved due to the late start of Mandarin teaching in Laos. Thus, this study intends to provide further insight into issues related to Chinese character learning at the moment of performing *Liushu* in the Mandarin learning classroom in Laos.

To make up for the gaps, this study intends to use comparative experimentation to investigate the effect of *Liushu* on Mandarin learners' Chinese character achievement and motivation. Also, in order to recommend the application of *Liushu* in Mandarin classrooms, it provides an examination of the connection between motivation and Chinese character

achievement. As a result, the Chinese character teaching-learning process may be improved in the Laos learning environment.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Liushu*

A more detailed description of *Liushu* is given in “Shuo Wen Jie Zi Xu (Origin of Chinese Characters)”, in which *Liushu* includes pictograms, self-explanatory, ideograms, semantic-plus-phonetic, mutually explanatory, and phonetic loans. The Chinese characters are classified into six categories according to these six rules (Guo & Chew, 2022, p. 1) 1) Pictogram characters depict specific objects like pictures, such as “山(mountain)” and “月(moon)”; 2) Self-explanatory characters illustrate abstract concepts. For instance, to signify “上(up)” and “下(down)”, respectively, the symbols are marked above or below the main body of “一”; 3) Ideographic characters meld the interpretations embodied by the elements to produce a particular concept. For instance, “止(foot)” and “戈(a weapon)” are two elements that makeup “武(military)”. “止(foot)” means foot while “戈(a weapon)” means a weapon. Therefore, “武(military)” means that a person advances with a weapon; 4) Semantic-phonetic compound characters are made by combining a sound element that corresponds to the character’s pronunciation with a meaning element that corresponds to the character’s meaning. For instance, “氵(water-related)”, the meaning element of “湖(lake)”, is associated with water, and the sound element “胡(a surname)” has a similar pronunciation to “湖(lake)”; 5) Mutually explanatory characters mean that the reciprocal transformation of synonyms sharing the identical radicals. For instance, the ancient Chinese character “考(the original meaning is elder)” and “老(elder)” both refer to elder. The Chinese character “考” used today has shed the meaning it once had, whereas its meaning and usage have all been transferred to “老”; 6) Phonetic loan characters indicate that using an existing character to convey a new meaning without the addition of a new character. For instance, the “令(official)” of “县令(magistrate)” is employed to indicate the interpretation of the “令(order)” of “命令(order)”.

It worth noting that “mutually explanatory” and “phonetic loan” are widely utilized in ancient literature. Although they still contain many traditional cultures, they are difficult to learn and master, and they are not suitable for assisting in teaching Chinese characters (Chen & Fu, 2014). In this research, phonetic loan characters and mutually explanatory characters are also not involved.

### B. *Motivation*

Motivation studies can be classified into three phases in L2 learning. The social-psychological period, which is the social center, is characterized by Gardner’s (1985) motivation theory. The cognitive situated period, in educational psychology, is characterized by theories such as Deci and Ryan’s (1985) self-determination theory and Weiner’s (1992) attribute theory. In the process-oriented period, motivational changes are prioritized, as shown by Ushioda (1996) and Dörnyei (2005, 2009). L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS), proposed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009) in the process-oriented phase, defined these three dimensions of motivation: Ideal L2 Self (IL2S), Ought-to L2 Self (OL2S), and L2 Learning Experience (L2LE). L2MSS emphasizes self-guides (IL2S and OL2S), and students’ motivation to learn a second language is generated directly by them, rather than from outside sources such as Gardner (1985). Also, it expands the scope of motivation in SLA research by taking learning experience into account as the third element of motivation.

The notion of “integrativeness” in Gardner’s motivation theory is defined by Dörnyei (2005) as an individual’s IL2S, which pertains to the abilities and skills learners imagine they have and who are therefore working toward reducing the gap between their ideal and actual selves. Lamb (2012) further defined IL2S as an individual’s ideal image of the language user he or she wants to be, which encourages people to take action toward their goals. IL2S can also be driven by a person’s passions, dreams, and values (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). Researchers have found that IL2S is similar to integrativeness but can explain the variance in key standard measures more effectively than integrativeness (Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009). Instrumentality-promotion, also called “instrumental motivation” in Gardner’s (1985) theory of motivation, is the desire and goal to succeed. As a result, the promotional aspect of instrumentality correlates more highly with IL2S since it leads to positive outcomes.

OL2S refers to the attributes learners believe should be in place to prevent undesirable consequences (Dörnyei, 2005). An earlier study, that of Higgins (1998), had already distinguished OL2S from IL2S. IL2S was related to promotion, meaning learners took specific actions to achieve the desired outcome. In contrast, OL2S was related to prevention, meaning learners took specific actions to avoid bad outcomes. Lamb (2012) points out that OL2S represents what others expect a person to become.

L2LE is situation-specific and based on the immediate learning environment (Dörnyei, 2005). Different from self-guides, which tend to be future-oriented, L2LE emphasizes the implementation motivation based on the current learning environment, such as the influence of instructors, courses, and textbooks (Moskovsky et al., 2016).

Most previous studies theoretically explored the feasibility of using *Liushu* in Chinese character teaching. In particular, Li (2018) elaborated on *Liushu*’s role in the teaching of four types of Chinese characters (i.e., pictogram characters, self-explanatory characters, ideographic characters, and semantic-phonetic compound characters). Chen and Fu (2014) and Liu (2011) believed that the use of *Liushu* would also enhance Mandarin learners’ interest and



motivation in Mandarin learning. In some recent studies (e.g., Su, 2016; Su & Li, 2019; Wang, 2017), experiments have been conducted to examine the role of *Liushu* in Chinese character teaching. However, some limitations remain. For example, Su (2016) only examined the role of *Liushu* in the identification of Chinese character glyphs, without considering the function of *Liushu* in the identification of Chinese characters' sounds and meaning. Moreover, previous studies have not, experimentally, looked at the effects of *Liushu* on learners' Mandarin learning motivation.

With the phenomenon of "Mandarin fever" in Laos in recent years, the insufficiency of Chinese character teaching has gradually emerged. Ye (2013) pointed out that Lao students have difficulties recognizing and reading Chinese characters because Chinese characters are not as phonological as phonetic characters. Also, She's (2017) survey results showed that 72% of Mandarin learners in Laos said that Chinese characters are difficult to learn. Hence, effective Chinese character teaching methods are necessary for Chinese character teaching in Laos.

In view of this, this research intends to examine the impact of *Liushu* on Chinese character achievement (i.e., the identification of the sound and meaning of pictogram characters, self-explanatory characters, ideographic characters, and semantic-phonetic compound characters) and Mandarin learning motivation among Lao Mandarin Learners. In addition, an analysis of the correlation between motivation and Chinese character achievement will be presented. Therefore, this research aims to respond the questions below:

Are there any differences in Chinese character achievement and motivation between the experimental group and the control group before treatment?

Are there any differences in Chinese character achievement and motivation of the control group between the pre-test and post-test?

Are there any differences in Chinese character achievement and motivation of the experimental group between the pre-test and post-test?

Are there any differences in Chinese character achievement and motivation between the experimental group and the control group in the post-test?

Are there any significant correlations between motivation and Chinese character achievement in the experimental group after treatment?

Then, eight null hypotheses were developed based on the research questions.

Ho1: There are no significant differences in Chinese character achievement between the experimental group and the control group before treatment.

Ho2: There are no significant differences in the motivation between the control group and the experimental group before treatment.

Ho3: There are no significant differences in Chinese character achievement of the control group between the pre-test and post-test.

Ho4: There are no significant differences in the motivation of the control group between the pre-test and post-test.

Ho5: There are no significant differences in Chinese character achievement of the experimental group between the pre-test and post-test.

Ho6: There are no significant differences in the motivation of the experimental group between the pre-test and post-test.

Ho7: There are no significant differences in Chinese character achievement between the experimental group and the control group after treatment.

Ho8: There are no significant differences in the motivation between the control group and the experimental group after treatment.

Ho9: There are no significant correlations between motivation and Chinese character achievement in the experimental group after treatment.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

Planned research that includes a number of purposeful modifications to procedure elements and observations of the results is known as a quasi-experimental design (Chua, 2016). Data from the control and experimental groups both before and after the treatment were used in this quasi-experimental investigation. The experiment covered six classes (four Information Technology classes and two Accounting classes). To maintain homogeneity between the two groups, human intervention was used. Each group is therefore comprised of Information Technology (IT) students and Accounting students. The experiment design is shown in Figure 1.

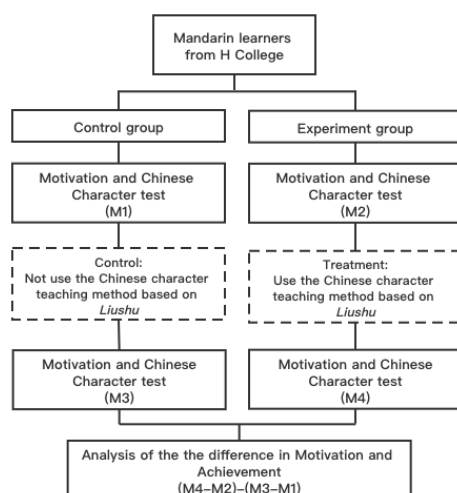


Figure 1 Experiment Design

### B. Participants

In Laos, there are 217 Mandarin learners from H College studying Accounting and IT. Nine classes with 10–30 students each are given to these 217 students. While 170 learners (105 boys and 65 girls) majoring in IT were given six classes, 47 learners (18 boys and 29 girls) majoring in accounting were given three classes. Despite the fact that Mandarin was a required subject for them, the majority of Mandarin students are beginner Mandarin learners.

Six classes were chosen for this experiment, including two Accounting classes and four IT classes. A total of 133 students made up the final sample, with 68 (37 boys and 31 girls) in the experimental group and 65 (42 boys and 23 girls) in the control group. 102 learners were studying IT, and 31 learners were majoring in Accounting.

### C. Instruments

The Chinese Character Test and L2MSS Questionnaire (L2MSSQ) were employed for collecting the data.

#### (a). Chinese Characters Test

Chinese Characters Test is designed in this current study to measure the proficiency of Mandarin learners in recognizing Chinese characters they have learned. Pre-test and post-tests were respectively composed of six pictogram characters, six ideogram characters, six semantic-phonetic compound characters, and two self-explanatory characters. The 20 Chinese characters in the pre-test were learned by the learners in the last semester, while the 20 Chinese characters in the post-test were from the Chinese characters learned during the treatment.

Before treatment, the primary purpose of the Chinese character test is to examine learners' recognition of Chinese characters. As a result, the following are the guidelines for choosing Chinese characters for the pretest:

1) Chinese characters that have been taught and learned in the last semester.

2) Chinese characters can be spoken alone because it is trickier to examine the interpretation of Chinese characters if the Chinese characters cannot be spoken alone. For example, “菜(dish)” was selected in place of “了(a modal particle)”.

Similarly, the guidelines in the post-test are:

1) Chinese characters that were taught and learned during treatment.

2) Chinese characters must be spoken and form words alone because it would be trickier to examine the meaning of the Chinese character if the Chinese characters cannot be spoken alone. For example, “高(tall)” was chosen instead of the “最(an adverb of degree)”.

Additionally, in order to make comparisons easier, the number and type of the selected Chinese characters were kept the same before and after the treatment. They are listed in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1  
THE SELECTED CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THE PRE-TEST

Category	No. of Chinese Characters	Chinese Characters
Pictograms characters	6	山(mountain) 心(heart) 大(big) 西(west) 月(moon) 女(female)
Self-explanatory characters	2	七(seven) 九(nine)
Ideographic characters	6	好(good) 见(see) 家(home) 我(I, me) 是(is, are) 有(have, has)
Semantic-phonetic compound characters	6	她(she, her) 菜(dish) 书(book) 说(say) 写(write) 请(please, invite)

TABLE 2  
THE SELECTED CHINESE CHARACTERS IN THE POST-TEST

Category	No. of Chinese Characters	Chinese Characters
Pictograms characters	6	高(high, tall) 长(long, grow) 门(door) 鱼(fish) 白(white) 它(it)
Self-explanatory characters	2	上(up) 下(down)
Ideographic characters	6	卖(sell) 送(send) 从(from) 黑(black) 穿(wear) 等(wait)
Semantic-phonetic compound characters	6	懂(understand) 晴(sunny) 玩(play) 近(close) 红(red) 问(ask)

There are two sections in the test paper. The first part is the demographic information (i.e., student ID). This second part offers 15 multiple-choice questions. Questions 1 to 5 test students' ability to distinguish the meaning of Chinese characters, and questions 6 to 10 examine students' ability to identify the pronunciation of Chinese characters. Accordingly, questions 11 to 15 are designed to assess the ability to infer pronunciations and meanings of Chinese characters based on learned knowledge.

#### (b). L2MSSQ

The L2MSSQ, which was utilized in this research, was modified from a version of the Likert scale with five points used by Taguchi et al. (2009) and Moskovsky et al. (2016) to assess motivation for learning a second language. There are two parts to the questionnaire. Demography is the first part (i.e., student ID). Part 2 is made up of 33 items given to assess IL2S, OL2S, and L2LE as shown below:

1) IL2S (9 items) refers to what a person wants to be, it displays an individual's own desire. IL2S is correlated with integrativeness, e.g., "I often imagine myself speaking Mandarin as if I were a native speaker of Mandarin"

2) OL2S (9 items) is what other people want a person to achieve, which represents the expectations of others, such as peers and parents. It is related to instrumental motivation because it represents an external motivation, e.g., "Learning Mandarin is necessary because people around me expect me to do so"

3) L2LE (15 items) is an individual's experience in the educational setting mostly affected by instructors, subjects, and classmates, e.g., "My Mandarin teachers are better than my other subjects' teachers"

#### D. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

The test paper and questionnaire were given to three experts for assessment to determine the validity of the face and content of the instruments in this research. To accommodate the study's Mandarin learners, some adjustments were made according to suggestions from the experts. For example, the "please" in the test paper changed to "please, invite" since "请" is a polysemous word in Mandarin. In addition, items with similar meaning to other items in L2MSSQ have also been removed.

This study uses the test-retest method to test the reliability of the Chinese Characters Test. A total of 30 respondents from classes not included in the experimental group and the control group took the first test and the second test with a two-week gap. A Pearson correlation coefficient of not less than 0.65 is considered reliable by Chua (2016). This study's Pearson coefficient is 0.826, which suggests the test paper has a high level of reliability. Furthermore, 39 students who were not taking part in the experiment received and completed the questionnaire. Results demonstrated that the questionnaire had attained internal consistency because the motivation scale's Cronbach coefficient was 0.895, which was greater than the minimum allowable value of 0.60 (Pallant, 2010).

#### E. Intervention Procedure

According to the Mandarin teacher's introduction, semester 2 of the 2020/2021 session lasts for 14 weeks. In order not to affect students' final exams, the fourteenth week will not be occupied. Mandarin lessons are held once a week and each lesson lasts for 90 minutes. In addition to the time taken to introduce the experiment to the participants in the first week and distribute questionnaires and test papers in the second week for the pretest and the last week for the posttest, there are 10 weeks left. As a result, the treatment will last 10 weeks. As usual, according to the teaching plan, each lesson lasted 90 minutes, and 20 to 30 minutes of that time was devoted to teaching 2-4 Chinese characters. The subjects and Chinese characters covered in every lesson during the treatment process are as follows:

- 1) September is the best time to visit Beijing——猫(cat) 它(it) 要(want) 最(an adverb of degree)
- 2) I get up at six every day——高(tall) 忙(busy) 药(medicine) 上(up)
- 3) The red one on the left is mine——下(down) 红(red) 送(send)
- 4) He recommended me for this job——给(give) 问(ask) 长(long) 两(two)
- 5) Take this one——鱼(fish) 衣(clothing) 买(buy) 卖(sell)
- 6) Why don't you eat more——门(door) 外(a position word) 羊(sheep)
- 7) Let me think about it and I'll tell you later——等(wait) 白(white) 黑(black) 贵(expensive)

8) There are too many questions, I did not finish all of them——错(wrong) 从(from) 懂(understand) 完(finish)

9) You wear too little——雪(snow) 近(close) 进(enter) 穿(wear)

10) Have you seen that movie——玩(play) 晴(sunny)

There was no treatment provided to learners in the control group. The teaching procedures followed a conventional routine as usual. Specifically, an introduction, reading, writing, and sentence construction are all included in the instructional processes for each Chinese character. Differently, for the experiment group, the researcher developed lesson plans for teaching Chinese characters to assist the Mandarin teacher. Introduction, reading, writing, character glyphs evolution or Chinese character structure analysis, and sentence making are the teaching steps for each Chinese character.

Students were instructed to consider a particular Chinese character associated with the image during the introduction phase (for instance, the image of a fish). With pictogram characters and self-explanatory characters, the instructor was expected to assist students in identifying connections between objects and Chinese characters.

The teacher then guides the class in reading Chinese characters by exercising pronouncing the initials and finals. The teacher instructs the class on how to pronounce the sound components in the case of teaching semantic-phonetic compound characters.

The next step, which is equally crucial for the control group, is for students to practice writing Chinese characters after being treated to a presentation of the writing sequence in animation.

For pictogram characters and self-explanatory characters, students move on to learning Chinese character development and evolution by examining the difference in glyphs from antiquity to the present. By dividing Chinese characters into their constituent parts, students can learn the constructing principles of ideographic characters and semantic-phonetic compound characters.

As a final phase, which is also a regular step in the control group, students construct sentences using the learned Chinese characters based on the prompts.

#### F. Data Analysis

Data was collected from pretests and posttests. SPSS was used to process and analyze all of the data. Independent sample *t*-tests and paired sample *t*-tests will be used to examine any differences in Mandarin learners' achievement of Chinese characters and motivation before and after treatment to respond to the research questions. In addition, a Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to test the relationship between motivation and Chinese character achievement.

### IV. FINDINGS

An independent sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if a statistically significant difference exists in Chinese character achievement and motivation of Mandarin learners between the two groups before the treatment. The results from the *t*-test are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 3  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CONTROL AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST

	Control		Experiment		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
1-5 scores	8.97	1.42	8.53	2.33	1.321	0.189
6-10 scores	9.02	1.43	8.70	2.44	0.940	0.349
11-15 scores	6.80	2.59	6.50	1.78	0.775	0.440
Total scores	24.79	4.32	23.73	5.88	1.185	0.238

TABLE 4  
THE MOTIVATION OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST

	Control		Experiment		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
IL2S	30.95	5.95	29.32	5.30	1.671	0.097
OL2S	30.32	6.03	31.03	6.16	-0.668	0.505
L2LE	46.35	5.20	46.72	6.71	-0.351	0.726
Motivation	107.63	13.52	107.07	15.87	0.218	0.828

As shown in Table 3, Chinese characters' achievement didn't show a significant difference at  $t=1.185$ ,  $p=0.238>0.05$  between the two groups. Additionally, Table 4 indicates that no significant difference exists in motivation ( $t=0.218$ ,  $p=0.828$ ) between the two groups. This result indicates that there were no significant differences in Chinese character scores or motivation of the learners in the two groups before the treatment, although the experimental group's Chinese character achievement and motivation were slightly lower than the control group. As a result, the two groups were determined to be identical, and Ho1 and Ho2 were accepted.

We next conducted paired sample *t*-tests to compare the Chinese character achievement and motivation between the pre-test and the post-test of the control group with conventional teaching. The results are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

TABLE 5  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CONTROL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
1-5 scores	8.97	1.42	8.68	1.99	1.050	0.298	
6-10 scores	9.02	1.43	8.55	2.45	1.584	0.118	
11-15 scores	6.80	2.59	4.92	2.24	4.515	0.000**	0.560
Total scores	24.79	4.32	22.15	5.85	3.252	0.002**	0.403

\*\**p*<0.01

The results of Table 5 show that all the scores in the control group were lower on the post-test than they had been on the pre-test. Findings showed there is a statistically significant difference between pre-test for 11-15 scores ( $M=6.80$ ,  $SD=2.59$ ) and total scores ( $M=24.79$ ,  $SD=4.32$ ) and post-test for 11-15 scores ( $M=4.92$ ,  $SD=2.24$ ) and total scores ( $M=22.15$ ,  $SD=5.85$ ) of the control group. In other words, the students in the control group scored lower in the post-test compared to the pre-test at  $t=4.515$ ,  $p=0.000$ , Cohen's  $d=0.560$ , for the 11-15 scores and  $t=3.252$ ,  $p=0.002$ , Cohen's  $d=0.403$  for the total scores. It appears that a significant negative change in students' Chinese character achievement is observed under regular instruction. Therefore, Ho3 was rejected.

TABLE 6  
THE MOTIVATION OF THE CONTROL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
IL2S	30.95	5.95	30.65	5.35	0.469	0.640
OL2S	30.32	6.03	29.54	5.87	1.082	0.283
L2LE	46.35	5.20	47.62	7.74	-1.217	0.228
Motivation	107.63	13.52	107.80	17.01	-0.086	0.932

According to Table 6, the pair sample *t*-test results did not show a significant difference in motivation in the pre-test ( $M=107.63$ ,  $SD=13.52$ ) and post-test ( $M=107.80$ ,  $SD=17.01$ ) of the control group at  $t=-0.086$ ,  $p=0.932$ . Hence, the motivation in the control group did not change much before and after they followed the conventional teaching. Ho4 is therefore acceptable.

These paired sample *t*-tests from the control groups show that conventional teaching did not improve Chinese character performance or motivation. Despite not receiving any treatment, the Chinese character scores in the control group showed a downward trend, which indicates that the post-test was more challenging for students than the pre-test.

To examine whether the effects of using *Liushu* after treatment were significant, paired sample *t*-tests were performed between the pre-test and the post-test of the experimental group as presented in Table 7 and Table 8.

TABLE 7  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
1-5 scores	8.53	2.33	8.37	2.27	0.856	0.395
6-10 scores	8.70	2.44	8.39	2.91	1.051	0.297
11-15 scores	6.50	1.78	6.26	2.42	0.767	0.445
Total scores	23.73	5.88	23.02	6.44	1.157	0.251

As seen in Table 7, although all mean scores decreased slightly, the pair-sampled *t*-test results showed that there was no significant difference in the Chinese character achievement between the pre-test ( $M=23.73$ ,  $SD=5.88$ ) and the post-test ( $M=23.02$ ,  $SD=6.44$ ) of the experiment group at  $t=1.157$ ,  $p=0.251$ . Therefore, the findings indicate that there is no significant change in the Chinese character achievement of the experimental group after they have gone through the *Liushu* instruction. Thus, Ho5 was supported.

TABLE 8  
THE MOTIVATION OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Pre-test		Post-test		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
IL2S	29.32	5.30	31.12	6.73	-2.502	0.015*	0.303
OL2S	31.03	6.16	30.41	5.71	0.775	0.441	
L2LE	46.72	6.71	49.06	8.22	-2.233	0.029*	
Motivation	107.07	15.87	110.59	17.94	-1.593	0.116	0.271

\**p*<0.05

In Table 8, in the experimental group, the difference in IL2S between pre-test ( $M=29.32$ ,  $SD=5.30$ ) and post-test ( $M=31.12$ ,  $SD=6.73$ ) is statistically significant ( $t=-2.502$ ,  $p=0.0150.05$ , Cohen's  $d=0.303$ ). Also, L2LE shows a significant difference between pre-test ( $M=46.72$ ,  $SD=6.71$ ) and post-test ( $M=49.06$ ,  $SD=8.22$ ) at  $t=-2.233$ ,  $p=0.029<0.05$ , Cohen's  $d=0.271$ . It showed that there was positive progress with a small effect size on students' IL2S and L2LE in the treatment group with the help of *Liushu* instruction. However, the overall motivation did not show significant differences at  $t=-1.593$ ,  $p=0.116>0.05$ . Therefore, Ho6 is accepted.

Before treatment, independent sample *t*-tests showed no statistical significance between the two groups in Chinese character achievement and motivation. In order to further examine the influence of *Liushu*, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted again to compare the results of the control and experimental groups after the conventional and *Liushu* instruction respectively. The findings are shown in Table 9 and Table 10 below.

TABLE 9  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Control		Experiment		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
1-5 scores	8.68	1.99	8.37	2.27	0.835	0.405	0.576
6-10 scores	8.55	2.45	8.40	2.91	0.351	0.726	
11-15 scores	4.92	2.24	6.26	2.42	-3.318	0.001**	
Total scores	22.15	5.85	23.02	6.44	-0.813	0.418	

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Statistically, though the experimental group scored higher than the control group on the Chinese characters test, there is no significant difference between the control group ( $M=22.15$ ,  $SD=5.25$ ) and the experiment group ( $M=23.02$ ,  $SD=6.44$ ) according to Table 9. This can be summarized as there was no significant difference in the Chinese character scores of the learners in the two groups after the treatment. Therefore, Ho7 was accepted.

However, it is worth noting that for 11-15 scores, the average value of the experimental group ( $M=6.26$ ,  $SD=2.42$ ) is significantly higher than the average value of the control group ( $M=4.92$ ,  $SD=2.24$ ) at  $t=-3.318$ ,  $p=0.001 < 0.01$ , Cohen's  $d=0.576$ .

TABLE 10  
THE MOTIVATION OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN THE POST-TEST

Measurement	Control		Experiment		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
IL2S	30.65	5.35	31.12	6.73	-0.446	0.656
OL2S	29.54	5.87	30.41	5.71	-0.870	0.386
L2LE	47.62	7.74	49.06	8.22	-1.042	0.299
Motivation	107.80	17.01	110.59	17.94	-0.919	0.360

As presented in Table 10, there is no significant difference in motivation after treatment between the two groups at  $t=-0.919$ ,  $p=0.360 > 0.05$ . In general, the mean score of the learners' motivation in the experiment group was higher than that of the control group, indicating that *Liushu* may enhance the motivation of learners in all aspects when compared to the convention teaching method, though its effect is not significant. As a result, Ho8 was accepted.

TABLE 11  
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MOTIVATION AND CHINESE CHARACTER ACHIEVEMENT IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AFTER TREATMENT

	Motivation	Chinese character achievement
Motivation	-	
Chinese character achievement	0.072	-

As shown in Table 11, motivation was not significantly associated with Chinese character achievement at  $r=0.072$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . This result implies that higher motivation toward Mandarin learning is not associated with higher Chinese character achievement. Thus, Ho9 was accepted.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research investigated the influence of a ten-week Chinese character teaching instruction by *Liushu* on Mandarin learners' Chinese character achievement and learning motivation in Laos. The paired-sample *t*-test of the experimental group did not show a significant difference in Chinese character achievement between the pre-test and the post-test. In other words, there was no significant change in Chinese character achievement before and after treatment in the experimental group. However, according to the paired-sample *t*-test results of the control group, it can be inferred that the difficulty of the post-test of Chinese characters may be more difficult than that of the pretest because the results of the control group demonstrated a clear downward trend. Both the independent sample *t*-tests before and after treatment demonstrated that there was no significant statistical difference between the experimental group's and control group's achievement in Chinese characters. It is worth noting that the experimental group whose mean score in the pre-test is lower has exceeded the control group in the post-test. On the whole, the findings indicate that *Liushu* is effective in Chinese character achievement, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies such as Qi (2017), Su (2016), Su and Li (2019), and Wang (2017).

Particularly, in this current study, *Liushu* leads to an obvious increase in inferring the pronunciation and meaning of Chinese characters. It reflected that a significant difference was found between the two groups on scores of 11-15 after treatment. As mentioned before, questions 11 to 15 are designed to assess the ability to infer pronunciations and meanings of Chinese characters based on knowledge learned. In a previous study, Su and Li (2019) found that the use of *Liushu* can improve the accuracy of students' dictation of Chinese characters with the help of the meaning elements

and the sound elements. These two results indicate that *Liushu* effectively helps learners identify the sound and meaning of Chinese characters based on the sound elements or the meaning elements. This finding confirms the view of Hao (2019) who believes that the introduction of *Liushu* in Chinese characters teaching helps Mandarin learners expand the depth of learning and enhance the effect of learning. Specifically, *Liushu* can not only help learners memorize the already learned Chinese characters, but also assist learners in recognizing new Chinese characters through the sound elements or the meaning elements.

On the other hand, the independent sample *t*-test in the pre-test revealed that the motivation levels of the control group and experimental group were nearly identical. However, the post-test results revealed little change in the control group's average motivation scores, while the experimental group's average motivation increased from 107.80 to 110.59, though the statistical difference was not significant. It is generally believed that *Liushu* can increase learners' motivation to some degree. Furthermore, it is clearer that IL2S and L2LE had significant differences in the treatment group during the treatment process based on the results of the paired-sample *t*-test.

IL2S means what a person wants to be, representing a person's own desire. *Liushu* combines the cultures during this process to increase the interest of Mandarin learners in learning Chinese characters, which may motivate the student to have a greater wish to be ideal Mandarin learners. L2LE refers to an individual's experience in the classroom affected by the instructors, subjects, and instructional strategies. This outcome is aligned with Chen and Fu's (2014) view, stating that the use of *Liushu* can improve learners' desire for learning Mandarin by deepening their comprehension and memorization of Chinese characters.

An additional finding is that, for Mandarin learners in this study, higher motivation is not strongly related to higher Chinese character achievement, which may challenge our common sense since high motivation is generally associated with high achievement. It was noted that, based on Dörnyei's L2MSS, more and more research (e.g., Lamb, 2012; Moskovsky et al., 2016) have begun taking notice of this phenomenon. Specifically, learners' high learning motivation may prompt learners to put more efforts into learning, which is defined as Intended Learning Efforts (ILEs). However, sometimes, ILEs and actual learning efforts are inconsistent because a person's wishes do not always determine a person's behavior (Moskovsky et al., 2016). In other words, the efforts do not always translate into achievement in language learning, which is also reflected in the current study. Therefore, it should be accompanied by well-implementation plans that detail the particular actions students must take to succeed (Lamb, 2012).

On the basis of this study, it can be demonstrated that *Liushu* can significantly produce favorable effects on the Chinese character achievement of Mandarin learners. At the same time, *Liushu* makes a significant contribution to IL2S and L2LE. Therefore, for beginner Mandarin learners, the Chinese character teaching method based on *Liushu* is supported in terms of improving Chinese characters' performance, especially, reflected in the ability to infer pronunciations and meanings of Chinese characters based on the sound elements and the meaning elements. Also, instructors should focus more on the cultural roles involved in *Liushu* to improve students' IL2S. In addition, instructors may add interest to lessons by analyzing the source and structure with the help of *Liushu*, thereby improving students' L2LE. More importantly, while teaching with the help of *Liushu*, teachers should help students to develop a feasible learning plan so that students' efforts can positively affect Chinese character achievement. In a word, the findings of this research confirmed the feasibility and effectiveness of the Chinese character teaching method with the instruction of *Liushu*. In addition, more qualitative research, such as interviews, is expected to be implemented in future research to further deepen our comprehension of students' and instructors' attitudes toward *Liushu*.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Boyatzis, R. E., & Akrivou, K. (2006). The ideal self as the driver of intentional change. *Journal of management development*, 7(7), 624-642.
- [2] Chen, Y., & Fu, Y. (2014). Guanyu *Liushu* lilun yingyong zai duiwai hanzi jiaoxue zhong de yanjiu [Research on the application of *Liushu* in Chinese character teaching]. *Journal of Hubei University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 2, 113-117.
- [3] Chua, Y. P. (2016). *Mastering research methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- [4] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in personality. *Journal of research in personality*, 19(2), 109-134.
- [5] Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- [6] Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self-system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- [7] Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- [8] Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Arnold.
- [9] Guo, Q., & Chew, F. P. (2022). *Liushu*-based Instruction and Its Effects on the Motivation and Intended Learning Efforts: The Case of Laos Learners of Standard Chinese. *Acta Linguistica Asiatica*, 12(2), 73-90. <https://doi.org/10.4312/ala.12.2.73-90>
- [10] Hao, L. (2019). "*Liushu*" lilun yu duiwai hanzi jiaoxue [*Liushu* theory and Teaching Chinese Characters to Foreign Countries]. *Science, Education and Literature (Early Issue)*, 3, 72-74. <https://doi.org/10.16871/j.cnki.kjwha.2019.03.029>
- [11] Higgins, E. T. (1998). *Promotion and prevention: Regulatory focus as a motivational principle*. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 30, pp. 1-46). New York: Academic Press.

- [12] Lamb, M. (2012). A Self System Perspective on Young Adolescents' Motivation to Learn English in Urban and Rural Settings. *Language Learning*, 62(4), 997–1023. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2012.00719.x>
- [13] Li, J. (2018). Cong *Liushu* lilun kan duiwai hanzi jiaoxue [The Teaching of Chinese Characters to Foreign Countries from the Theory of *Liushu*]. *Literary Education (Part 1)*, 5, 146-147.
- [14] Li, Q. (2009). Guanyu jianli guoji hanyu jiaoyu xueke de gouxiang [Ideas on Establishing the International Chinese Language Education Discipline]. *Chinese Teaching in the World*, 3, 399-413.
- [15] Li, Q., & Ruan, C. (2012). “Hanzi jiaoxue” zhi jiaoxue duice [The teaching strategies of “Chinese characters are difficult to learn”]. *Chinese language learning*, 04, 83-90.
- [16] Liu, Y. (2011). Sanweiyiti—cong renzhi jiaodu lun hanzi xingshengzhi de jiaoxue [The Trinity—On the teaching of Chinese phonetic characters from the perspective of cognition]. *Overseas Chinese Education*, 1, 58-77.
- [17] Moskovsky, C., Assulaamani, T., Racheva, S., & Harkins, J. (2016). The L2 Motivational Self System and L2 Achievement: A Study of Saudi EFL Learners. *Modern Language Journal*, 100(3), 641–654. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12340>
- [18] Qi, W. (2017). Zao zi fa zai duiwai hanzi jiaoxue zhong de yingyong [The Application of Character-making Method in Teaching Chinese Characters to Foreign Countries]. *Art Technology*, 7, 358+379.
- [19] Ryan, S. (2009). Self and Identity in L2 Motivation in Japan: The Ideal L2 Self and Japanese Learners of English. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 120–143). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- [20] She, M. (2017). *Dui laowo xuesheng hanzi jiaoxue yanjiu* [Research on the Teaching of Chinese Characters for Lao Students] [Master Dissertation, Guangxi University for Nationalities]. Retrieve May 31, 2022 from <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201801&filename=1017074180.nh>.
- [21] Su, J., & Li, W. (2019). Naotu zhuji tuidong xia “zaozifa” lilun zai duiwai hanzi jiaoxue zhong de yingyong [The application of the theory of “character creation method” in the teaching of Chinese characters to foreigners under the promotion of brain map mnemonics]. *Educational Watch*, 35, 26-28+35.
- [22] Su, K. (2016). *Yi zaozaifa wei zhidao de hanzi jiaoxue shiyan* [A Chinese character teaching experiment guided by the method of making Chinese characters] [Master's thesis]. Yunnan University. Retrieve May 31, 2022 from <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201701&filename=1016228259.nh>
- [23] Taguchi, T., Magid, M., & Papi, M. (2009). The L2 Motivational Self System among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian Learners of English: A Comparative Study. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (pp. 66–97). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- [24] Tao, J., Lin, Q., & Zhang, T. (2020). “Yidai yilu” changyi xia de laowo “hanyu re” yanjiu [Research on the “Chinese Fever” in Laos under the “Belt and Road” Initiative]. *International Mandarin Education*, 2, 91-99+90.
- [25] Ushioda, E. (1996). Developing a dynamic concept of motivation. In T. Hickey and J. Williams (Eds.), *Language, education and society in a changing world* (pp. 239-245), Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- [26] Wang, G. (2017). *Liushu lilun zai Sililanka xuesheng hanzi jiaoxue zhong de yunying yanjiu* [The Application of *Liushu* Theory in Chinese Character Teaching for Sri Lankan Students] [Master's thesis]. Tianjin Normal University. Retrieve May 31, 2022 from <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201801&filename=1017287924.nh>
- [27] Weiner, B. (1992). Attributional theories of human motivation. In B. Weiner (Ed.), *Human Motivation: Metaphors, Theories, and Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- [28] Ye, J. (2013). Laowo xuesheng xuexi hanzi de nandian ji duice tanxi [An Analysis of the Difficulties and Countermeasures for Lao Students in Learning Chinese Characters]. *New West (Theoretical Edition)*, 7, 88+90.
- [29] Zhang, C., Lu, X., & Zhe, Ba. (2021). Laowo hanyu jiaoxue xianzhuang ji fazhan yanjiu [Research on the Status Quo and Development of Mandarin teaching in Laos]. *World Education Information*, 2, 63-69.



**Qing Li Guo** is a Ph.D. student at the Faculty of Education from Universiti Malaya (UM). She earned her Master's degree in Teaching Chinese as a Second Language from Beijing Language and Culture University. Her research interest is Chinese character teaching and learning.



**Fong Peng Chew** is a lecturer at the Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya. (UM), Malaysia. Teaching Malay language education, Chinese language education, and early childhood education program. She has published 9 books, 131 articles published in journals, 72 papers in conference proceedings, 41 chapters in books, 21 translated books including creative writings, 14 edited books, and edited creative writings.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chew is an article reviewer for some established international journals. For example, *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *SAGE Open*, *Educational Research and Reviews (ERR)*, *Pertanika: Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, *GEMA Online*, etc





**Yin Yin Yeoh** is a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Malaya. (UM), Malaysia. She earned her Master's degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of Peking, Beijing, China and her Doctoral degree in Arts from National Taiwan University, Taipei. Her area of expertise includes Chinese Dialects, Language Contact, Sociolinguistics, and Chinese Language and Culture.

# Lexical Borrowing of Covid-19 Terminologies in the Indonesian Language

Dewa Ayu Kadek Claria

Faculty of Letters, Warmadewa University, Denpasar, Indonesia

Ketut Artawa

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia

Made Sri Satyawati

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia

Anak Agung Putu Putra

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Denpasar, Indonesia

**Abstract**—New terminologies of Covid-19 in the Indonesian language began to appear during the pandemic. Generally, English affects the articulation of many terms in Indonesian when no equivalent words exist, leading to the borrowing process. The spread of new terms is inseparable from the influence of technological advances. Hence, the data used were obtained from a trusted national online media site [antvklik.com](http://antvklik.com), and qualitative methods were used to examine Indonesian terms that existed during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research concluded that the borrowed term can be classified into five forms, namely words, phrases, synonyms, abbreviations, and acronyms. Some terminologies are adjusted to enhance acceptance in society, while others are used directly.

**Index Terms**—based knowledge, Covid-19, lexical borrowing, language variety

## I. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 was first discovered in Wuhan, China, and was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) after the uncontrolled spread of the dangerous and deadly virus began in December 2019. Most medical experts described the virus as a more harmful and transmissible variant of the flu (Iqbal, 2020). Subsequently, information about the virus has been circulated in various languages. The existence of the Covid-19 virus has impacted the development of language as a means of communication, leading to the emergence of various new terms. Since the majority of these terms surfaced as English words, they are used directly or with some adjustments (Violeta, 2020). These words can be documented by generating a new lexicon to show the flexibility, enrichment, and development of language over time (Minova, 2003).

The emergence of new linguistic and health terms and vocabulary also occurred in the Indonesian language, promoted in print and online media due to the influence of technological advances. The demand for information about the virus has been generated through various media (Taejin et al., 2021). Therefore, people require basic competence in the words and their meanings to avoid misunderstandings (Widiatmojo, 2020).

Generally, online media encourages the use of new terms faster than other media by providing diverse information in numerous languages, leading to its use as a tool for lexical development. Hasanah et al. (2021) found that people chose online media as a source of information during the pandemic because of its individual and social impacts, such as working from home, limited public access, and even staying indoors. Most people use online media to find trending information as a result of the restrictions on socializing during the pandemic. Online platforms were highly exploited due to people's high curiosity and tendency to obtain current information faster than any other media, where the most sought and read information involved discussions about the Covid-19 virus. The benefits of online media are convenience and accessibility to every person anytime and anywhere, particularly during the pandemic when Indonesians were required to stay indoors to avoid contact with people and reduce the risk of contracting the virus.

Online media belong to a discursive reconstruction of reality that requires all the delivered news to be factual (Carvalho, 2008). Following the novel pandemic circumstances and use of strange terms, the online media must adapt to words that are acceptable and understandable by the majority of the people with internet access in Indonesia. The online media also help the government introduce these new terms to enhance their recognition as well as the appropriate reception of information without any language barrier due to the use of foreign terms. During the pandemic, the government used online media to provide information about the virus that was commonly found in public places. This was efficient, considering the restrictions on movement, which impaired people's ability to leave their homes and access the announcements (Ladyanna, 2020).

Consequently, online media platforms strive to present fully informed news related to the Covid-19 pandemic by adapting new terms from the source language into the recipient vocabulary to enable their understanding by society (Jovanovic, 2020). These words have enriched the Indonesian language through direct use or by borrowing some English terms, confirming that the vocabulary employed by online media users contains variations that should be researched (Aribowo & Khomsah, 2021). Some Indonesian terms used in relation to Covid-19 are descriptive and easily understood because equivalent words already existed. However, several words are often misinterpreted, and some have no equivalents in Indonesian, resulting in confusion and a need to borrow terms from the English language. This necessitates the availability of information about the form and meaning of the terms in Indonesian and English. The mapping can reveal the hidden meaning of texts that contain new terms (Hassan, 2018).

Many English words have been absorbed into the Indonesian vocabulary as a result of globalization and the widespread use of the language. The borrowing of Covid-19 terminologies into the Indonesian language is very interesting to discuss because of their extensive use in the public and the common use of English words by online media. The reason for this phenomenon has been questioned by research, which examined the establishment of the language used to deliver Covid-19 information in other countries. Since these terminologies are categorized as sensitive, the pragmatic function is also significant in the analysis to understand the utterances (Al-azzawi et al., 2020). The development of the Indonesian language during the pandemic can be seen in the existence of new terms. A large number of new words that appeared were not in Indonesian, thereby requiring explanations to determine their origination from the local vocabulary or lexical borrowing from another language. These terminologies should be introduced and explained to the community to avoid misunderstanding their meanings. Therefore, this research was conducted to clarify the meaning of Covid-19 related terminologies and promote their correct usage.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language functions as a means of communication and expression of one's thoughts and feelings. Learning a language is important due to its use in daily activities and its constant modification, which occurs nationally or internationally. These changes are progressive and are due to developments and adjustments in the life system patterns of the speaker community, such as the level of education or culture (Haryono, 2011). Many factors influence the development of languages, such as urbanization and technological development. Sudden changes may also occur due to the political situation of a country or health situations, such as the present Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the essential perspective needs to be modified to build the implicit and explicit meanings of texts, particularly in social contexts (van Dijk, 2000).

As a means of communication, language can be used directly or indirectly (Wijayanti, 2014). Direct communication is a two-way interaction that requires a second person, while indirect communication is the opposite. In addition, language functions as the identity of a nation, country, or tribe, and can be described as a link to perpetuate interaction between two or more ethnic groups (Chaer, 2013). It is a series of sound systems or symbols obtained from human speech tools, which have meanings and are used by a group of people to communicate (Sintia, 2017).

There are various functions of language depending on the location and speaker. According to Halliday (1978), the functions of language can be divided into 7 kinds namely (1) Instrumental, which regulates behavior and impacts the reader or listener, (2) Regulatory, which controls people's behavior, (3) Representational, used to convey facts experienced by other people, (4) Interactional, which maintains communication relations between speakers and listeners, (5) Personal, used to express feelings, ideas, and emotions, (6) Heuristic, used by information seekers to gain knowledge, and (7) the Imaginative function, which promotes innovative idea creation.

### A. *Language Variation*

Language variation is the diverse use of language according to the needs and users and is closely related to the use of language in formal and informal structures. The formal variety is often used as a standard to determine the appropriateness of a language to be used. Formal language is structured according to the conceptual and logical rules used consistently to fulfill a specific purpose and must conform to the rules of syntax and semantics. Informal language is a variation that exists and continues to develop according to the times. It is used in informal situations for casual conversation, which promotes its development.

The variety of informal language can be seen in the use of foreign language, synonyms, abbreviations, and acronyms that are created during a trend or event. A synonym is a semantic relationship between several words that have a similarity of meaning based on their intended use. It is a study of the semantic equation between terms that allows the formation of a group of synonymous word pairs. An abbreviation is a shortened form of a written phrase and is generally taken from the initial letter of a word contained in a phrase or sentence. The purpose of creating abbreviations is to simplify the pronunciation of long phrases. An acronym is a combination of short words from letters, syllables, words, and other elements that are written and pronounced as natural words. It can be interpreted as an abbreviation composed of two words or more that are treated as a whole. Acronyms are usually created with heed to harmony by combining various arrangements of vowels and consonants according to patterns that are easy to pronounce and remember.

Language variations generally refer to lexical items used by a group of people to communicate. The lingual units can be divided into three, namely words, phrases, and sentences. A word may be single, defined as a grammatical item consisting of small units, or complex, which comprises even smaller units. Phrases are clause elements containing two or more words consisting of grammatical units that do not exceed their functional limit. Sentences are a group of words that have a structure. In the written form, they are indicated by a capital letter at the beginning of the word group and marked by a period at the end of a series.

Diverse new vocabularies result from the emergence of language variation and are influenced by certain groups, leading to the production of interesting words that differ in certain areas. People may use languages that are unknown to some, such as terms related to global health or specifically, Covid-19. Although these words were previously used by only health workers, their application has expanded to the community because of the influence of technology through online media.

### *B. Lexical Borrowing*

Another process that leads to language variation is lexical borrowing (Daulton, 2012). The process involves the adoption of individual words from other regions or the reproduction of a certain language or vocabulary (Haugen, 1950). Words are adopted from other languages to express a meaning or describe an event when equivalent or exact translations in a language are unavailable. Borrowed lexes are also known as loanwords. According to Matthews (1997), lexical borrowing comprises the transferring or copying processes.

In Indonesia, other languages are accepted as new terms or concepts due to the lack of appropriate descriptive words. Crystal (1997) states there are three types of lexical borrowing. They are 1) loan concept, which is a new concept term existing in a source language and then adopted into the target language, 2) loan translation, an idiomatic expression literally translated into the receiving language, and 3) loan blend, referring to a phenomenon where a part of the expression is borrowed while another fragment remains native. Loan translation and blend are rarely found in the Indonesian language, while the loan concept is mostly used and represents the majority of occurrences.

According to Haspelmath (2009), a loanword is a term transferred from a donor language to a recipient. The process of borrowing words ensues from a native speaker, who consciously imports a word from another language, and may involve the transfer of syntactic features from the donor to the recipient language. Haugen (1950) argued that the taxonomies of lexical borrowing can be divided into loanwords and loan blends. Loanwords involve the transfer of the form and meaning of a word from the donor to the recipient language, while a loan blend entails copying only the meaning. Haspelmath (2009) stated that loanwords are always about the word, where the lexical phrases are derived from compounding vocabularies, but the process may cause a reconstitution of the morphological structure.

### *C. Term*

A term is a form of language variation and may be defined as a word or phrase used to name an item or event or a symbol to express an intended action. It is often referred to as vocabulary and denotes all the words that arise, are heard, and used by a speaker, and may be compiled in a special unofficial dictionary owned by the users. Following an agreement, an originally informal term can be formalized into a standard language by a decision of the groups that formed the expression. A term is a variation in speech used by a certain group of people that adjusts to their needs and profession. Every group in an organization or faced with circumstances can create a new term according to the event or experience.

The language that emerges from this phenomenon is new and has never been used before. This emergence occurs due to certain reasons, as every language variation has its purpose, function, benefits, and characteristics. As stated previously, the formation of a new language is propagated by certain groups with special characteristics in related fields. One of the fields that promote the creation of new terms is the health sector. According to Shahmatun (2004), this sector has special expressions unique to medical or health personnel for the treatment of patients. For example, blood pressure measurement uses the terms tension, dialysis, which implies purification of blood, defibrillator, an electrical therapy for heart shock, etcetera. Subsequently, the Covid-19 pandemic led to the appearance and use of many terms in the news, particularly in online articles.

The terms related to the Covid-19 were initially in English as an International Language during the early days of globally disseminating information about the virus. However, some new words have been extracted and equated to the Indonesian language due to the need to understand the terms related to the disease. Words that were originally solely used by medical personnel have become known and used by the community because of the need to understand information about the pandemic. In this case, the term is adjusted to the country or region of the user.

## III. METHODS

This study aimed to describe the borrowing of Covid-19 related terminologies using a qualitative descriptive approach. According to Susilawati and Yunus (2017), language creation or change can occur following the development of the times and society according to the function of the word. The procedure involved describing the object of research based on facts in the community (Sugiyono, 2014).

Meanwhile, the data were sourced from an online media site named antvklik.com by selecting news related to the pandemic. This platform was selected because it contains unique linguistics phenomena, is highly trusted and known by the Indonesian people as a source of information, and can be accessed anywhere and anytime to obtain necessary information, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. Data were obtained by observing borrowed terms to reveal their forms and meanings in the Indonesian language. Sutopo (2006) stated that the technique for descriptive qualitative data collection involves note-taking methods. This was employed in classifying the data attained from the news delivered during the pandemic by antvklik.com and published in Indonesian with few borrowed words.

After classifying the terms based on their group as words, phrases, synonyms, abbreviations, and acronyms, the data were analyzed by explaining each term carefully using the theory proposed by Haugen (1950), which involves focusing on lexical borrowing to identify the research problem. This was supported by Haspelmath's theory (2009), and the data were analyzed qualitatively according to Creswell (2009).

#### IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine the expressions borrowed by antvklik.com, Covid-19 related terms identified as words, phrases, synonyms, abbreviations, and acronyms were highlighted. This aided analysis by enabling the classification of the terms as full lexical borrowing (loanword), meaning a direct adaptation of the English word into the recipient Indonesian language, or partial borrowing, signifying adjustments. The result can be seen below:

##### A. Covid-19 Terms in the Form of Words in the Indonesian Language

Various words were used by antvklik.com to describe the Covid-19 pandemic. Some terms already had their equivalents in Indonesian, while others were borrowed. The word category was mostly noun in Indonesian, with some variations in English.

TABLE 1  
TERMS IN THE FORM OF WORD

No	Indonesian	Category	English	Category
1	<i>Penutupan</i> [pənotopan]	Noun	Lockdown ['lɒkdaʊn]	Verb
2	<i>Terduga</i> [tərdoga]	Noun	Suspect ['sʌspekt]	Adjective
3	<i>Isolasi</i> [isəlasɪ]	Noun	Isolation [ˌaɪsəʊ'leɪʃən]	Noun
4	<i>Karantina</i> [karantina]	Noun	Quarantine ['kwɒrəntiːn]	Noun
5	<i>Antiseptik</i> [antiseptik]	Noun	Antiseptic [ˌæntɪ'septɪk]	Adjective
6	<i>Pandemi</i> [pandəmi]	Noun	Pandemic [pæn'demɪk]	Noun
7	<i>Disinfektan</i> [disinfəktan]	Noun	Disinfectant [ˌdɪsɪn'fektənt]	Noun
8	<i>Protokol</i> [prɒtɒkɒl]	Noun	Protocol ['prɒtəˌkɒl]	Noun
9	<i>Klaster</i> [klastər]	Noun	Cluster ['klʌstə]	Noun
10	<i>Wabah</i> [wabah]	Noun	Epidemic [ˌepɪ'demɪk]	Noun
11	<i>Penyebaran</i> [peŋekatan]	Noun	Restriction [rɪs'trɪkʃən]	Noun

Data 1 – 11 are the Covid-19 terminologies in the form of words in the Indonesian language. Item (1) is the word *penutupan*, which is categorized as a noun in Indonesian and as a verb in English meaning lockdown. Presently, *penutupan* is widely used in news writing, including on online platforms. In Indonesian, the word is defined in more detail as a situation that prohibits someone from entering or leaving a place because of an emergency condition, such as a pandemic. *Penutupan* broadly means a country, city, or village that closes its borders to prevent entry or departure. Item (2) shows the word *terduga*, a noun in Indonesian that means suspect. In English, it is regarded as an adjective that refers to a person suspected of having the Coronavirus. Item (3) contains the term *isolasi*, which was adapted to the native language to enhance pronunciation by Indonesians. This was done by eliminating the '-ion' in the English variant and changing the letter 't' to 's.' The word has the same meaning in English and Indonesian as the limitation of activities in managing the Covid-19 infection. A similar adjustment of pronunciation or absorption of words from English occurred in item (4) with the word *karantina*, which means a period a person is separated from others to prevent the spread of the virus. *Karantina* is a word borrowed from the English term quarantine. Item (5) is *antiseptik*, borrowed from the English term antiseptic, which experienced a phonological adaptation in the pronunciation and spelling. The letter 'c' at the end of the word was changed to 'k,' and the meaning as a substance that helps to prevent infection was retained. Item (6) was *pandemi*, signifying a disease, such as the Coronavirus, that spreads. It was borrowed from the word pandemic in English and was modified by eliminating the letter 'c.' Item (7) is the word *disinfektan*, meaning a substance that kills bacteria and is used for cleaning. It originated from 'disinfectant' in English and was adapted by changing 'c' to 'k' and eliminating the 't' at the end of the word. In item (8), *protokol* was borrowed from the English word protocol, which means a formal system used at official meetings, and involved a spelling adaptation where 'c' was changed to 'k.' Item (9) is *klaster*, modified from the word cluster in English with the same meaning as a group of things that grow together. The borrowed word was adapted by changing the letter 'c' to 'k' and 'u' to 'a.' Item (10), *wabah*, was not absorbed or adjusted from a word but is a new term that represents the word 'epidemic' in English.

Finally, item (11) was *penyekatan*, meaning restrictions in English, which has been recently used by the government in dealing with Covid-19.

### B. Indonesian Covid-19 Terms in the Form of Phrases

According to Rozikin et al. (2021) a phrase is a group of words that stand together as a single grammatical unit (p. 595). Phrase does not contain a subject or verb and it is known as a part of a clause or sentence. The phrases related to Covid-19 were not stand-alone words but consisted of a group of terms that functioned as a meaningful unit. The pandemic has offered new phrases to languages all over the world, including Indonesia. Some terms and phrases in the Indonesian language can be seen below:

TABLE 2  
TERMS IN THE FORM OF PHRASE

No	Indonesian	English
12	<i>Penyantasi Tangan</i> [pəˈnɪtasi tʌŋʌn]	Hand sanitizer [hænd 'sænɪtaɪzə]
13	<i>Penularan Lokal</i> [pəˈnʉlʌrʌn lʉkal]	Local Transmission ['lʉkʉl trʌnz'mɪʃən]
14	<i>Kasus Impor</i> [kasʉs ɪmpʉr]	Imported Case [ɪm'pɔːtɪd keɪs]
15	<i>Termometer Tembək</i> [tərmʉmʉtər tɛmbək]	ThermoGun ['θɜːmʉu ɡʌn]
16	<i>Normal Baru</i> [nɔrmʌl bʌrʉ]	New Normal [njuː 'nɔːmʉl]
17	<i>Tes Usab</i> [təs ʉsʌb]	Swab Test [swʉb tɛst]
18	<i>Tes Cepat</i> [təs tʃɛpʌt]	Rapid Test ['ræpɪd tɛst]
19	<i>Jaga Jarak</i> [dʒʌɡʌ ʒʌrʌk]	Social Distancing ['sʉʉʌl 'dɪstʉnsɪŋ]
20	<i>Pembatasan Fisik</i> [pɛmbʌtʌsʌn fɪsɪk]	Physical Distancing ['fɪzɪkʉl 'dɪstʉnsɪŋ]
21	<i>Kekebalan Kelompok</i> [kəkəbʌlʌn kəlʉmpʉk]	Herd Immunity [hɜːd ɪ'mjuːnɪti]
22	<i>Isolasi Mandiri</i> [ɪsʉlʌsɪ mʌndɪrɪ]	Self-Isolation [sɛlf-ʌɪsʉʉ 'leɪʃən]
23	<i>Sektor Esensial</i> [sɛktʉr ɛsɛnsɪʌl]	Essential Sector [ɪ'sɛnʃʉl 'sɛktʉ]
24	<i>Sektor Non-Esensial</i> [sɛktʉr nɔn ɛsɛnsɪʌl]	Non-essential Sector [ 'nɔni 'sɛnʃʉl 'sɛktʉ]
25	<i>Sektor Kritisal</i> [sɛktʉr kɪtɪkʌl]	Critical Sector [ 'kɪtɪkʉl 'sɛktʉ]
26	<i>Sektor Khusus</i> [sɛktʉr kʉsʉs]	Special Sector [ 'spɛʃʉl 'sɛktʉ]
27	<i>Kekebalan Komunal</i> [kəkəbʌlʌn kʉmʉnʌl]	Herd Immunity [hɜːd ɪ'mjuːnɪti]
28	<i>Proses Penyekatan</i> [prʉsɛs pɛnʉkʌtʌn]	Restriction Process [rɪs'tɪkʃʉnz 'prʉʉsɛs]

Data 12 – 28 contain Covid-19 related phrases in the Indonesian language. Many new phrases appeared and have been used by online media as new Indonesian-based health terms that provided important information during the pandemic. Some of these terms and their English meanings include items (12) *pensantasi tangan* - hand sanitizer, (13) *penularan lokal* - local transmission, (14) *kasus impor* - imported case, (15) *termometer tembək* - ThermoGun, (16) *normal baru* - new normal, (17) *tes usab* - swab test, (18) *test cepat* - rapid test, and (19) *jaga jarak* - social distancing. Other words are item (20) *pembatasan fisik* - physical distancing, (21) *kekebalan kelompok* - herd immunity, (22) *isolasi mandiri* - self-isolation, (23) *sektor esensial* - essential sector, (24) *sektor non-esensial* - non-essential sector, (25) *sektor kritisal* - critical sector, (26) *sektor khusus* - special sector, (27) *kekebalan komunal* - herd immunity, and (28) *proses penyekatan* - restriction process. Some parts of the phrases above are borrowed words, such as *lokal*, *impor*, *normal*, *tes*, *sektor*, *kritisal*, and *proses*. These were originally English words, namely local, import, normal, test, sector, critical, and process. Phonological adaptations were made to the spelling of each word, such as modifying the letter 'c' in the word local to 'k' in *lokal* and eliminating 't' in import to form *impor*. The word normal was borrowed purely without modifications, while test lost a 't' to form *tes*, 'c' changed to 'k' for *sektor*, and 'c' changed to 'k' for the word *kritisal*. Finally, the spelling of the word *proses* involved changing the letter 'c' to 's' and eliminating 's' from the last word.

### C. Covid-19 Terms in the Form of Synonyms in the Indonesian Language

A synonym is a word with another form that is close in meaning or the same as the original term. Although synonyms exist for some English Covid-19 related terms, the borrowed words are often used in the news due to the popularity of the language and its easy absorption into Indonesian. The terms that have synonyms include:

TABLE 3  
TERMS IN THE FORM OF SYNONYMS

No	Indonesian	Synonym	English
29	<i>Klaster</i> [klastər]	<i>Kelompok</i> /kəlpmpk/	Cluster [ˈklastə]
30	<i>Karantina</i> [karantina]	<i>Penahanan</i> [pənaʔanan]	Quarantine [ˈkwəranti:n]
31	<i>Positif</i> [pɔsitiʃ]	<i>Terjangkit</i> [tərjangkit]	Positive [ˈpɔzətɪv]
32	<i>Pandemi</i> [pandəmi]	<i>Wabah</i> [wabah]	Pandemic [pænˈdemɪk]
33	<i>Protokol</i> [prɔtɔkɔl]	<i>Aturan</i> [atoran]	Protocol [ˈprəʊtəkɔl]

Data 29-33 show that the English forms of some health terms used by online media in Indonesia have two equivalent words called synonyms. For instance, the term cluster in item (29) can be referred to as *klaster* or *kelompok*. *Klaster* is a system used to classify the initial groups of virus spreaders. Since the term cluster may be difficult to understand by society, the equivalent *klaster*, which is synonymous with *kelompok* is used. Item (30) refers to quarantine as *karantina* or *penahanan* in Indonesian. Quarantine is a shelter located far from the community and isolated to prevent the transmission of diseases. It was used during the Covid-19 pandemic to signify efforts toward minimizing or preventing the access of a particular group or individual to society. The term *karantina* is synonymous with *penahanan*, which has the same meaning as the original term quarantine. *Penahanan* is the prohibition of a person from performing activities in a certain place for a specific purpose and is sometimes used by people that are unfamiliar with the term *karantina*. Item (31) contains the word positive, which can be *positif* or *terjangkit* in the Indonesian language. The term *positif* during this pandemic refers to a person with the Covid-19 virus in their body, while *terjangkit* denotes a person infected with an organism or disease. The two terms are synonymous and often used in society. The word pandemic in (32) can be *pandemi* or *wabah*, meaning a disease prevalent throughout the world. In Indonesian society, the term *pandemi* is not as familiar as *wabah*. Item (33) refers to protocol, translated to *protokol* or *aturan*. A protocol is an official letter containing the results of the agreement or rules from the government. The use of the term *protokol* or *aturan* depends on the needs, as both have similar meanings to the original term.

#### D. Covid-19 Terms in the Form of Abbreviations

An abbreviation is formed from an arrangement or combination of letters by shortening the word order. The abbreviated data obtained in this research are:

TABLE 4  
TERMS IN THE FORM OF ABBREVIATIONS

No	Abbreviation	Indonesian	English
34	APD	<i>Alat Pelindung Diri</i> [alat pəlindɔŋ diri]	Personal Protective Equipment [ˈpɜːsnl prəˈtektɪv ɪˈkwɪpmənts]
35	OTG	<i>Orang Tanpa Gejala</i> [ɔraŋ tanpa gedʒala]	Person Without Symptoms [ˈpɜːsn wɪˈðaʊt ˈsɪmptəmz]
36	ODP	<i>Orang Dalam Pengawasan</i> [ɔraŋ dalam pəŋawasan]	Suspect [ˈsʌspekt]
37	PDP	<i>Pasien Dalam Pengawasan</i> [pasien dalam pəŋawasan]	Patient Under Surveillance [ˈpeɪʃənt ˈʌndə sʌːˈveɪləns]
38	PSBB	<i>Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar</i> [pəmbatasan sɔsɪal bərsəkala bəsar]	Large-scale Restrictions [lɑːdʒ-skeɪl rɪsˈtrɪkʃənz]
39	PPKM	<i>Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat</i> [pəmbərlakoan pəmbatasan kegiatan masʔarakat]	Implementation of Restrictions on Community Activities [ˌɪmplɪmənˈteɪʃən ɒv rɪsˈtrɪkʃənz ɒn kəˈmjuːnɪti ækˈtɪvɪtɪz]
40	STRP	<i>Surat Tanda Registrasi Pekerja</i> [sɔrat tanda regsitrasi pəkərʒa]	Worker Registration Certificate [ˈwɜːkə ˌredʒɪsˈtreɪʃən səˈtɪfɪkət]

Abbreviated Covid-19 related terms can be seen in data items 34-40. Item (34) contains APD, an abbreviation of *Alat Pelindung Diri*, known as PPE or Personal Protective Equipment in English. The use of APD became more common among the public during the pandemic because of its frequency in the news, which strives to inform the public that APD serves as personal protection to reduce the possibility of the medical staff contracting the virus. Item (35) mentioned OTG, abbreviated from *Orang Tanpa Gejala* and meaning an infected but asymptomatic individual. The use of this abbreviation is to introduce terms that can be easily remembered, understood, pronounced, and used by society. Item (36) OPD, obtained from *Orang Dalam Pengawasan*, denotes infected or exposed persons that require monitoring. Conversely, PDP in item (37) was procured from *Pasien Dalam Pengawasan*, connoting a patient under supervision.

The abbreviation describes a patient who has tested positive for the virus and must be treated independently in an isolation room in a hospital or at home under the supervision of health workers. This term has been widely known since the Covid-19 virus spread and enables the acceptance of related information by the public. Item (38) PSBB, shortened from *Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar*, symbolizes Large-Scale Social Restrictions. Due to the pandemic, social activities that initially involved physical contact required the minimization of the risk of transmission. PPKM is the abbreviation of *Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat* in item (39), which means the implementation of restrictions on community activities. This term refers to government regulations formulated during the pandemic to prevent the spread of the virus. Presently, the term is used in daily conversation and can be found in various online or print media reporting on Covid-19. A recently issued term is STRP in item (40), abbreviated from *Surat Tanda Registrasi Pekerja*, meaning worker registration certificate. STRP is needed as a condition for working due to the PPKM restrictions and is a letter issued by the respective workplace. The complex words were shortened to allow for easy recollection and pronunciation.

#### E. Indonesian Covid-19 Terms in the Form of Acronyms

An acronym combines several letters from different words to form a new terminology. The use of an acronym is to simplify long words and facilitate recollection. The various forms of acronyms in the Indonesian language used during the pandemic are:

TABLE 5  
TERMS IN THE FORM OF ACRONYMS

No	Acronym	Indonesian	English
41	<i>Faskes</i> [faskəs]	<i>Fasilitas Kesehatan</i> [fasilitas kəsehatan]	Medical Facility [ˈmɛdɪkəl fəˈsɪlɪti]
42	<i>Fasyankes</i> [fasyankəs]	<i>Fasilitas Pelayanan Kesehatan</i> [fasilitas pəlayanan kəsehatan]	Health Service Facility [hɛlθ ˈsɜːvɪs fəˈsɪlɪti]
43	<i>Isoman</i> [isɒmən]	<i>Isolasi Mandiri</i> [isɒlasi mandiri]	Self-isolation [self-ˈaɪsəʊˈleɪʃən]

Data items 41 and 42 are Covid-19 terms modified into acronyms. *Faskes* in item (41) is an acronym of *Fasilitas Kesehatan* and refers to the health facilities used by the community, particularly in Indonesia. Health facilities is a general term that refers to infrastructure or services organized by the government or private sector to maintain or improve health in the community. This term has been used for a long time since the pandemic and is often found in spoken and written media. *Fasyankes* in item (42) is an acronym of *Fasilitas Pelayanan Kesehatan*, which means health service facilities. The existence and function of these facilities must be socialized to the public to ensure the appropriate use of the term, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. The term *Isoman* in Data (43) is an acronym of *Isolasi Mandiri*, meaning self-isolation. Its popularity spread when the government began announcing that persons infected or suspected of having Covid-19 but only exhibiting mild symptoms should self-isolate instead of going to the hospital.

#### F. The Lexical Borrowing of Covid-19 Terms in Indonesian

Haugen (1950) distinguished types of borrowed terms into loanwords, blended stems, compound blends, derivational blends, as well as loan synonyms, homonyms, and translations. Myers-Scotton (2002) explained that the concept of borrowing may also involve cultural expressions, where the meaning of a word is duplicated when a native synonym already exists. Based on the new Covid-19 related terms found in the Indonesian language, this research discovered the process of reproduction a new language exhibited by various words, as shown below:



TABLE 6  
THE LEXICAL BORROWING TERMS OF COVID-19 IN INDONESIAN

No	Indonesian	English	Types of Borrowing
44	<i>Isolasi</i> /isolasi/	Isolation [ˈaɪsəʊˈleɪʃən]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
45	<i>Karantina</i> /karantina/	Quarantine [ˈkwɒrəntiːn]	Loan word (complete phonetic substitution)
46	<i>Antiseptik</i> /antiseptik/	Antiseptic [ˌæntɪˈseptɪk]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
47	<i>Pandemi</i> /pandəni/	Pandemic [pænˈdemɪk]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
48	<i>Disinfektan</i> /disinfektan/	Disinfectant [ˌdɪsnˈfektənt]	Loan word (complete phonetic substitution)
49	<i>Protokol</i> /prɒtɒkɒl/	Protocol [ˈprəʊtəkɒl]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
50	<i>Klaster</i> /klastər/	Cluster [ˈklʌstə]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
51	<i>Lokal</i> /lokal/	Local [ˈləʊkəl]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
52	<i>Impor</i> /impɒr/	Import [ɪmˈpɔːt]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
53	<i>Normal</i> /normal/	Normal [ˈnɔːmə]	Loan word (without phonetic substitution)
54	<i>Tes</i> /tɛs/	Test [tɛst]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
55	<i>Isolasi</i> /isolasi/	Isolation [ˈaɪsəʊˈleɪʃən]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
56	<i>Sektor Esensial</i> /sɛktɒr ɛsənsial/	Essential Sector [ɪˈsɛnʃəl ˈsɛktə]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
57	<i>Sektor Non-Esensial</i> /sɛktɒr nɒn ɛsənsial/	Non-essential Sector [ˈnɒniˈsɛnʃəl ˈsɛktə]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)
58	<i>Sektor Kritis</i> /sɛktɒr kɪtɪkal/	Critical Sector [ˈkrɪtɪkəl ˈsɛktə]	Loan word (partial phonetic substitution)

The list of borrowed lexis in Table 6 involves partial and complete phonetic substitutions. A characteristic of the Indonesian borrowing process is the appearance of morphemic modifications, particularly substitutions. Covid-19 terms used globally are also found in the Indonesian language, which borrows words through modification to promote understanding by the user. For instance, *Isolasi* in item (44) is an example of lexical borrowing with the phonemic process, where the spelling of the original word isolation was changed. The process of adaptation through the use of loanwords and partial phonetic substitutions can be seen in the words *antiseptik* (46), *pandemi* (47), *protokol* (49), *klaster* (50), *lokal* (51), *impor* (52), *tes* (54), *isolasi* (55), *sektor esensial* (56), *sektor non-esensial* (57), and *sektor kritis* (58). Two words, namely *karantina* (45) and *disinfektan* (48), which originated obtained from quarantine and disinfectant, experienced complete phonetic substitution. These two terminologies are categorized as loanwords because their spellings and pronunciations were completely changed. Meanwhile, one word adapted directly without phonetic substitution or spelling modification was *normal* (53). The words listed in Table 6 are new because there are no appropriate synonyms related to Covid-19 in the target language.

## V. CONCLUSION

After researching Indonesian health terms that existed during the Covid-19 pandemic on antvklik.com, the process of lexical borrowing can be categorized into five forms, namely words, phrases, synonyms, abbreviations, and acronyms. The loanwords with partial, complete, and nonexistent phonetic substitutions are found in these forms. Although these new health terms became new vocabularies that can be classified as Indonesian-based words, the languages were obtained through a process called lexical borrowing. Hence, language variation is the most basic and frequently used benchmark to determine the development of a language.

The analysis of the lexical borrowing of health terms that existed during the pandemic needs to be further explored in the Indonesian language because the pandemic is still ongoing and allows the emergence of other terms. The functions and morphological processes of these new terms should also be investigated extensively to propagate their usefulness as a new source of language.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful to Udayana and Warmadewa Universities for their support.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Al-azzawi, Q.O., & Hussein. (2020). Pragmatic Study of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Control(CDC)Instructions of Covid-19. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(9), 9875–9889.

- <https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/6075>
- [2] Aribowo, S.A., & Khomsah, S. (2021). Implementation Of Text Mining For Emotion Detection Using The Lexicon Method (Case Study: Tweets About Covid-19). *Telematika: Jurnal Informatika Dan Teknologi Informasi*, 18(1), 46–60. <https://doi.org/10.31315/telematika.v18i1.4341>
  - [3] Carvalho, A. (2008). Media (Ted) Discourse and Society: Rethinking the Framework of Critical Discourse Analysis. *Journalism Studies*, 9(2), 161–177. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14616700701848162>
  - [4] Chaer, A. (2013). *Pembinaan Bahasa Indonesia*. Rineka Cipta.
  - [5] Creswell, John W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. California: SAGE Publication, Inc.
  - [6] Crystal, D. (1997). *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Blackwell Publisher.
  - [7] Daulton, F. E. (2012). Lexical Borrowing. *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, 2(3), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0687>
  - [8] Halliday, M. A. (1978). *Language as Social Semiotic The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. Edward Arnold.
  - [9] Haryono, A. (2011). Perubahan dan Perkembangan Bahasa: Tinjauan Historis dan Sociolinguistik. *Linguistika*, 18, 1–9. <https://ojs.unud.ac.id/index.php/linguistika/article/view/9679>
  - [10] Hasanah, N. A., Nanik, S., & Purwitasari, D. (2021). Identifying Degree-of-Concern on COVID-19 topics with text classification of Twitters. *Register: Jurnal Ilmiah Teknologi Sistem Informasi*, 7(1), 50–62. <https://doi.org/10.26594/register.v7i1.2234>
  - [11] Haspelmath, Martin. (2009). *Loanwords in the World's Languages (A Comparative Handbook)*. De Gruyter Mouton
  - [12] Hassan, A. (2018). *Language, Media, and Ideology: Critical Discourse Analysis of Pakistani News Bulletin Headlines and Its Impact on Viewers*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
  - [13] Haugen, E. (1950). The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing. *Linguistic Society of America*, 26(2), 210–231. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/410058>
  - [14] Iqbal, Z. (2020). Persuasive Power Concerning COVID-19 Employed by Premier Imran Khan: A Socio\_Political Discourse Analysis. *Register Journal*. 13(1), 208–230. <https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v13i1.208-230>
  - [15] Jovanovic, M. (2020). Discursive Governmental and Media Response to Covid-19: The Case of Serbia. *Society Register*, 4(2), 95–108. <https://doi.org/10.14746/sr.2020.4.2.07>
  - [16] Matthews, P. (1997). *Concise dictionary of linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
  - [17] Minova-Gjurkova, L. (2003). *Stilistika na makedonskiot jazik [Stylistics of the Macedonian language]*. Magor.
  - [18] Myers-Scotton, C. 2002. *Contact linguistics: Bilingual encounters and grammatical outcomes*. Oxford University Press.
  - [19] Rozikin, A.K., Kasmiani., & Lubis, A.A. (2021). Idiomatic Expressions Analysis in Joker Movie. *Journal of English Education and Teaching*. 5(4), 594-608. <https://doi.org/10.33369/jeet.5.4.594-608>
  - [20] Sintia, R. D. (2017). Bahasa Iklan Layanan Masyarakat dan Implikasinya Terhadap Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SMA. *Jurnal Kata (Bahasa, Sastra dan Pembelajarannya)*. 5(2), 1-10. <http://dx.doi.org/10.23960/Kata>
  - [21] Sonezza, L., Rona, A., & Yola, M. (2020). Language and Community Response on The Appeal and Announcement of Covid-19 Found in West Sumatera. *Tell-Us Journal*, 6(2), 136–147. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22202/tus.2020.v6i2.4423>
  - [22] Taejin, K., Yeol, Y., & Namgyu, K. (2021). Deep Learning-Based Knowledge Graph Generation for COVID-19. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 2276. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13042276>
  - [23] van Dijk, T. A. (2000). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
  - [24] Violeta, J. (2020). The Macedonian Language in Regard to Covid-19. *International Research Journal*, 9(2), 243–261.
  - [25] Widiatmojo, R. (2020). Literasi Visual Sebagai Penangkal Foto Hoax Covid-19. *Sospol: Jurnal Sosial Politik*, 6(1), 114–127. <https://doi.org/10.22219/sospol.v6i1.11221>
  - [26] Wijayanti, D. R. (2014). *Analisis Kesalahan Berbahasa Bidang Morfologi pada Karangan Narasi Siswa Kelas VII Madrasah Tsanawiyah Muhammadiyah 1 Weleri Tahun Ajaran 2013/2014*. Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta.

**Dewa Ayu Kadek Claria** is one of the lecturers at the English Department, Faculty of Letters, Warmadewa University, Bali, Indonesia. She received her Master's Degree in Linguistics from Warmadewa University, Denpasar, Indonesia, in 2015. Her research interests encompass Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics, and Eco-linguistics. She has participated in several local, national, and international seminars and workshops.

**Ketut Artawa** is a Professor of linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities Udayana University, Bali Indonesia. He obtained his MA in Linguistics in 1992 and PhD in Linguistics in 1995 from La Trobe University, Melbourne. He was a visiting Professor at the Research School of Pacific Studies, the Australian National University (October 2009-January 2010) and a Visiting Professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA/ AA-ken), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (TUFS), Japan (2011-2012). His research interests are in the fields of syntax, semantics, language typology, and linguistic landscape. He has published a number of articles in International journals with his research group including in *Studies in language* 1977, 21(3) pp 483-508 and *Cognitive science* 2021, 45(4), e1294. He has supervised 25 PhD graduates in Linguistics and he has participated in a number of international conferences on linguistics.

**Made Sri Satyawati** is a lecturer at the Indonesian Department, Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia. She obtained her Master's Degree in Linguistics from Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia, in 1999, and her Doctorate Degree in Linguistics from Udayana University in 2010. Her research interest is linguistics, and she has conducted some research on syntax, typology, and semantics. Satyawati's publications involve research on the Indonesian language and some local East Indonesian

languages. She has supervised many bachelor papers, theses, and doctorate dissertations, as well as participated as a guest and invited speaker in several national and international seminars.

**Anak Agung Putu Putra** is a Doctor in linguistics at Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia. His Bachelor's degree was earned at Udayana University in 1985, his Master's in Linguistics at Hasanuddin in 1993, and Doctorate in Linguistics from Udayana University in 2007. His research mainly focuses on dialectology and phonology. He engages as a lecturer, reviewer, and supervisor of many theses and dissertations, while also participating in numerous national and international conferences, books, and articles.

# Gender Role of Characters in the Illustrations of Local and Introduced Edition Textbooks of College Portuguese Teaching in China

Jiajia Sui

Faculty of Languages and Translation, Macao Polytechnic University, Macao, China

**Abstract**—As an important resource and tool for college Portuguese teaching and learning, textbooks contain rich cultural concepts to a certain extent, among which gender culture is also deeply embedded in the textbooks and influences Portuguese students' perceptions of gender roles. This paper presents an empirical study that is based on a comparative analysis using the illustrated characters of four current college Portuguese textbooks, both local and introduced edition as the object of analysis to investigate the gender roles in these textbooks. By building a research framework that covers six dimensions of analysis: a) the number of male illustrations, female illustrations, and male and female illustrations; b) the number of male and female characters in the illustrations; c) the emotions of the male and female characters in the illustrations; d) the occupations of the male and female characters in the illustrations; e) the activity scenes of the male and female characters in the illustrations; f) the specific activities of male and female characters in the illustrations, we found that there is an imbalance of gender roles in the four introduced edition and local Portuguese textbooks, the findings suggest that the construction of gender culture in future Portuguese textbooks should pay attention to give balanced treatment to male and female characters and break down the gender stereotypes not only in the linguistic term but also visual and pictorial.

**Index Terms**—gender roles, illustrated characters, college Portuguese textbooks, gender equality

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 20th century, as feminist thought has gradually awakened and women's liberation movements have swept the world, more attention has been paid to the issue of gender equality. Storey (2009) in his book "Cultural theory and popular culture: An Introduction" provides a detailed classification of feminist schools into four groups, including "radical<sup>1</sup>, Marxist<sup>2</sup>, liberal<sup>3</sup>, and what Sylvia Walby (1990) calls dual-systems theory<sup>4</sup>" (p. 140). In the field of education, research on gender roles is also more based on liberal feminism, which aims to achieve equal social status and rights between men and women. It is worth mentioning that UNESCO has launched the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021, which includes improving gender inequality by achieving equal rights to education. In foreign language teaching, textbooks carry a certain gender culture, which has become one of the important factors that influence students to form perceptions of gender roles.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. The Role of Textbooks

As a mediator between curriculum policy and teachers (Valverde, et al., 2002), the interpretation and understanding of the term textbook are divided into broad and narrow senses. The broad sense of textbooks can be found in "Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics" (Richards et al., 2002, p. 415), as follows: "anything which can be used by teachers or learners to facilitate the learning of a language. Materials may be linguistic, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, and they may be presented in print, audio or video form, on CD-ROMS, on the Internet or through live performance or display". A textbook in a narrow sense can be understood as an important book based on the syllabus or teaching standards that reflects the content of a subject, usually consisting of multiple volumes and units, as well as accompanying exercise books and audio-visual resources, which systematically and completely present the teaching content.

As an important way to achieve educational goals, textbooks reflect social and cultural life, and carry social values and ideology (Shin et al., 2011). For teachers, textbooks can supplement and improve teaching activities, while for learners, textbooks are the main learning source. As an important carrier of educational activities, teaching materials not only affect the teaching process but also shape students' collective memory (Nasser & Nasser, 2008). In other words,

<sup>1</sup> focuses on a critique of patriarchy.

<sup>2</sup> focuses on the critique of capitalism.

<sup>3</sup> focuses on the individual rights of women and the social equality of men and women.

<sup>4</sup> focuses on the critique of patriarchy and capitalism.

the culture contained in the textbook shapes students' values and ideology in indirect and profound ways. Therefore, because of the status of textbooks in subject teaching, textbook editors need to be cautious when selecting materials, and teachers should adopt critical principles when dealing with relevant materials.

In fact, as the product and medium of social culture, textbooks contain rich cultural knowledge to a large extent and reflect the mainstream culture of society. Therefore, in a sense, textbooks can directly or indirectly map the corresponding cultural concepts, which also reflect the different gender roles that society has given to men and women, and even gender prejudice or discrimination. In college Portuguese teaching activities, teachers and students often use teaching materials to carry out a series of teaching and learning activities. Portuguese textbooks not only carry the language knowledge but also carry the cultural knowledge of Portuguese-speaking countries. To a certain extent, textbooks influence the teaching and learning activities of the Portuguese language and transmit cultural concepts, including gender culture, to students in a subtle way and have a profound impact on their attitudes and behavior (Abdelhay & Benhaddouche, 2015). Schau and Scott (1984) stated in their study that the integration of sex-equitable material into teaching materials can help break down students' stereotypes about gender roles, but such sex-bias materials will lead to wrong gender culture, subtly affect students' thinking, and even put gender bias into action.

### *B. Gender Roles in Language Textbooks*

Research on gender roles is divided into broad and narrow senses. From a broad perspective, it covers not only the research on gender inequality and discrimination in female roles but also on gender inequality and discrimination in male roles. Eugene (1989) proposed three types of gender bias and discrimination, including the concept of "masculinization of evil" (Yang, 2004, p. 250), "gender-exclusive language" and "gender-restrictive language". In a narrow sense, it is more concerned with gender inequality in female roles, such as "exclusion", "subordination", "distortion", and "degradation" of female roles (Sunderland et al., 2000). This paper adopts gender role research in a narrow sense, which is mainly aimed at focusing on the inequality of women's roles.

In the process of education, teaching materials have always played an important role. Scholars have carried out corresponding research on various teaching materials from the perspective of gender roles, including experts and scholars in the field of language teaching. The study of gender issues in textbooks first appeared in the 1970s. U'Ren (1971) explored gender issues from the perspective of female roles in textbooks. She found that 75 percent of the characters in the textbook were male, and only 15 percent of the characters in the illustrations were female. The study highlights the unequal gender roles of men and women in textbooks. Scott (1972) also conducted research on female images in textbooks, and proposed a series of feasible solutions to this gender role problem, breaking gender stereotypes and even gender discrimination. Hartman and Judd (1978) focused on the phenomenon of sexism in English textbooks, analyzed the social roles of women and men from the text and illustrations in the textbooks, and launched a series of reflections on gender issues in English textbooks. Hellinger (1980) indicated that there are concepts of "exclusion", "subordination", "distortion" and "degradation" in foreign language textbooks. Porreca (1984) empirically analyzed gender inequality in 15 English textbooks, using a quantitative research framework based on the frequency of male and female gender in texts and illustrations, combined with a qualitative research framework based on gender adjectives and occupations, etc. The analytical framework summarizes the various gender role issues that appear in English textbooks. In the 1990s, Jones et al. (1997) analyzed discourse roles in dialogues in three EFL textbooks, their study also makes people reflect on the negative effects of gender-imbalanced dialogues. Since the 21st century, research on this topic has gradually gained attention. The main research dimensions focus on the frequency of male and female roles, social roles of males and females, family roles of males and females, personality characteristics of males and females, activities of males and females, and background of male and female activities. In general, the research on gender roles in language textbooks at this stage focuses more on the textual level, while there is not much research on illustrations, especially the comparative study of local and introduced edition textbooks.

From 1960 when the Beijing Broadcasting Institute (BBI) (now Communication University of China) established the Portuguese major to the beginning of this century, the development of Portuguese in China's higher education has been particularly slow, and even stagnated for a time. With the advent of the new century, Portuguese education has gained new vitality. More and more Chinese colleges and universities offer Portuguese majors, as well as Portuguese compulsories or elective courses. However, the teaching of Portuguese in Chinese universities is still in the development stage. The research on teaching materials mainly focuses on the compilation and use of teaching materials, and rarely involves the issue of gender roles in teaching materials. There is also fewer gender role research involving textbook illustrations.

Regarding the research on gender roles in language textbook illustrations, scholars from all walks of life have successively proposed effective research dimensions. Amini and Birjandi (2012) investigated five dimensions: visibility, firstness, masculine constructions, occupations, and activities. Abdelhay and Benhaddouche (2015) adopted the following three dimensions for analysis in their research: a) the number of illustrations between male characters and female characters; b) differences in occupational types in male and female illustrations; c) differences in activity types presented in male and female illustrations. Sovič and Hus (2015) analyze the problem of gender stereotypes in teaching materials from three perspectives: a) frequency and percentage of male and female occurrences; b) activities of male and female; c) clothing of male characters and female characters. Karintzaidis et al. (2016) constructed a research framework based on three sections to reveal gender issues in the illustrations of the 6th Grade Language textbooks,

including a) the occupation of male and female characters in the illustrations; b) the locales of men and women in the illustrations; c) the activities/behaviors of the male and female characters. Yang (2016) focuses on the visual analyses of gender roles in two primary English Language textbooks from the perspective of males' and females' clothing color and hair length.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Based on previous research, this paper designs a research framework and six feasible analysis dimensions to verify if there is an imbalance of gender roles in introduced edition and local Portuguese textbooks, as shown in the following figure:

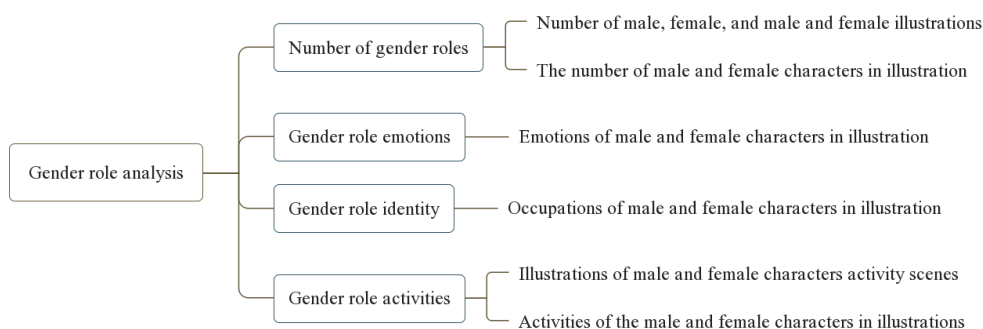


Figure 1 Analytic Framework and Dimensions of Male and Female Roles in College Portuguese Local and Introduced Edition Textbooks

The current college Portuguese teaching textbooks can be mainly divided into introduced edition textbooks and local textbooks, this paper will select four textbooks commonly used in the undergraduate teaching of Portuguese in China, including two introduced edition textbooks: Portuguese XXI (Português XXI), Passport to Portuguese (Passaporte para Português), and two local textbooks: Portuguese for University Teaching (Português para Ensino Universitário) and Global Portuguese (Português Global). This paper presents an empirical study of illustrated characters in four textbooks, using a combination of content analysis and comparative analysis, intending to explore the issue of gender roles in the illustrated parts of college Portuguese textbooks in China. And further, based on the findings, this study proposes corresponding suggestions for the gender role issue.

#### Research Results

##### A. Statistics of the Number of Illustrations

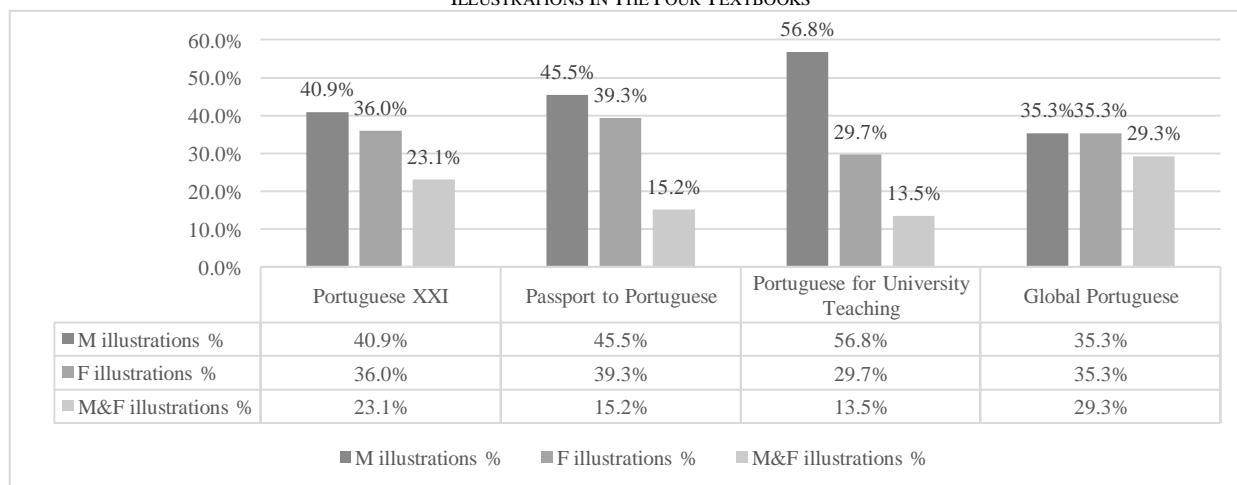
This dimension of analysis aims to measure the number of illustrations with only male characters, the number of illustrations with only female characters, and the number of illustrations with both male and female characters in the four college Portuguese language textbooks. Based on the above three categories, we calculated the percentage of the total number of character illustrations, and finally summarized the differences in the number and proportion of male character illustrations, female character illustrations, and male and female character illustrations in several textbooks. After analysis, the results are as follows:

TABLE 1  
THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF MALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS, FEMALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS, AND MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>5</sup>

Textbook		Number of Character Illustrations	Male character illustrations		Female character illustrations		Male and female characters illustrations	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Portuguese XXI	Vol 1	137	60	43.8%	40	29.2%	37	27.0%
	Vol 2	67	26	38.8%	24	35.8%	17	25.4%
	Vol 3	60	22	36.7%	31	51.7%	7	11.7%
Total		264	108	40.9%	95	36.0%	61	23.1%
Passport to Portuguese	Vol 1	359	155	43.2%	144	40.1%	60	16.7%
	Vol 2	107	57	53.3%	39	36.4%	11	10.3%
Total		466	212	45.5%	183	39.3%	71	15.2%
Portuguese for University Teaching	Vol 1	17	6	35.3%	6	35.3%	5	29.4%
	Vol 2	20	15	75.0%	5	25.0%	0	0%
Total		37	21	56.8%	11	29.7%	5	13.5%
Global Portuguese	Vol 1	31	7	22.6%	16	51.6%	8	25.8%
	Vol 2	44	5	11.4%	19	43.2%	20	45.5%
	Vol 3	22	12	54.5%	8	36.4%	2	9.1%
	Vol 4	36	23	63.9%	4	11.1%	9	25.0%
Total		133	47	35.3%	47	35.3%	39	29.3%
The above four textbooks total		900	388	43.1%	336	37.3%	176	19.6%

To more clearly present the relative proportions of male character illustrations, female character illustrations, and male and female character illustrations in the above four textbooks, as shown in the following chart:

TABLE 2  
THE PROPORTION OF MALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS, FEMALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS, AND MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTER ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS



Through the analysis of the data in this dimension, the following questions about the gender role differences between males and females in the four research textbooks can be concluded: a) Generally speaking, in the four college Portuguese textbooks, except for Global Portuguese, the remaining three textbooks demonstrate a more or less difference in the number of male and female character illustrations, i.e. male figures are more accustomed to using; b) In the two introduced edition textbooks, in comparison with Passport to Portuguese, the three factors in the Portuguese XXI have less difference in proportions; c) Among the two local textbooks, the proportion of the three factors in Global Portuguese varies little and is balanced between male and female character illustrations.

#### B. Statistics of the Number of Characters in the Illustration

This dimension of analysis mainly aims to measure the number of male characters and the number of female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, and then calculate the percentages of the above male characters and female characters in the total number of characters, and finally summarize the difference in the proportion of male and female characters in the total number of characters in the illustration of these four textbooks. After analysis, the results are as follows:

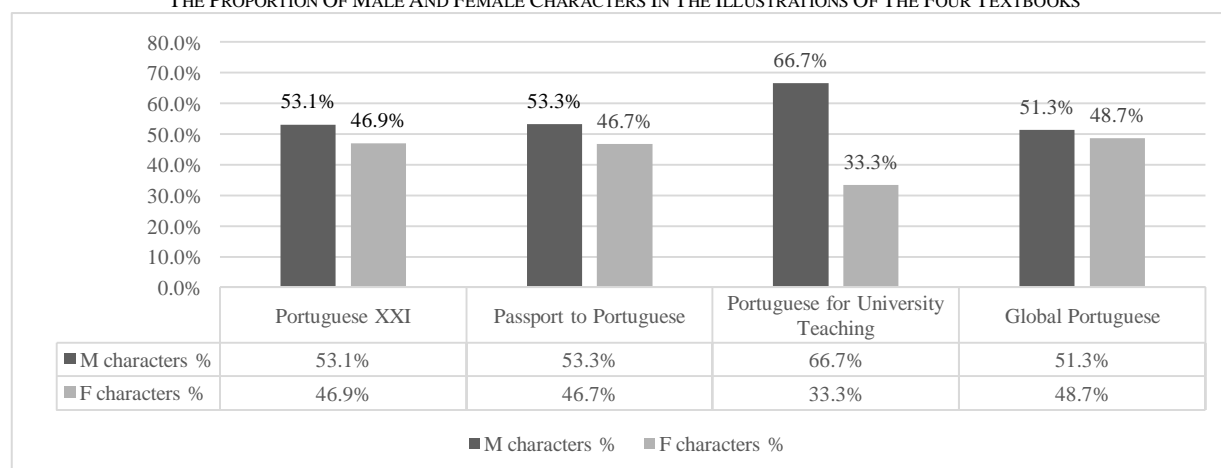
<sup>5</sup> No statistics for illustrations where the gender of the character could not be determined.

TABLE 3  
THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS AND THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CHARACTERS IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>6</sup>

Textbook		Total No.	Male characters		Female characters	
			No.	%	No.	%
Portuguese XXI	Vol 1	258	145	56.2%	113	43.8%
	Vol 2	99	55	55.6%	44	44.4%
	Vol 3	82	33	40.2%	49	59.8%
Total		439	233	53.1%	206	46.9%
Passport to Portuguese	Vol 1	508	264	52.0%	244	48.0%
	Vol 2	147	85	57.8%	62	42.2%
Total		655	349	53.3%	306	46.7%
Portuguese for University Teaching	Vol 1	36	21	58.3%	15	41.7%
	Vol 2	24	19	79.2%	5	20.8%
Total		60	40	66.7%	20	33.3%
Global Portuguese	Vol 1	60	27	45.0%	33	55.0%
	Vol 2	76	29	38.2%	47	61.8%
	Vol 3	28	17	60.7%	11	39.3%
	Vol 4	68	46	67.6%	22	32.4%
Total		232	119	51.3%	113	48.7%
The above four textbooks total		1386	741	53.5%	645	46.5%

To more clearly present the relative proportion difference between male characters and female characters in the illustrations of the above four textbooks, as shown in the following chart:

TABLE 4  
THE PROPORTION OF MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS



Through the analysis of the data in this dimension, the following questions can be drawn about the differences in gender roles in the illustrations of the four research textbooks: a) Generally speaking, there are differences in the number of male and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, male characters appear more frequently than female characters. Among them, Global Portuguese has the smallest difference in the proportions of the two; b) The proportions of male characters and female characters in the two introduced edition textbooks are similar, but compared with the Passport to Portuguese, the difference between the two factors in Portuguese XXI is slightly smaller; c) In the two local textbooks, the proportions of the two factors in Global Portuguese is more balanced than that in Portuguese for University Teaching.

### C. Statistics of Characters' Emotions in Illustrations

This dimension of analysis mainly aims to measure the positive and negative emotions of male and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, and then calculate: a) The percentage of male and female characters' positive emotions in the total positive emotions; b) The percentage of male and female characters' negative emotions in the total negative emotions; c) The difference in the emotional proportions of male and female characters in the illustrations of several textbooks.

Before statistics and analysis of data, it is necessary to clarify what positive emotions and negative emotions are. Based on the valence division method, Yang et al. (2007) sum up the emotional positive and negative electrodes. Specifically, positive electrodes are called positive emotions, which will bring positive subjective experience and physiological response to the individual; on the contrary, the negative electrode is called negative emotion, which will bring negative subjective experience and physiological response to the individual. Common positive emotions are joy,

<sup>6</sup> No statistics are made for the characters whose gender could not be identified or counted.



pleasure, happiness, relaxation, pride, excitement, etc.; common negative emotions are sadness, anxiety, pain, anger, fear, etc.

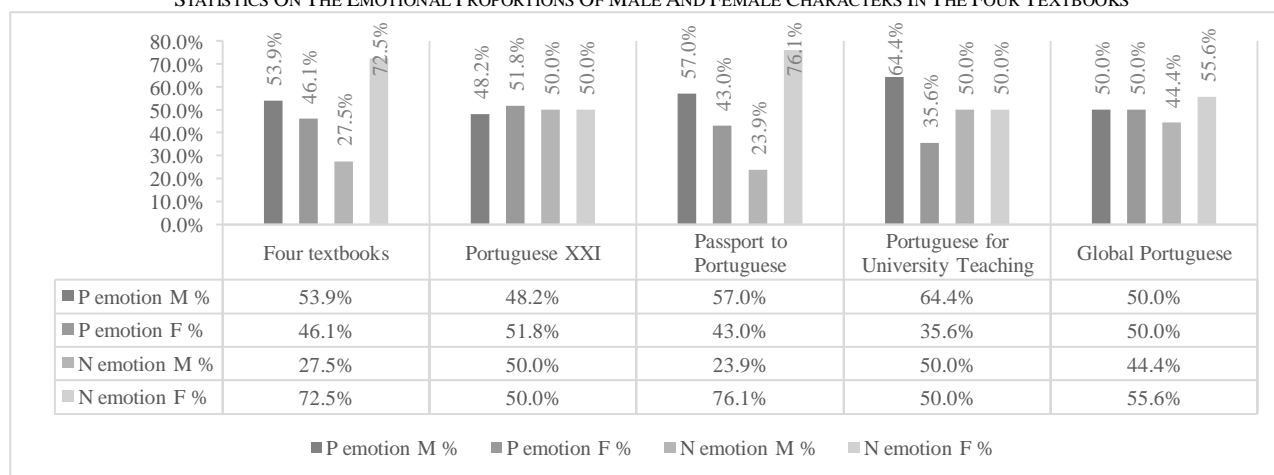
After analysis, the results are as follows (P=positive; N=negative):

TABLE 5  
STATISTICS OF MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS' EMOTIONS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>7</sup>

Textbook		Total No.	Total No.P	Total No.N	Male characters		Female characters	
					No.P	No.N	No.P	No.N
Portuguese XXI	Vol 1	105	105	0	54	0	51	0
	Vol 2	66	64	2	31	1	33	1
	Vol 3	51	51	0	21	0	30	0
Total		222	220	2	106	1	114	1
Passport to Portuguese	Vol 1	388	331	57	194	15	137	42
	Vol 2	102	92	10	47	1	45	9
Total		490	423	67	241	16	182	51
Portuguese for University Teaching	Vol 1	29	29	0	16	0	13	0
	Vol 2	18	16	2	13	1	3	1
Total		47	45	2	29	1	16	1
Global Portuguese	Vol 1	39	37	2	17	1	20	1
	Vol 2	52	49	3	18	0	31	3
	Vol 3	19	19	0	11	0	8	0
	Vol 4	33	29	4	21	3	8	1
Total		143	134	9	67	4	67	5
The above four textbooks total		902	822	80	443	22	379	58

To more clearly present the difference in the relative proportions of male characters and female characters in the above four textbooks, as shown in the following chart:

TABLE 6  
STATISTICS ON THE EMOTIONAL PROPORTIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS



Through the analysis of the data in this dimension, the following questions can be drawn about the differences in gender roles between men and women in the illustrations of the four research textbooks: a) Generally speaking, there are emotional differences between male and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, the proportion of male characters in the positive emotions of illustrated characters is generally higher than that of female characters, and the proportion of male characters in the negative emotions of illustrated characters is generally lower than that of female characters; b) In the two introduced edition textbooks, compared with Passport to Portuguese, the difference in the proportion of positive and negative emotions between male and female illustrated characters in Portuguese XXI is smaller. Moreover, the proportion of females with positive emotions in Portuguese XXI is slightly higher than the proportion of males with positive emotions; c) In the two local textbooks, the difference in the proportion of positive and negative emotions between male and female characters of illustrations in Global Portuguese is smaller than that in Portuguese for University Teaching.

#### D. Statistics of Characters' Occupations in Illustrations

This dimension of analysis mainly aims to count and analyze the occupational roles of male and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, and then calculate the percentages of male and female characters' occupational roles in occupational categories, and finally summarize the illustrations' differences in the type

<sup>7</sup> No statistics for characters whose emotions could not be identified.

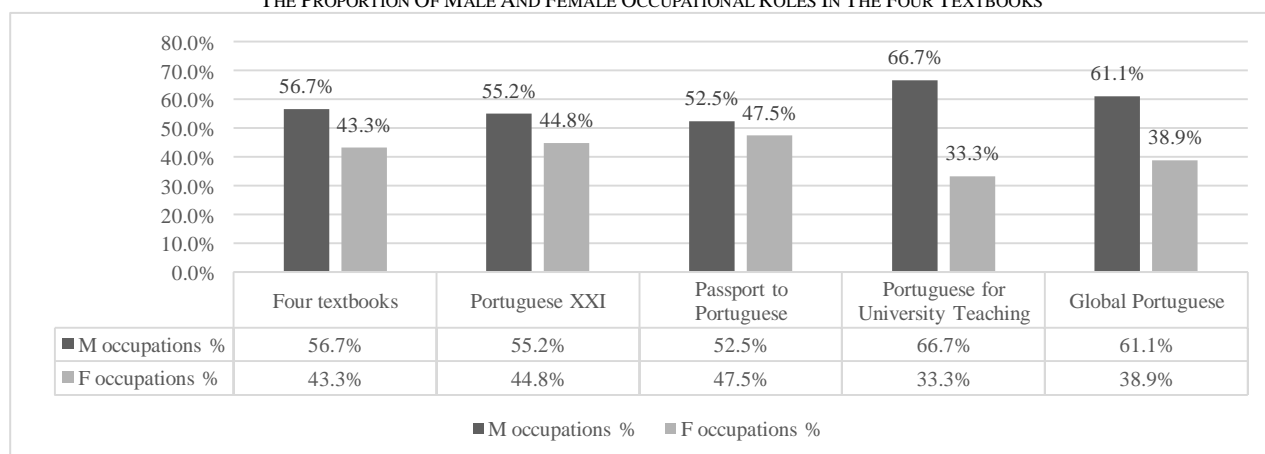
and number of occupations performed by male and female characters in illustrations of several textbooks. After analysis, the results are as follows:

TABLE 7  
STATISTICS ON OCCUPATIONAL ROLES OF MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>8</sup>

Textbook			Male occupation	Female occupation
Portuguese XXI	Vol 1	Type	Lawyer, chef, fireman, police, student, architect, waiter, economist, singer, bullfighter, athlete, doctor, maintenance worker	Student, clerk, doctor, painter, waiter, nurse, singer, model, tour guide, kindergarten teacher, manicurist, stationery clerk
		No.	13	12
	Vol 2	Type	Chef, actor, student, politician, fortune teller, sports coach, salesperson, shoe shiner, knife sharpener	Teacher, artist, actor, singer, doctor, salesperson, engineer
		No.	9	7
	Vol 3	Type	student, artist, doctor, writer, garbage collector, cooks, newspaper seller, architect, worker, meat cutter	Student, artist, singer, designer, fashion celebrity, deputy mayor, radio host
		No.	10	7
Total			32	26
Passport to Portuguese	Vol 1	Type	Celebrity, athlete, driver, policeman, engineer, doctor, journalist, waiter, computer repairer, student, chef, clerk, captain, sports judge	celebrity, operator, chef, teacher, student, judge, doctor, clerk, athlete, painter, dancer, cleaner
		No.	14	12
	Vol 2	Type	Celebrity, courier, maintenance worker, waiter, athlete, teacher, designer	Celebrity, flight attendant, maintenance worker, hotel receptionist, operator, athlete, pharmacist
		No.	7	7
Total			21	19
Portuguese for University Teaching	Vol 1	Type	Celebrity, athlete, student, boss, clerk, singer	student, nurse, clerk, dancer, celebrity
		No.	6	5
	Vol 2	Type	Celebrity, teacher, student, airport staff, doctor, boss	Celebrity
		No.	6	1
Total			12	6
Global Portuguese	Vol 1	Type	Clerk, student, doctor	clerk
		No.	3	1
	Vol 2	Type	boss	Clerk, student, doctor
		No.	1	3
	Vol 3	Type	litterateur, athlete	litterateur
		No.	2	1
	Vol 4	Type	Teacher, litterateur, student, screenwriter, singer	Litterateur, student
		No.	5	2
Total			11	7
The above four textbooks total			76	58

To more clearly present the difference in the relative proportions of male characters and female characters in the above four textbooks, as shown in the following chart:

TABLE 8  
THE PROPORTION OF MALE AND FEMALE OCCUPATIONAL ROLES IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS



Through the analysis of data in this dimension, the following questions about the gender role differences between males and females in the illustrations of the four textbooks can be summarized: a) There are differences in the occupational roles of males and females in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks. In general, the number of male occupational roles is higher than that of female occupational roles, and male occupational roles are

<sup>8</sup> No statistics for characters whose occupations could not be identified.

more diverse, but it is worth noting that female occupational roles are not restricted to service industries or located in families; b) In the two introduced edition textbooks, compared with the Passport to Portuguese, the difference in the number and types of male and female occupational roles in illustrations of Portuguese XXI is more obvious, and the male occupational types are more and account for a larger proportion; c) In the two local textbooks, compared with Global Portuguese, the difference in the number and types of male and female occupational roles in illustrations of Portuguese for University Teaching is more obvious, and male occupational categories are more and account for a larger proportion; d) The descriptions of the occupational roles of male and female characters in the two introduced edition textbooks are more abundant, and the differences in the number and types are smaller. On the contrary, the descriptions of occupational roles in the two local textbooks are more scarce, and the differences between males and females are larger, which is not conducive to students' formation of correct concepts of male and female occupational roles.

#### E. Statistics on the Specifics Types of Activities of the Characters in the Illustrations

This dimension of analysis mainly aims to count and analyze the activity types of male characters and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, and then calculate the percentage of the activity types of male and female characters in the total activity types, and finally summarize differences in the type and number of activities between male and female characters in illustrations of several textbooks. After analysis, the results are as follows:

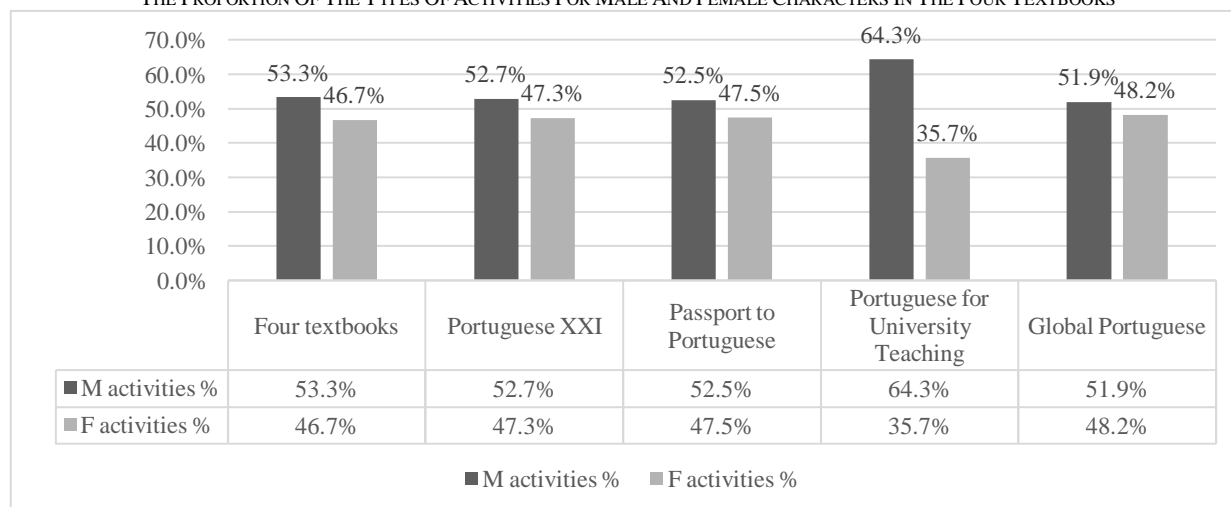
TABLE 9  
STATISTICS ON ACTIVITY TYPES OF MALE CHARACTERS AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>9</sup>

STATISTICS ON ACTIVITY TYPES OF MALE CHARACTERS AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS				
Textbook			The activity of male characters	The activity of female characters
Portuguese XXI	Vol 1	Type	Play golf, work, take exams, listen to music, drink coffee, play football, play guitar, watch TV, dance, do exercises, eat, make phone calls, read newspapers, take medical exams	Work, drink coffee, shop, study, call, dance, chat, eat, photograph, draw, do housework
		No.	14	11
	Vol 2	Type	Study, eat, work, do exercises, watch TV, read newspapers, do outdoor leisure activities	Study, eat, work, do exercises, watch TV, read newspapers, make phone calls
		No.	7	7
	Vol 3	Type	Study, chat, work, weed, sell newspapers, take pictures, read newspapers, dance	Study, chat, sing, draw, take pictures, dance, do exercises, read newspapers
		No.	8	8
Total			29	26
Passport to Portuguese	Vol 1	Type	Do exercises, drive, eat, work, go out, go to school, study, cook, dance, watch TV, go shopping, do housework, ride horses, listen to music, play a musical instrument, play chess, smoke, get married	Do exercises, study, eat, work, go to school, take care of children, smoke, sing, dance, go out, shop, watch TV, drive, do housework, draw, take pictures, get married
		No.	18	17
	Vol 2	Type	Wash, dress, eat, sing, do housework, work, do exercises, drink coffee, drive, read, take pictures, do outdoor leisure activities, chat	Sing, draw, drive, eat, make phone calls, work, do outdoor leisure activities, listen to music, chat, do exercises, read
		No.	13	11
Total			31	28
Portuguese for University Teaching	Vol 1	Type	Do exercises, have an interview, have a meeting, sing	Work, have an interview, have a meeting, dance
		No.	4	4
	Vol 2	Type	Have an interview, work, do outdoor leisure activities, see a doctor, chat	Do outdoor leisure activities
		No.	5	1
Total			9	5
Global Portuguese	Vol 1	Type	Chat, entertain, watch TV, dance, eat, travel, see a doctor	Chat, entertain, listen to music, shop, wash, cook, work, dance, travel
		No.	7	9
	Vol 2	Type	Watch TV, dance, eat, see a doctor, camp, have an interview, have a meeting, row a boat, cook, do exercises	Read, do exercises, cook, dance, watch TV, see a doctor, camp, wash, have an interview, have a meeting, row a boat, do housework, eat
		No.	10	13
	Vol 3	Type	Do exercises, draw, get married, chat, work	Get married
		No.	5	1
	Vol 4	Type	Work, watch TV, do exercises, eat, attend class, chat	Do exercises, eat, attend class
		No.	6	3
Total			28	26
The above four textbooks total			97	85

To more clearly present the difference in the number of activities of male characters and female characters in the above four textbooks, as shown in the following chart:

<sup>9</sup> No statistics for characters whose type of activity could not be identified.

TABLE 10  
THE PROPORTION OF THE TYPES OF ACTIVITIES FOR MALE AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS



Through the analysis data of this dimension, the following questions about the differences in the types and numbers of activities of male and female characters in the illustrations of the four textbooks can be summarized: a) Generally speaking, the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks all show the phenomenon of imbalance in the types and numbers of activities of male and female characters. The specific manifestation is that compared with female characters, the types of activities of male characters are more diverse and account for a larger proportion; b) There is little difference between the two introduced edition textbooks in this dimension; c) In both local textbooks, the difference in the type and number of activities of male and female characters in the illustrations of Portuguese for University Teaching is more evident than in Global Portuguese, with more categories and a larger share of activities for males and a lack of types and numbers of activities for females.

#### F. Statistics of the Activity Scenes of the Characters in the Illustrations

This dimension of analysis mainly aims to count and analyze the activity scenes of male characters and female characters in the illustrations of the four college Portuguese textbooks, and then calculate the percentage of the activity scenes of male and female characters in the total activity scenes, and finally summarize differences in the type and number of activity scenes between male and female characters in illustrations of several textbooks. After analysis, the results are as follows:

TABLE 11  
STATISTICS OF ACTIVITY SCENES OF MALE CHARACTERS AND FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE FOUR TEXTBOOKS<sup>10</sup>

Activity Scenes	School	12	12	4	6			3	5
	Family	2	7	12	24	2	2	14	16
	Workplace	33	23	5	7	7	3	7	4
	Outdoor	30	22	22	17	6	1	36	26
	Restaurant	8	7	13	10				
	Beauty Salon								2

<sup>10</sup> No statistics for characters whose activity scenes could not be identified.

textbook	Gender	Mall&Super market	Cinema	Library	Bank	Hotel	Hospital & Pharmacy	Public transport	Sports place
Portuguese XXI	M						1	2	3
	F						2	2	6
Passport to Portuguese	M	1	10	1				18	13
	F	8	10	1	1	2	2	8	5
Portuguese for University Teaching	M						2	1	2
	F								
Global Portuguese	M						2		2
	F	1					3		2

Through the statistical data of this dimension, we focus on the following four more representative scenes, it is not difficult to find in the four textbooks: a) Except for Portuguese for University Teaching, the female characters appear more frequently in the family scenes in the other three textbooks are higher than men; b) Except for Portuguese Passport, the female characters appear more frequently than the male characters in the home scenes in the remaining three textbooks; c) Except for Passport to Portuguese, the male characters appear more frequently than the female characters in the work scenes in the remaining three textbooks; d) The male characters appear much more frequently than the female characters in the outdoor scenes in all four textbooks; e) In the two textbooks where the mall scenes, the frequency of female characters is much higher than that of male characters. This series of findings may lead to traditional stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles, i.e., that women's activities are based more on the home, supermarkets, or shopping malls, while men's activities are more often found in the workplace and outdoors.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Through the analysis of the above six dimensions, this study found that the characters in the illustrations in the four introduced and local textbooks all present different degrees of gender role imbalance and insufficient attention to female roles. There is still a need to strengthen the awareness of gender equality in college Portuguese language textbooks to achieve the goal of transmitting a correct gender culture, and the following two recommendations are made here regarding the development and use of Portuguese language textbooks: First, at the level of textbook development, editors need to establish a correct awareness of gender roles and, of course, face up to the biological differences between men and women, and they need to take careful consideration in the selection of illustrations to understand the meaning and importance of gender equality and to eliminate gender bias and even discrimination. Secondly, in the

selection and use of teaching materials, teachers should incorporate the concept of gender role equality into the criteria for selecting teaching materials, carefully and reasonably select teaching materials and scientifically guide students to view the gender role phenomena presented in the illustrations, and in the process of explaining the teaching materials, they should also provide certain teaching activities that help students develop a fair concept of gender roles, to stimulate students to analyze and reflect on gender role issues.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Abdelhay, B., & Benhaddouche, W. (2015). Gender stereotyping through textbook Illustrations: A case study of Algerian middle school textbook-spotlight on English. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(5), 435-435.
- [2] Amini, M., & Birjandi, P. (2012). Gender bias in the Iranian high school EFL textbooks. *English Language Teaching*, 5(2), 134-147.
- [3] Eugene, A. (1989). *Real Man Don't: Anti-Male Bias in English*. Scott Foresman and Company.
- [4] Hartman, P. L., & Judd, E. L. (1978). Sexism and TESOL materials. *TESOL Quarterly*, 12(4), 383-393.
- [5] Hellinger, M. (1980). 'For men must work, and women must weep': Sexism in English language textbooks used in German schools. *Women's Studies International Quarterly*, 3(2-3), 267-275.
- [6] Jones, M. A., Kite, C., & Sunderland, J. (1997). Discourse roles, gender and language textbook dialogues: Who learns what from John and Sally?. *Gender and Education*, 9(4), 469-490.
- [7] Karintzaidis, N., Christodoulou, A., Kyridis, A., & Vamvakidou, I. (2016). Gender representations in the illustrations of the 6th grade language textbook used in Greek elementary school. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 7(6), 113-122.
- [8] Nasser, R., & Nasser, I. (2008). Textbooks as a vehicle for segregation and domination: State efforts to shape Palestinian Israelis' identities as citizens. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 40(5), 627-650.
- [9] Porreca, K. L. (1984). Sexism in current ESL textbooks. *TESOL Quarterly*, 18(4), 705-724.
- [10] Richards, J. C., Schmidt, R., & Kendrick, H. (2005). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3th ed.). (Guan Yanhong & Tang Yuzhu, Trans.). Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [11] Schau, C. G., & Scott, K. P. (1984). Impact of gender characteristics of instructional materials: An integration of the research literature. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76(2), 183-193.
- [12] Scott, F. & Glenview, IL. (1972). *Guidelines for improving the image of women in textbooks*. Scott, Foresman and Company.
- [13] Shin, J., Eslami, Z. R., & Chen, W. C. (2011). Presentation of local and international culture in current international English-language teaching textbooks. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 24(3), 253-268.
- [14] Sovič, A., & Hus, V. (2015). Gender stereotype analysis of the textbooks for young learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 186, 495-501.
- [15] Storey, J. (2009). *Cultural theory and popular culture: An introduction*. Longman.
- [16] Sunderland, J., Cowley, M., Rahim, F. A., Leontzakou, C., & Shattuck, J. (2000). From bias "in the text" to "teacher talk around the text": An exploration of teacher discourse and gendered foreign language textbook texts. *Linguistics and Education*, 11(3), 251-286.
- [17] U'Ren, M. B. (1971). The image of woman in textbooks. In V. Gornick, & B. K. Moran (Eds.), *Woman in sexist society: Studies in power and powerlessness* (pp. 318-328). Signet/New American Library.
- [18] Valverde, G. A., Bianchi, L. J., Wolfe, R. G., Schmidt, W. H., & Houang, R. T. (2002). *According to the book: Using TIMSS to investigate the translation of policy into practice through the world of textbooks*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- [19] Yang, C. C. R. (2016). Are males and females still portrayed stereotypically? Visual analyses of gender in two Hong Kong primary English Language textbook series. *Gender and Education*, 28(5), 674-692.
- [20] Yang, Lizhu., Dong, Guangheng., & Jin, Xinli. (2007). Brain reaction difference of positive and negative emotions. *Studies of Psychology*, 3, 224-228.
- [21] Yang, Yonglin. (2004). *A study of sociolinguistic issues*. Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.



**Jiajia Sui** was born in Sui Hua, Hei Longjiang Province, China in 1995. She received her master degree in Portuguese as Foreign Language from University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal in 2019. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Portuguese Studies of Macao Polytechnic University, Macao, China. Her research interests include Portuguese as foreign language teaching and intercultural communication.

# Consolidation Through Rebellion in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

Farhadiba H. Khan

Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—This paper examines Kate Chopin's heroine Edna's journey for self-actualization in *The Awakening* which was published in (1899). The period represents the first wave of feminism and New Woman era. Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* portrays the patriarchy, oppression and marriage as compelling forces that assume women to fulfill the expectations of a devoted true woman. Chopin presents Edna's rebels against the moral and social restraints set on women by the patriarchal society in order to become an individual as she refuses to be casted as a typical traditional Victorian mother and a wife. To understand Edna's rebelliousness, Chopin uses a variety of pictures and encounters with people as instruments. It's clear that she has a rebellious streak. Chopin's deliberation, in this sense, is to not condemn Edna's rebellion in proclaiming her sexuality and seeking independence through the consolidation of her mind, body, and spirit, but rather to paint her as the 'new woman' who gains control and awareness of her sexual and artistic potentials. Therefore, this research work attempts to study Edna's trials and tribulations in achieving self-understanding by resisting patriarchal subordination and finding autonomy by pursuing her own goals.

**Index Terms**—feminism, patriarchy, oppression, rebel, sexuality

## I. INTRODUCTION

*The Awakening*, published in 1899, is a 19th-century symbolic work that addresses important women issues that had been disregarded for ages. From being attacked after its publication with Willa Cather stating, "Miss Chopin has devoted such exquisite and sensitive, well-governed a style to such trite and sordid a theme" (Cather, 1899, as cited in Elz, 2003, p.13), to being compared to the French novel *Madame Bovary*, to being banned for nearly half a century, it was clear that the idea of a woman fighting for her own identity in *The Awakening* was considered dangerous for the society. Later, the novel was rediscovered in the 1960s as a classic feminist one, and ever since it has remained a fundamental work in the American literary canon.

In *The Awakening*, Chopin depicts the Creole society of New Orleans in which men and women's duties are firmly defined and divided. Women are the caretakers, while men are the providers. Early in their marriage, Edna notices her unequal relationship with her husband Leonce Pontellier because she recognizes that she was not his social equal and that she is a "valuable piece of personal property" (Chopin, ch. I, p.3) for him. While on vacation at Grande Isle, Edna encounters people she believes will complete her life. Robert Lebrun, a man with whom she fell deeply in love, was one of them. As the events of the novel take place during the end of nineteenth century when marriage was considered a sacred bond that cannot be broken, Edna embarks on a journey where she challenges the set norms of patriarchy by leaving her husband and children to discover herself. Chopin depicts the social and emotional difficulties Edna encounters. Although Chopin never labeled herself as a feminist, she was a proponent of women empowerment. As a result, Chopin portrays Edna as one of the earliest female characters in literature to challenge and rebel against patriarchy. Once Edna recognizes her rights and asserts her emotional and physical desires she exemplifies the idea of a "new woman."

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A series of previous and recent studies indicate that Kate Chopin's novel *The Awakening* presents the rebellion of a married woman Edna Pontellier against 19th Century patriarchy illuminating a woman's struggles, the myths regarding motherhood, and Edna's awakening to her sexuality and eventual journey toward autonomy. Contemporary scholars analyze the novel from different perspectives with many seeing *The Awakening* as a subversion of patriarchal male dominance. According to Rula Quawas (2009), the female protagonist Edna's success is solely evaluated by her obedience to the divine plan—marriage and motherhood—as it was for her predecessors. She goes on to say that what distinguishes Edna from them is that, "she recognizes that this pattern of Victorian True Womanhood, which is in fact a patriarchal ideology that expects woman to be perfect in her virtues but denies her autonomy as a human being, and those predictable relationships, which it subsumes, are inadequate, for they limit her role narrowly to the home sphere as a subservient caretaker" (Quawas, 2009, p.481). Another Chopin critic, Zoila Clark, focuses on Chopin's use of bird imagery "to discuss the systematic nature of oppression" in her "Feminist Approach to Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*," stating that "the main goal of Western feminism was to achieve liberty, disregarding equality and fraternity," and that

"Edna Pontellier, Chopin's protagonist, achieves this individuality, but it is fraternity which might bring equality and freedom for all" (Clark, 2008, p.335).

In addition, Wenhui Hong (2011) examines the gender-space relationship in his essay "Space and Female Subjectivity in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*," claiming that "the spatial settings in the novel are, first of all, implicative of power relations" and that the geography and community of the island are "metaphors of patriarchal control" (Hong, 2011, p. 89). Mercy Ezeala and Regina Rudaityte examine literary images of women based on French feminism's assertion that language makes women; however, casting doubt on these representations they contend that "*The awakening* presents divergent voices acknowledging the women's relationships with the norms associated with motherhood and wifehood while parodying these women for unquestioningly living up to the expectations of society" (Ezeala & Rudaityte, 2020, p. 28).

In these critical discussions the one area of substantial agreement seems to be about Edna's rebellion against insurmountable patriarchy in order to become an autonomous subject in search of an identity of her own. According to Per Seyersted (1969), with the eventual shift to the pigeon house, Edna continues to defy social convention, regulations, and what is expected of her as a woman., and that she has "a feeling of having descended in the social scale, with a corresponding sense of having risen in the spiritual" (Chopin, ch. XXXII, p.245). Joseph Urgo (1987) believes that what Edna accomplishes in *The Awakening* is more of a prelude to rebellion than a true rebellion. He further comments "that in order to live in society she must silence herself. This she rejects. The rebellious quality of *The Awakening* is that Edna would rather extinguish her life than edit her tale" (Urgo, 1987, as cited in Singh & Kumar, 2022, p.180). In the New Woman -debate, Kate Chopin's role appears to be more than evident. Ann Heilmann (2008) states "in its quest for female self-determination, *The Awakening* aligns itself with nineteenth century female traditions of writing, in particular the Anglo-American fiction of the New Woman. Chopin's frank treatment of female sexuality broke new ground at a time when married women held no legal rights over their bodies, and when few other female or feminist writers hazarded openly to explore women's sexual desire"(p.87).

Lawrence Thornton (1980) interprets Edna Pontellier's revolt as a political stand against a woman's social standing, while establishing a distinction between *Madame Bovary's* Emma and *The Awakening's* Edna Pontellier. He states "While Edna Pontellier and Emma are both narcissists, Edna becomes aware of political crises related to her position within Creole society that sharply distinguish her from Emma" (Thornton, 1980, p.1). In "Circadian Rhythms and Revolt in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*," Robert S. Levine looks at Edna's rebellion against the prerequisite of compromise in human life. He suggests that a close examination of the sleep-wake pattern will reveal Edna's radical rebellious tendencies and demonstrate "a more comprehensive rebellion against the regular circadian rhythms of her husband and, eventually, of her community" (Levine, 1982, p.71). Finally, Aparecido Donizete Rossi's Gothic concept fits Edna Pontellier's "solitary soul" that rebels "in order to unveil the awakening of a woman's identity and independence--a shift away from the reductive patriarchal metaphors such as the Angel in the House" (Rossi, 2015, p.76).

### III. DISCUSSION

Until the nineteenth century, a woman's function within the confines of matrimony was limited to housework and acting as a caretaker and nurturer. Men, on the other hand, were the family's representatives, and they made all economic, social, and political decisions. According to a 13th century Christian Theologian, Thomas Aquinas, women were "created to be men's helpmeet, but her unique role is in conception..." (Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia, WIC, 1994). In terms of their role, this was still true for most women in the nineteenth century, as the technological advancements of the industrial revolution reduced the role of women in the nineteenth century to that of a home-staying wife, while men dominated the political, economic, and social domains. As a result, when the market economy was introduced in America, the ideology of female domesticity rose. As a result of this divergent categorization of duties, which required white women to stay at home and not work, an idea of a true woman developed in the 1850s in the United States. In her article "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," Welter (1966) explains that "The attributes of the true Womanhood, by which a woman judged herself and was judged by her husband, her neighbors and society could be divided into four cardinal virtues piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" (p.152). Only women who possessed these qualities were considered worthy of the community's admiration. However, American women were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the social, political, and legal restrictions imposed on them due to their gender. Patriarchy and inequality spurred a feminist movement in response to this injustice. As a result, by the end of the nineteenth century, women's restrictions and subjugation prompted "an awakening in the feminist consciousness whose motives were the need to correct and discuss gender equality" (Arezki & Mahmoudi, 2013, p.171.).

Kate Chopin may not have been an outspoken feminist suffragette like Charlotte Perkin Gilman, Mary Wilkin Freeman, and Edith Wharton, but "In her short stories she frequently engaged with the themes of New Woman fiction: the importance of female independence, tomboyish heroines who refuse to be feminized, women's conflict between art and love, unconventional marital arrangements, marital oppression, prostitution, and congenital syphilis" (Heilmann, 2008, p.93). As a result, Kate Chopin's writings were significant in depicting the situation of women at the time. The phrase "New Woman" has its origins in the organized movement of the first wave of feminists who emphasized women's issues and as a term was first time featured in an 1894 essay by novelist Sarah Grand called "The New Aspect



of the Woman Question." Cruea (2005) while examining the origins of feminism and the Woman Movement in the nineteenth century states that "The New Woman phase of the Woman Movement focused primarily on entirely "emancipating" women from the social expectations and conventions forced upon them by tradition" (p.198) and that "New Woman asserted her right to sexuality and separated it from her public reputation" (Cruea, 2005, p.201).

This concept obviously influenced Chopin's image of the "New Woman," who, according to her, should have her own identity and be in charge of her own body. An idea that is diametrically opposed to the ideology of a true woman. Consequently, in many of her short stories, including "The Story of an Hour," "A Pair of Silk Stockings," and "The Storm," Chopin deliberately deconstructs the role of a 19th century stereotyped role of wife. Similarly, she introduces a number of female characters in her novel *The Awakening*, including the stereotypical Victorian self-sacrificing Madame Ratignolle, who devotes her life to her husband and children, and Edna Pontellier, who defies the traditional roles of wife and mother, thus failing to fit into the general code of true woman. As Russ Sprinkle (1998) states: "...yet willing to give up everything—even her own life—for the freedom of unencumbered individuality, Edna Pontellier epitomized the consummate New Woman of the late nineteenth century." (para. 4) In a nutshell, Edna of *The Awakening* is Chopin's "new woman" who chooses to leave her family and seek artistic and sexual independence in order to escape the social constraints imposed by her marriage and its expectations. In her famous article "Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* as Feminist Criticism," Toth (1976) contends: "The novel moves us because it illustrates the need for women's psychological, physical, social, and sexual emancipation—the goals of feminists in the twentieth century as well as the nineteenth" (p.231). Therefore, the work follows the feminist critical tradition from a century ago, which highlights the enormous restrictions imposed on women.

Chopin establishes an existing tension between Edna and her husband's relationship from the beginning of the novel. It begins with Edna spending time at the beach with a young man Robert. Mr. Pontellier's lack of interest in his wife's activities and his separate trips to play billiards indicate that they both live separate lives. Mr. Pontellier expects Edna to perform the role of a mother to his children while ignoring her interests and desires. "She couldn't tell why she was crying. Such experiences as the foregoing were not uncommon in her married life" (Chopin, ch. III, p. 11). Chopin's depiction of Edna's personality in the winter pajamas scene in the beginning of the novel lends an insight into Edna's views on self-reliance and independence. Edna, unlike Adele, is certain that her children's summer requirements are sufficient and is not interested in forecasting their winter demands, a practical tendency that would later prompt Léonce to doubt Edna's dedication to her children because she does not exhibit panic and concern regarding their health and comfort. Edna clearly does not pay attention to her husband's warnings that their child is sick, "If it wasn't a mother's place to look after children, whose on earth was it?" (Chopin, ch. III, p. 10) but she insists that he is not in pain. Léonce is a patriarchal man who believes that a woman has a set of responsibilities, therefore Edna's behavior is unacceptable to him because she does not represent the ideal cult of womanhood. Edna does not place her children at the center of her life, in contrast to the patriarchal ideal of a mother-woman who sees motherhood as the pinnacle of her existence, therefore; her husband sees Edna as someone who lives in an emotional, fictitious universe and is unconcerned about reality because she lacks the sense of responsibility to her children and husband that is traditionally associated with true womanhood. When her children visit their grandparents, she, for example, does not miss them, "Their absence was a sort of relief,...It seemed to free her of a responsibility, which she had blindly assumed, and for which Fate had not fitted her" (Chopin, ch. VII, p. 36). Although Edna adores her children, she also recognizes that she isn't made out to be a selfless mother willing to give up her identity for them.

Chopin employs certain images as tools to comprehend Edna's rebelliousness. It's evident that rebelling is in her nature, whether it's against her church and family as a young girl by marrying a Catholic or against society as an adult. For example, near the beginning of the novel, the detained parrot represents Edna's life, as she, like the caged parrot, is trapped in matrimonial bondage. The image of a caged bird reminisces Chopin's previous short story "Emancipation: A Life Fable," a fable about a caged bird who accidentally experiences freedom. The cage represents the patriarchal world and the bird in it- a woman. This imagery is carried on in *The Awakening* where Edna feels trapped in her house like the bird is in its cage. Edna believes that, just as Léonce owns the parrot, he also owns her, making her his property. Indeed, Léonce, as a true patriarchal man, believes that he must supervise Edna as an object that he owns and looks "at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property" (Chopin, ch. I, p. 3). As Mizic (2015) explains "Bird imagery is a tool that Chopin uses to show Edna's dissatisfaction with the tenets of the cult of True Womanhood" (p.18) Edna realizes that her relationship with her husband is one of inequality because she realizes that her husband looks at her as his "valuable piece of property" rather than an individual. This sense of powerlessness in an unequal relationship causes her to question the constraints imposed by her marriage and, as a result, she rebels.

Chopin also employs the imagery of the sea to convey Edna's rebellious spirit. It is while she is at the sea, she feels that "The voice of the sea speaks to the soul" (Chopin, ch. VI, p. 26) and she realizes that her existence encompasses more than simply the bonds of marriage, which are primarily focused with fulfilling her husband and children's needs. Beyond these roles, there was more of herself and her desires to find. She initially declines Robert Lebrun's invitation to the water, but then changes her mind and opts for a swim in the sea. Edna experiences new feelings as she ventures into the sea. As Chopin puts it "Mrs. Pontellier was beginning to realize her position in the universe as a human being, and to recognize her relations as an individual to the world within and about her" (Chopin, ch. VI, p. 25). Therefore, in *The Awakening*, the sea is a metaphor for liberation, since it contrasts with Edna's household imprisonment. Edna learns to

swim and enjoys speculating in the open sea, and she feels “like the little tottering, stumbling, clutching child, who of a sudden realizes its powers, and walks for the first time alone, with over-confidence” (Chopin, ch. X, p. 52). This image of Edna walking like a child represents her progress toward freedom. As she controls her body, the act of swimming becomes a metaphor for the accumulation of her strength and realization of her own capacity. For Edna:

A feeling of exultation overtook her, as if some power of significant import had been given her to control the working of her body and her soul. She grew daring and reckless, overestimating her strength. She wanted to swim far out, where no woman had swum before. (Chopin, ch. X, p. 53).

This sudden awareness of her own body and soul gives Edna a sense of freedom. As swimming makes Edna a more challenging and self-assessing individual; it also reinforces her understanding of her own supremacy because she is in control of her movements. In fact, it becomes Edna’s consolidation “of self-ownership, physical, mental and spiritual, which in turn triggers two fundamental insights that determine her progression from disengaged wife to autonomous subject: in control of her body, she becomes aware of its potential for pleasure and learns to claim her right to self-determination” (Heilmann, 2008, p.87). In the water, Edna recognizes her own strengths and feels liberated to break free of the constraints of patriarchal responsibilities.

Edna also encounters a number of people that inspire her rebellion and quest for self-awareness. Adele Ratignolle, Edna’s closest friend, is one of them, and Chopin portrays her as a “faultless Madonna” and an exemplary “true woman.” However, when Chopin describes Adele, it is clear that she is satirizing the expected traits of a “true woman,” “Madame Ratignolle had been married 7 years. About every two years she had a baby. At that time, she had three babies, and was beginning to think of a fourth one” (Chopin, ch. IV, pp. 16-17). Despite the fact that they both live in a Creole society, their perspectives are vastly different. Adele, for example, embodies the concept of a perfect mother woman who “idolized their children,” “worshipped their husbands,” and, “esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angel” (Chopin, ch. III, pp. 14-15). Edna Pontellier, on the other hand, is the novel’s protagonist who is always considering breaking away from the established institutions such as marriage, church, and society. The true woman Adele, may stand out as she receives adulation for carrying out her domestic responsibilities in the family and community, but Edna resists patriarchal conventions and forges her own path. Adele’s idealized family image gives Edna “a sense that she could not happily continue in the role of wife and mother; a sense of stasis and discontent above all else” (Pozorski & Martine, 2018, p. 1). Although they were friends, with Adele functioning as Edna’s mother figure, these two women are diametrically opposed, as indicated by their disagreement over their roles as self-sacrificing mothers. Adele feels that a mother must sacrifice her life for her children, to which Edna responds that she “would never sacrifice herself for her children” (Chopin, ch. XVI, p. 90), and that she would give “the unessential” such as wealth but not herself, and that she will determine how much of herself she will give to others including her children. Edna’s skepticism about expectations from a mother is demonstrated in the subsequent exchange between the two ‘I don’t know what you would call the essential, or what you mean by unessential’, said Madame Ratignolle, cheerfully; ‘but a woman who would give her life for her children could do no more than that—your Bible tells you so. I’m sure I couldn’t do more than that’. ‘Oh, yes you could!’ laughed Edna (Chopin, ch. XVI, pp. 90-91). Edna is certainly aware that a woman is capable of much more than only being a mother. Edna also notices Adele’s inability to comprehend that a mother woman might defy social rules and moralities that limit her. This argument emphasizes the basic difference between the two: Adele is content being a mother and wife. Edna, on the other hand, refuses to be seen as a person whose value is determined by her ability to bring happiness to her husband and children. In fact, she has “pity for that colorless existence which never uplifted its possessor beyond the region of blind contentment” (Chopin, ch. XVIII, p. 107). Edna’s discomfort with her status as a wife and mother is evident in this remark; she yearns for a womanhood separate from her children and from patriarchal norms. Finally, when Edna learns that Adele embodies everything she doesn’t want to be, this dialogue serves as a catalyst for her awakening and ultimate rebellion.

Mademoiselle Reisz, in contrast to the true woman figure Adele, is the other significant female character whose unreserved lifestyle and autonomy not only astounds but also inspires Edna. She is an unmarried pianist who has lived life unconventionally and on her own terms. Chopin utilizes her character to highlight the idea that in the nineteenth century, a woman might either be an artist or a wife. It seemed impossible for a woman to have it all. According to Papke there are only two categories of women in Edna’s society: “Women either become wives and mothers ... or exiles” (Papke, 1990, p.39). Mademoiselle Reisz leads an exiled life of a recluse, shunned by the society as an eccentric “no longer young, who had quarreled with almost everyone, owing to a temper which was self-assertive and a disposition to trample on the rights of others” (Chopin, ch. IX, p. 48). Elizabeth Fox-Genovese (1994) while commenting on Mademoiselle Reisz’s emancipation contends that “for the possibility of female independence her life may be austere and frugal, but it is her own”(p. 260). So, for the sake of her art, she has sacrificed her sexuality, as she later cautions Edna: “The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong wings. It is a sad spectacle to see the weaklings bruised, exhausted, fluttering back to earth” (Chopin, ch. XXVII, p. 118). Edna is drawn to Mademoiselle Reisz’s personality because, unlike Adele, she has created an identity for herself as an artist. When Edna hears her play music, she feels a renewed sense of isolation, her emotions relax, and a slew of images of freedom and solitude come to mind:

When she heard it there came before her imagination the figure of a man standing beside a desolate rock on the seashore. He was naked. His attitude was one of hopeless resignation as he looked toward a distant bird winging its flight away from him. (Chopin, Ch. IX, p. 49)

As Edna imagines the bird flying far away, this quote reveals her longing for liberation and expectancy. The bird's representation is analogous to Edna's liberation; unfortunately, no one is willing to assist her in breaking the rules. It also reveals how music stimulates her creative mind. Mademoiselle Reisz notices Edna's agitation, even tears, and realizes that music provides her with a sense of solitude, which is necessary for her to seek self-expression through art. Mademoiselle Reisz, obviously, plays a big role in Edna's artistic understanding and freedom. Edna is inspired to be a woman in her own right by Mademoiselle Reisz, who encourages her to recognize her own needs. When Edna comes to see her and tells her she wants to be an artist, Mademoiselle Reisz is astounded and warns, "To be an artist includes much; one must possess many gifts--absolute gifts--....And, moreover, to succeed, the artist must possess the courageous soul" (Chopin, ch. XXI, p. 120). Edna's friendship with Mademoiselle Reisz not only inspires her to be an artist, but it also teaches her how to overcome the limitations imposed by society on women and prepares her for more exposure to the masculine public arena. Mademoiselle Reisz embodies the image of a free woman artist for Edna finds inspiration in Mademoiselle Reisz's talent and decides to pursue painting.

As the summer draws to a close, Edna returns to New Orleans with her family; the music and swimming have led to her feminist awakening, and she recognizes the connection between mind, body, and soul. Edna openly resists her husband by not attending the Tuesday get-togethers with the guests. Her defiance catches Leonce off guard, resulting in an argument. Edna stomps on her ring and throws it away in a fit of rage; in doing so, Edna vows open rebellion against patriarchy, subjugation, and objectification of women. Edna's decision to throw away her wedding ring represents her liberation from "burdensome and disheartening" role of a wife. Edna's defiance has a deeper significance according to Jahan (2017) "She is the most rebellious when she, in a fit of dissatisfaction of her marriage, flings her wedding ring upon the carpet and attempts to crush it.....Edna's inability to crush the wedding ring, prophecies that it would not be easy for her to be liberated from the shackles of the patriarchal codes of conduct. But her fingers without wedding ring, renders her to paint, make drawings, and earn her living independently without any obstruction that impedes or is burdensome for her" (p.67). Edna becomes melancholic after this experience and perceives her surroundings to be hostile and unpleasant. She craves independence, so she creates a personal space in the attic for herself, which she uses as a studio where she "dabbles" in her artistic talent. Edna becomes obsessed with painting as a way to escape domestic and familial responsibilities, but her husband warns her against "letting the family go to the devil" (Chopin, ch. XIX, p. 109). Unfortunately, Leonce misdiagnoses Edna's desire for her own space and identity as illness. Leonce dismisses her as insane and mentally unstable, reflecting a typical patriarchal mindset; he tells the doctor that "she has some sort of notion in her head concerning the eternal rights of women," (Chopin, ch. XXII, p. 124) which further explains Leonce's refusal to accept that his wife has transformed into a new woman with her own identity.

Furthermore, Edna's excuse for not going to her sister's wedding was because she feels "a wedding is one of the most lamentable spectacles on earth" (Chopin, ch. XXII, p. 126) is an act of rebellion in that it defines marriage as a consolation event that imprisons women and prevents them from achieving their own freedom. Therefore, Edna remains at home, content in her solitude, "she breathed a big, genuine sigh of relief. A feeling that was unfamiliar but very delicious came over her" (Chopin, ch. XXII, p. 137). In response to Edna's refusal to attend the wedding, her father accuses Leonce of not knowing how to manage a wife. By declining to attend her sister's wedding, Edna certainly disturbs the pillars of patriarchy and dominance in her family.

Edna's rebellion progresses to independence and liberty when she chooses to move into "a little four-room house around the corner" from her husband's house with a single servant; she states, "I know I shall like it, like the feeling of freedom and independence" (Chopin, ch. XXVI, p. 151). By creating an individual space for herself, Edna seeks further autonomy and individuality. Edna discusses this with Mademoiselle Reisz who asks her "What does your husband say?" "I have not told him yet, I only thought of it this morning. He will think I am demented, no doubt" (Chopin, ch. XXVI, p. 152). Nevertheless, Edna leaves the house without waiting for her husband to respond. Her new home is known as "the pigeon house" because of its modest size, but it has made Edna fully conscious of experiencing life in a new perspective, where she appreciates her experiences: "The pigeon house pleased her. It quickly took on the intimate character of a home, while she imbued it with a charm that radiated like a warm glow" (Chopin, ch. XXXII, p. 180).

Furthermore, Edna's relationships with Robert and Arobin also reform her personality to a newly awakened individual. Through these relationships, Edna finds an expression to rebel against patriarchal presumptions that a "good woman" is expected to find sex frightening and disgusting" (Tyson, 2014, p.86). Edna's fixation with Robert is a projection of an unmet sexual urge that she masks behind romance. Robert is delighted to play his part in this romance. The ideal love relationship with Robert may have satisfied Edna's emotional and passionate longings, but it could not meet her physical needs owing to Robert's absence. She attends horse races and meets Alcee Arobin, a philanderer with whom she had sexual experiences as "a flaming torch" (Chopin, ch. XXVII, p. 159), and with whom her "sensuality,... unfolded under his delicate sense of her nature's requirements like a torpid, torrid, sensitive blossom" (Chopin, ch. XXX, p. 200). Edna has defied her husband's image of her as "a valuable piece of personal property" by first deciding to be an artist and then by exploring her sexuality.

Edna's decision to visit Adele during her childbirth reveals Adele as a true mother woman who, while concerned for Edna, cannot comprehend Edna's independence and advises her to be more cautious, "You seem to act like without a certain amount of reflection which is necessary in this life. That is the reason I want to say you mustn't mind if I advise you to be a little careful while you are living here alone" (Chopin, ch. XXXIII, p. 184). She also reminds Edna about her children and how her needs and aspirations may have an impact on everyone around her. This conversation is significant because Adele's words have an impact on Edna, who is torn between her emotions. She realizes that in her pursuit of freedom and individuality, she will "trample upon the little lives" of her children. It further demonstrates the pervasiveness of patriarchy and the power it wields over women. It becomes clear to Edna that in order to oppose patriarchal norms, she requires support, which she does not receive from even Adele, let alone the society. Despite the fact that Edna has always rejected patriarchy, whether in opposing her father by marrying a catholic or by fleeing an unequal marriage, she realizes that it is her children that "sought to drag her into their soul's enslavement" (Chopin, ch. XXXIX, p. 219). According to Schweitzer (1990), "The children are a constant reminder for the confinement of her marriage to Edna," (p.163) they become an impediment to Edna's quest for self-awareness as she realizes that the essence of motherhood in her is forcing her to "sacrifice herself for her children" (Chopin, ch. XVI, p. 90). Edna also realizes that in a patriarchal culture, women are denied the opportunity to assert their sexuality or establish their individuality; a woman's role is to dedicate her life to her family and be a devoted wife and mother. This standard is the primary motivator for Edna's suicide.

After removing the "unpleasant, pricking clothing," she walks into the sea for the first time. "It seemed strange and dreadful to stand naked under the sky!" Edna exclaims "How delicious!" (Chopin, ch. XXXIX, p. 220). She feels like a new born individual with unique perspective on the world and freedom, and she eventually takes control of her existence. As Gilbert (1983) states, Edna is a heroine "journeying not just toward rebirth but toward a regenerative and revisionary genre, a genre that intends to propose new realities for women by providing new mythic paradigms through which women's lives can be understood" (p. 59). As Edna swims, she thinks about her husband and children, but then realizes that they no longer inhabit her body. Edna does not return to the shore and instead chooses to take her life as a final act of rebellion in order to not "sacrifice herself" (Chopin, ch. XVI, p. 88). Her overarching goal is to find meaning in her life and to live it on her own terms as she breaks the society's paradigms of the "true woman." Even though Edna's act of terminating her life is tragic, it is the final and ultimate triumphal declaration of her feminist awakening and her ultimate revolt against masculine subjugation and patriarchal oppression. Even her death is her decision, as she depicts the scene of her own death and makes it apparent to the world, as an artist would.

Gray (2004) considers Edna's death "as an escape from the oppressive ideology of patriarchy which prevents women from realizing their own-selves. Edna finds death as the only act to be free because she realizes that death will free her from the control of others" (p. 54). Edna's death, according to Rula Quawas (2009), is the apex of her unyielding resolve and courage to live as an adult woman, and that in doing so, is "An identity discovered, an attempt made to establish it, and a willingness to die instead of adapting it to traditional molds, bear witness to heroic courage" (Quawas 2009, p. 492). Thus, Edna sees suicide as the ultimate act of patriarchal oppressive resistance because it allows her to break free from patriarchal society's expectations on women. As a result, her death is a celebration of her rebellious spirit.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, Edna's rebellion is defined by her relationships with various men and women, her responsiveness to her creative impulses, and her sexual revelation. Despite being influenced by two mother figures, she rejects both the perfect mother-women, Madame Ratignolle, and the independent woman, Mademoiselle Reisz, as role models. Through her relationships with Leonce, Robert, and Arobin, she comes to perceive herself as a human being with needs and desires who is capable of breaking free from patriarchal oppression, which hinders women from claiming their own independence and having self-esteem. In truth, she seeks autonomy and independence from patriarchy and therefore rebels by uniting her spirit, intellect, and body, as well as by exercising her creative tendencies. Edna takes up swimming as a means of releasing her spirit. In the water, Edna gains control and awareness of her sexual and in painting her artistic potentials, thereby, rejecting the norms of the true woman and transforming herself into a new woman and, more importantly, an individual. Edna's sexual awakening motivates her struggle against patriarchy. Edna claimed for herself the right to choose sexual partners outside of her marriage by seizing the right to give or withhold her body as she pleased. These become a mechanism by which Edna achieves freedom and internal congruence. Hence, Edna emerges as a new woman who defies patriarchal conventions that allow men to transgress in marriage but not women. As a result, Edna's rebellion unites her soul (individuality), body (sexuality), and mind (creativity), resulting in her liberation from marital oppression. However, once free, Edna begins to see the barriers patriarchy places in the way of a woman carving out her own space in the masculine world. Edna commits suicide as the ultimate expression of her freedom and individuality after realizing that she can't be both an artist and a mother at the same time. It is evident that Chopin does not condemn Edna's rebellion in proclaiming her sexuality and seeking independence from patriarchy through the consolidation of her mind, body, and spirit, but rather paints her as the new woman. As Schaefer (2017) observes, "Edna's independence anticipates the modern woman who would emerge decades later with suffrage. Hence, Chopin's novel not only converses with the feminist addresses that came to New Orleans with Susan B. Anthony in

1880s and 1890s, but also foresees the questions of female subjectivity that will arise once suffrage is granted and women form identities and roles outside the home” (p.4).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Arezki, K., & Katia, M. (2013). American women of the colonial period and of the nineteenth century city: In Judith Sargent Murray's on the equality of sexes, Edith Wharton's Roman fever and Hamlin Garland's mrs. Ripley's trip. *Multilinguales*, (2):171-182. Retrieved March, 2, 2022 from: <https://doi.org/10.4000/multilinguales.2724>
- [2] Chopin, K. (1992). *The Awakening*. London: David Campbell Publishers Ltd.
- [3] Clark, Z. (2008). The bird that came out of the cage: A Foucauldian feminist approach to Kate Chopin's the awakening. *Journal of Cultural Research*, 12, (4):335-347 Retrieved June, 14, 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14797580802553999>
- [4] Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia Copyright (c) 1994, 1995 Compton's New Media, Inc. (Encyclopedia) Retrieved June, 17, 2022, from <http://www.wic.org/misc/history.htm>
- [5] Cruea, S. M. (2005). Changing ideals of womanhood during the nineteenth-century woman movement. *The American Transcendental Quarterly*, 19:187-204 Retrieved June, 16, 2022 from [https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/gsw\\_pub/1?utm\\_source=scholarworks.bgsu.edu%2Fgsw\\_pub%2F1&utm\\_medium=PDF&utm\\_campaign=PDFCoverPages](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/gsw_pub/1?utm_source=scholarworks.bgsu.edu%2Fgsw_pub%2F1&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages)
- [6] Elz, A. E. (2003). "The awakening" and "A lost lady": Flying with broken wings and raked feathers. *The Southern Literary Journal*, 35(2):13–27. Retrieved June, 14, 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078364>
- [7] Ezeala, M., & Rudaityte, R. (2020). Commodification and objectification of women in Kate Chopin's the awakening and the golden notebook by Doris Lessing: New French feminism's critique. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 11(5):25-31
- [8] Retrieved July, 20, 2021 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v.11n.5p.25>
- [9] Fox-Genovese, E. (1994). Progression and regression in Edna Pontellier. In Margo Culley (Ed.), *The awakening: An authoritative text, biographical and historical contexts, critic*, 257-263. New York: Norton.
- [10] Gilbert, S. M. (1983). The second coming of Aphrodite: Kate Chopin's fantasy of desire. *The Kenyon Review, New Series*, 5(3):42-66 Retrieved February, 2, 2021 from: [www.jstor.org/stable/4335384](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4335384)
- [11] Gray, J. B. (2004). The escape of the "sea": Ideology and "the awakening." *The Southern Literary Journal*, 37(1): 53–73. Retrieved April, 15, 2022 from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20078397>
- [12] Heilmann, A. (2008). The awakening and new woman fiction. In J. Beer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kate Chopin* (Cambridge Companions to Literature, pp. 87-104). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CCOL9780521883443.007
- [13] Jahan, M. (2017). Expressive individualism in the nineteenth century patriarchal creole society: A study of the portrayal of Edna Pontellier in Kate Chopin's the awakening. *International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL)*, 7(2): 65-74
- [14] Levine, R.S. (1982). Circadian rhythms and rebellion in Kate Chopin's the awakening'. *Studies in American Fiction*, 10(1): 71-81.
- [15] Mizic, J. (2015). *19th century American women's literature, the importance of symbolic meanings in Kate Chopin's the awakening*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Washington, Washington, USA. Retrieved February, 2, 2021 from [https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/33518/Mizic\\_washington\\_02500\\_14462.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/33518/Mizic_washington_02500_14462.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- [16] Papke, M. E. (1990). *Verging on the abyss: The social fiction of Kate Chopin and Edith Wharton*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- [17] Pozorski, A. (2018). *A portrait of the lady in modern American literature: Poor little rich girl*. UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- [18] Quawas, R. (2009). Transgression and individual rebellion: Edna Pontellier's life of apprenticeship in Kate Chopin's the awakening. *Dirasat: Human and Social Sciences*, 36(2):481-495.
- [19] Rossi, A. D. (2015). The gothic in Kate Chopin. In K. Donoghue, & H. Ostman (Eds.). *Kate Chopin in context: New approaches*, 65-82. New York, Palgrave Macmillan.
- [20] Schaefer, M. L. (2017). *Her Story: Female Artists' Resistance in the Awakening, Corregidora, and the Dew Breaker*. [Unpublished master's thesis]. United States: Indiana University. Retrieved June, 24, 2022 from [https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/14017/Schaefer\\_HERstory.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/14017/Schaefer_HERstory.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)
- [21] Schweitzer, I. (1990). Maternal discourse and the romance of self-possession in Kate Chopin's the awakening. *Boundary 2*, 17 (1): 158–86. Retrieved June, 17, 2022 from <https://doi.org/10.2307/303221>
- [22] Seyersted, P. (1969). *Kate Chopin: a critical biography*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press.
- [23] Singh, A., & Kumar, N. (2022). Questionable quest of Edna in the awakening by Kate Chopin. *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, 13(2), 173-181.
- [24] Sprinkle, R. (1998). *Kate Chopin's the Awakening: A Critical Reception*. United States Bowling Green State University, Ohio. [sprinkle@glasscity.net](mailto:sprinkle@glasscity.net)
- [25] Thornton, L. (1980). The awakening: A political romance. *American Literature*, 52(1), 50–66. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2925187>
- [26] Toth, E. (1991). Kate Chopin's the awakening as feminist criticism. *Southern Studies* 2.3-4: 231-241. Rpt. in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. J. Witalec. Vol. 127. Detroit: Gale, 2002. Literature Resource Center. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. Retrieved June, 18, 2022 from <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CH1420046577&v=2.1&u=malv39703&it=r&p=LitRC&sw=w>
- [27] Tyson, L. (2014). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. London and New York. Routledge.
- [28] Urgo, J. R. (1987). A prologue to rebellion: "The awakening" and the habit of self-expression. *The Southern Literary Journal*, 20(1), 22–32. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20077844>
- [29] Welter, B. (1966). The cult of true womanhood: 1820-1860. *American Quarterly*, 18(2), 151–174. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2711179>

- [30] Wenhui, H. (2011) Space and female subjectivity in Kate Chopin's the awakening. *Comparative Literature: East and West*, 14(1), 86-96. Retrieved February, 3, 2021 from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/25723618.2011.12015560?scroll=top&needAccess=true>



**Farhadiba H. Khan** was born on June 11, 1971 in Mumbai, India. She earned her bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from Mumbai University in 1992. In 1994, she earned her master's degree in English Literature from Mumbai University. In 2003, she completed her doctorate from Mumbai University in 19<sup>th</sup> century British novelist Charlotte Bronte's novels.

In Jordan and Saudi Arabia, she has worked at both private and governmental universities: Irbid Private University, Irbid, Jordan; Assistant Professor of English Literature, 2003-2004. Al-Ehssa Girls' College, Al-Ehssa, Saudi Arabia; 2004-2005. Assistant Professor, English Literature. Irbid Private University, Irbid, Jordan; 2005-2008, Assistant Professor of English Literature. Tafila Technical University, Tafila, Jordan; 2008-2010; Assistant Professor, English Literature. 2010-2011: Al-Ghad Medical Science Colleges, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Assistant Professor, Supervisor/Asst. Head English Unit. She has worked as an Assistant Professor of English Literature at Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University's Department of English Language and Literature, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, since 2011.

Dr. Khan, is a member of APETAU Association.

# Language Learning With Neurolinguistic Programming: An Integrative Review

Edhy Rustan

IAIN Palopo, Palopo, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

**Abstract**—The neurolinguistic programming (NLP) approach is being widely applied in learning. However, there are no review articles related to the application of NLP in language learning. This review aims to present a synthesis of literature on the effectiveness of NLP application in language learning in terms of methods, learning aspects, changes in language skills, and student learning psychology. An integrative review was conducted using five databases, namely, EBSCO, Wiley, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, and JSTOR. Keywords were used to search for and collect data in English related to language learning using the NLP approach published from 2011 to 2021. Based on the 15 articles reviewed, the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (VAK) learning method is most often applied in language learning. Most teachers use NLP in language learning in speaking and writing skills. Applying the NLP method in language learning can improve students' language skills and change students' psychological learning in a positive direction

**Index Terms**—language learning, learning method, neurolinguistic programming, VAK, integrative review

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is complex. Continuous practice is needed to be proficient in a language, with incredible productive skills such as speaking and writing (Karami & Bowles, 2019; Petersen et al., 2020). However, the problem often is that the learning process becomes boring, so students give up when they face difficulties in learning the language (Almusharraf & Bailey, 2021; Kim & Pae, 2018; Li, 2021; Ranjan et al., 2021). Especially acquiring a second language involves cultural differences, linguistics, and learning difficulties (Genç et al., 2016; Li, 2021). Therefore, an approach that teachers can implement is needed.

One of the learning methods used is neurolinguistic programming (NLP). NLP comes from the words neuro, linguistics, and programming, and is a practical approach in directing human thinking patterns, feelings, and actions through communication (Rustan & Hasriani, 2020). Bandler and Grinder (1979) emphasize modeling as the core process that results in the application of NLP through the investigation of language patterns, behavior, thought sequences, and internal images of the exponents of selected abilities. NLP emphasizes the potential for self-determination by overcoming learned limitations of oneself.

The NLP approach was initially used in the health sector for a family approach. The results of a review conducted by Sturt et al. (2012) showed that the NLP approach in the health sector had a positive impact. However, over time, NLP has been used for the learning process in the work environment (Bashir & Ghani, 2012; Kotera et al., 2019).

Based on our preliminary study, there are no review articles related to the application of NLP in language learning. Existing reviews examine psychological changes in the application of NLP and the application of NLP in the health sector (Sturt et al., 2012). Therefore, this paper presents a literature synthesis with a research question of how practical the NLP approach is in language learning. Researchers are interested in examining aspects of language learning, language learning methods based on NLP, describing language acquisition, psychological changes in students during learning, and other outcomes that can be obtained from the NLP approach. This study's results provide evidence of language learning, especially for teachers, in educating students using NLP.

## II. METHOD

### A. Study Design

This study presents a synthesis through an integrative review of the primary literature that examines language learning using the NLP approach. The review's focus on language learning with the NLP approach was chosen because it relates to the author's position as a practitioner in language learning and neurolinguistics. An integrative review was chosen to analyze all judgments based on the specified focus. In addition, this method was selected to fill the gaps in language learning research studies at all levels of education with the NLP approach.

### B. Study Criteria

This review covers the study of language learning with a neurolinguistic approach at all levels of education. It is intended to maximize the quality of the resulting judgment. The literature studied was limited to writings in English. Studies from books, reviews, or critical discussion papers were excluded.

### C. Study Search and Selection Strategy

A literature search was conducted using databases EBSCO, Wiley, ProQuest, ScienceDirect, and JSTOR from January 1, 2011 to July 31, 2021. Articles were searched using the keywords “Language learning OR language teaching OR writing OR reading OR listening OR speaking” AND “neurolinguistic programming OR neuro-linguistic programming” AND “language acquisition OR language ability OR language development OR second language acquisition OR foreign language.” A total of 3057 references were found (published in 2011–2021). Duplicate articles from the search results were then removed.

In selecting the studies, the researcher was assisted by two independent reviewers (HSR and SA) to screen the titles and abstracts of relevant articles identified from the database. The full text of the relevant articles was then retrieved to assess their inclusion. The reviewers’ questions were resolved through a joint researcher consensus (ER) process.

### D. Data Extraction

In this review, a data extraction tool was designed to guide information from records according to the purpose of the evaluation. The data extracted in each inclusive study included the author, year, country, study design, research objectives, aspects of language learning, NLP approach method used, language acquisition obtained by students, psychological changes of students during learning, and other outcomes resulting from each of these studies.

## III. RESULT

### A. Study Characteristics

Of the 3,057 studies identified, 15 articles met the criteria. The results of the study selection can be seen in Figure 1. Of the 15 articles, eight studies had a quasi-experimental design with a control group (Alamdar & Karbalaei, 2015; Alroudhan, 2018; Caballero & Rosado, 2018; Farahani, 2018; Fidinillah, 2018; Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017; Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015; Rumawan & Suharti, 2018), three studies had a one-group pretest–posttest design (Hamid & Marzieh, 2017; Pratama et al., 2019; Vaezi & Shahroosvand, 2015), three studies had a mixed method design (Dash & Rahaman, 2021; Rustan, 2017; Wikanengsih, 2013), and one study used a qualitative method (Keezhatta, 2019).

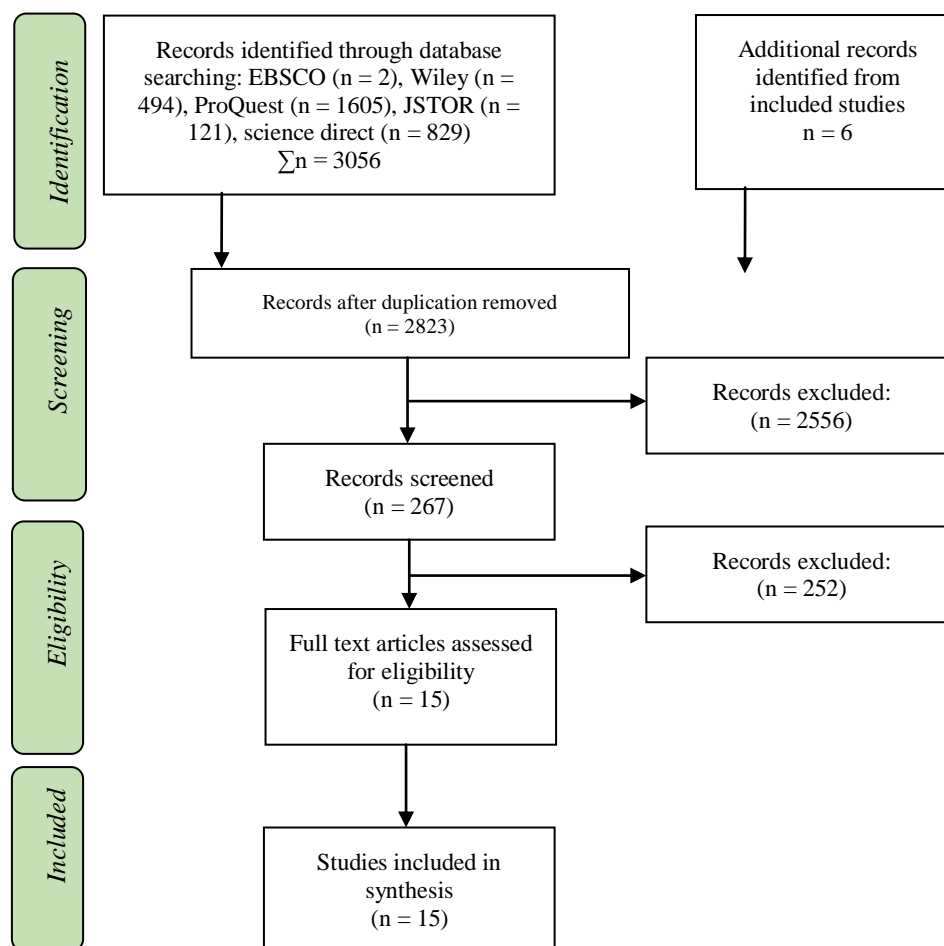


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram



The 15 studies were conducted in diverse countries with varied samples from middle school to higher education. Study characteristics can be seen in Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1.  
STUDY CHARACTERISTICS

No.	Author, year	Country	Design	Sample
1.	Alroudhan, 2018	Saudi Arabia	Experiment with a control group	119 people consisting of six classes of grade one second-stage students (aged 15–16 years) at 47 public schools for girls in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
2.	Farahani, 2018	Iran	Experiment with a control group	60 undergraduate students majoring in medical science were divided into the control and experimental groups; there were 26 males and 34 females
3.	Dash & Rahaman, 2021	India	Mixed method	19 high-school students
4.	Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017	Iran	Experiment with a control group	30 EFL students
5.	Keezhatta, 2019	India	Qualitative	20 English teachers
6.	Fidinillah, 2018	Indonesia	Experiment with a control group	60 Ibtidaiyah Madrasa students
7.	Rustan, 2017	Indonesia	Development of learning model with mixed method	96 high-school students
8.	Wikanengsih, 2013	Indonesia	Mixed method	80 middle-school students
9.	Pratama et al., 2019	Indonesia	One-group pretest–posttest	The study was conducted on 30 students of class X who studied English in the context of EFL
10.	Rumawan & Suharti, 2018	Indonesia	Quasi-experiment non-equivalent control group	64 middle-school students were divided into the control and experimental groups
11.	Caballero & Rosado, 2018	Colombia	Quasi-experiment non-equivalent control group	43 students of EFL S1 language faculty
12.	Hamid & Marzieh, 2017	Iran	Pretest–posttest	30 EFL teachers
13.	Alamdard & Karbalaei, 2015	Iran	Experiment with a control group	60 EFL secondary students in Iran
14.	Vaezi & Reza Shahroosvand, 2015	Iran	Pretest–posttest	Fifty-two Iranian EFL students studying English
15.	Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015	Iran	Experiment with a control group	60 Iranian middle-school students

\*EFL, English as a foreign language

TABLE 2.  
OBJECTIVES, LEARNING ASPECTS, MODELS, AND RESULTS

No.	Author	Objectives	Aspects of language learning and models used	Results
1.	Alroudhan, 2018	1. To find out if NLP is an efficient tool for language learning. 2. What is the possible role of NLP in learning English?	Examine all aspects of learning English by applying the linking criteria coaching technique in teaching EFL, where the coach first needs to find out what is essential to students and then give them what they want according to teacher criteria	1. NLP provides techniques and solutions to problems and allows teachers to form flexible responses to specific problems. 2. NLP coaching was shown to affect EFL learning significantly. 3. This study also revealed that using NLP can increase students' motivation levels and make the class less demanding on the teacher.
2.	Farahani, 2018	What is the effect of applying NLP techniques on Iranian undergraduate EFL learners' reading comprehension in ESP courses?	Assessing aspects of reading comprehension. The steps are based on the main pillars of NLP (outcome, rapport, sensory acuity, and flexibility)	The application of NLP techniques can have a significant impact on reading comprehension.
3.	Dash & Rahaman, 2021	1. To evaluate the effectiveness of NLP techniques on ELT/ESL teachers and students 2. To observe whether the NLP technique helps improve the efficacy of ESL acquisition	Assessing overall language learning by applying desuggestopedia	Application of desuggestopedia can increase students' interest, motivation, and learning outcomes.
4.	Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017	To find out the impact of applying NLP (accelerated learning) on EFL students' listening comprehension	Assessing listening comprehension with the accelerated learning strategy	1. This study shows that accelerated learning is more dynamic and significantly affects listening

		ability		comprehension. 2. Statistically, the effect of accelerated learning on the listening comprehension of VAK learners was 87%, 93%, and 85%, respectively.
5.	Keezhatta, 2019	To explore the feasibility of NLP in teaching English (ELT)	All aspects of learning English using the method of planting, modeling, VAK, and mind maps	1. NLP facilitates communication and encourages English learners. 2. This study strongly recommends NLP as an effective tool for developing teacher–student relationships and promoting an interactive learning environment.
6.	Fidinillah, 2018	To determine the effect of the NLP method on students' English-speaking skills at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Sa'adatuddarain 2, South Tangerang	Assessing English-speaking skills The method used is not described	The NLP method positively and significantly impacts students' English-speaking skills compared to conventional methods.
7.	Rustan, 2017	To know the creative writing learning model needed, the design and the ideal creative writing learning model, and the feasibility of an NLP-based creative writing learning model	Writing skills	1. Analysis results of the needs of students and teachers show the necessity of development of a creative writing learning model based on NLP. 2. The resulting learning model includes focus, syntax, social systems, reaction principles, supporting tools, and learning impacts. 3. The feasibility of the model by experts was declared valid.
8.	Wikanengsih, 2013	To describe the improvement of students' writing skills and character after the character-oriented NLP learning model is implemented	Writing skills using information-processing models and behavioral models	Students' writing skills improved. There was also an increase in positive characters in being communicative, tolerant, hardworking, and creative.
9.	Pratama et al., 2019	To find out whether there is an increase in self-efficacy and writing skills of recounting text after students are taught with NLP techniques and to find out what aspects of writing have the most significant increase	Writing skills No explanation of the NLP technique used	1. The NLP technique helps students to enjoy the teaching and learning process and even encourages them to continue to practice writing skills to get better results day after day. 2. The writing aspect that increased significantly was vocabulary, but every other aspect also increased (content, organization, language use, mechanics).
10.	Rumawan & Suharti, 2018	To determine the effect of the NLP technique on the writing skills of eighth-graders of middle Perintis 1 Sepatan	Narrative text writing skills, but methods were not explained	The approach used had a significant effect applying the NLP technique on writing narrative texts of VIII graders of Perintis 1 Junior High School. Sepatan.
11.	Caballero & Rosado, 2018	To explore how NLP techniques improve the pronunciation of “/ed/” regular verbs of Colombian EFL speakers	Speaking skills concerning the VAK learning method	1. Teachers' use of NLP techniques in their classrooms has a positive impact on students' pronunciation of past regular verb endings. 2. The use of NLP as an instructional tool for pronunciation has a positive impact on students' motivation because the strategy is exciting and fun.
12.	Hamid & Marzieh, 2017	To determine the effect of using NLP techniques on reflective teaching of EFL	General English teaching	NLP significantly improves EFL teachers' reflective teaching.
13.	Alamdard & Karbalaie, 2015	To measure the use of NLP in teaching English and the practices and techniques that ELT practitioners can use in the ELT classroom	All aspects of language learning with the VAK learning method	1. NLP has no significant effect on language anxiety for the experimental group, but NLP can help the experimental group increase their self-esteem. The perception of the experimental group is entirely positive. 2. The second-language acquisition proficiency obtained by the experimental group was significantly more than that obtained by the control group.
14.	Vaezi & Reza Shahroosvand, 2015	To investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL learners and teachers' sensory preferences (VAK) and students' achievement in speaking	Speaking ability with the VAK approach	Iranian EFL students' adjustment and teachers' sensory preference (VAK) have a significant effect on students' achievement in speaking.
15.	Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015)	To investigate the effect of the NLP technique on the motivation level of young Iranian EFL students, and improvements in learning and	Language learning, in general, uses the VAK learning approach	1. Young Iranian EFL English learners experienced increased EFL motivation and proficiency after applying NLP. 2. NLP techniques positively contributed

		teaching abilities		to improving the ability of teachers to communicate with students, strengthen the learning environment, and develop positive interactions that improve students' academic motivation and skills.
--	--	--------------------	--	--

\*EFL, English as a foreign language; English Language Teaching; ESL, English as a Second Language; ESP, English for Specific Purposes; NLP, neurolinguistic programming; VAK, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

### *B. Language Acquisition Through the NLP Approach*

Referring to the aspects of language learning reviewed in each article, there is an increase in the language skills of learners for language learning in general. Of the six studies that examined language learning in general, five studies that focused on EFL learners showed that NLP-based language learning significantly improved language skills (Alamdar & Karbalaeei, 2015; Alroudhan, 2018; Hamid & Marzieh, 2017; Keezhatta, 2019; Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015). NLP provides techniques and solutions to problems and enables teachers to form flexible responses to specific problems, thereby enhancing the language skills of EFL learners (Alroudhan, 2018). NLP also facilitates communication and encourages English-language learners (Keezhatta, 2019). NLP significantly improved the reflective teaching of EFL teachers (Hamid & Marzieh, 2017). In addition, one study with the application of desuggestopedia showed that NLP increased students' interest, motivation, and learning outcomes (Dash & Rahaman, 2021).

Studies that examine writing skills in relation to the application of NLP also showed an increase writing skills (Pratama et al., 2019; Rumawan & Suharti, 2018; Rustan, 2017; Wikanengsih, 2013). All aspects of writing increased (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics). However, it was the vocabulary aspect that experienced the most significant increase.

All studies that examine aspects of speaking skills also showed a significant increase in results. The NLP method has a positive and significant impact on students' English-speaking skills compared to conventional methods (Fidinillah, 2018). NLP helps EFL learners pronounce past regular verb endings (Caballero & Rosado, 2018). Iranian EFL learners' adjustment and teachers' sensory preference (VAK) have a significant influence on students' achievement in speaking (Vaezi & Shahroosvand, 2015).

NLP-based language learning also significantly affects reading comprehension (Farahani, 2018) and listening comprehension (Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017). Accelerated learning is much more dynamic and significantly impacts listening comprehension. Statistically, the effect of accelerated learning on the listening comprehension of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners was 87%, 93%, and 85%, respectively (Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017).

### *C. Psychological Changes in Students*

Of the 15 studies reviewed, eight studies describe the psychological changes in learners during the application of NLP. Three studies showed that language learning through the application of NLP helps teachers create an engaging and fun learning atmosphere (Caballero & Rosado, 2018; Keezhatta, 2019; Pratama et al., 2019). NLP techniques are effective in developing teacher-student relationships and encouraging an interactive learning environment (Keezhatta, 2019) so that students enjoy the teaching and learning process (Pratama et al., 2019) and are more communicative (Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017).

Four studies found that the application of NLP techniques can increase students' learning motivation (Caballero & Rosado, 2018; Dash & Rahaman, 2021; Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015; Wikanengsih, 2013). Two studies showed that students are more active in writing practicing (Pratama et al., 2019; Wikanengsih, 2013). One study showed students to be more creative (Wikanengsih, 2013). In addition, one study proved that NLP could not reduce the anxiety felt by students but helped increase students' self-esteem (Alamdar & Karbalaeei, 2015).

### *D. Aspects of Language Learning*

From the 15 articles reviewed, various aspects of language learning are the targets of NLP implementation. Six articles examined all aspects of learning English (Alamdar & Karbalaeei, 2015; Alroudhan, 2018; Dash & Rahaman, 2021; Hamid & Marzieh, 2017; Keezhatta, 2019; Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015). Four articles examined students' writing skills, including one report that examined creative writing skills (Rustan, 2017), one that discussed narrative text writing skills (Rumawan & Suharti, 2018), and two that examined writing skills in general (Pratama et al., 2019; Wikanengsih, 2013). English-speaking skills were assessed by three studies (Caballero & Rosado, 2018; Fidinillah, 2018; Vaezi & Shahroosvand, 2015). In addition, one article examined reading comprehension skills (Farahani, 2018) and one examined listening comprehension (Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017).

### *E. The NLP Approach Used*

Various strategies, techniques, methods, models, and approaches to NLP are used in language learning. From the number of articles reviewed, three studies did not clearly describe the NLP method used (Fidinillah, 2018; Hamid & Marzieh, 2017; Rumawan & Suharti, 2018), but the other 12 studies describe the NLP method used in detail. Adjustment to the VAK learning style is the most frequently used method. This method was applied in seven articles (Alamdar & Karbalaeei, 2015; Caballero & Rosado, 2018; Khalandi & Zoghi, 2017; Lashkarian & Sayadian, 2015;

Pratama et al., 2019; Rustan, 2017; Vaezi & Shahroosvand, 2015). Furthermore, Khalandi and Zoghi's (2017) study used an accelerated learning strategy adapted to VAK. There are also linking criteria coaching techniques (Alroudhan, 2018), desuggestopedia (Dash & Rahaman, 2021), information-processing models, and behavioral models (Wikanengsih, 2013), and combining methods of planting, modeling, VAK, and mind maps (Keezhatta, 2019). One article used the NLP approach based on the four main pillars of NLP, namely, outcome, rapport, sensory acuity, and flexibility (Farahani, 2018). This method begins with the introduction of NLP presuppositions and core concepts; goal setting (outcome)–guided fantasy; sensory language (Reid's test); sensory language (continued); metaphors–highlighting positivity; emotions; belief (flexibility); no failure, feedback only; finding the best strategy (flexibility); and strategy review.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

This review presents the effectiveness of the application of NLP in language learning based on aspects of language learning, the NLP method used, changes in language skills, and psychological changes in students during the application of NLP.

##### A. *Language Acquisition Through the NLP Approach*

All the studies reviewed reported improvements in learners' language skills, in both EFL and non-EFL students. The results of this study are based on the findings Kong (2012) that the proper application of NLP helps teachers develop functional relationships with students and direct their motivation and efforts toward the desired results. NLP brings flexibility in learning so that teachers can quickly adapt to the conditions of students and the environment (Grosu et al., 2014). The application of NLP results in effective teacher–student communication and helps create a friendly environment for students to learn (Rogozińska, 2016; Yao & Han, 2013). A positive psychological increase in student learning affects student activity in education (Feng et al., 2020). Students who learn with enthusiasm can better design and achieve learning objectives (Almusharraf & Bailey, 2021; Ranjan et al., 2021). Students can understand the teaching delivered by the teacher. Thus, NLP is effective in improving the language skills of learners.

##### B. *Psychological Changes in Students*

This review also proves that using the NLP method increases students' interest, motivation, self-esteem, and activeness in language learning. Adjustment of students' conditions with the learning model implemented by the teacher presents an engaging and fun atmosphere for students to learn. The application of NLP can change a person's psychology, including self-esteem, anxiety, stress, motivation, and locus of control (Kotera et al., 2019; Yao & Han, 2013). Thus, the application of NLP in language learning can change students' psychology in a positive direction.

##### C. *Aspects of Language Learning*

The review results show that all aspects of language learning can apply the NLP method. However, the most widely used is to practice writing and speaking skills. Language skills are acquired through a continuous training process, especially productive writing and speaking skills (Palfreyman & Benson, 2019; Petersen et al., 2020). An exercise program is a key to language teaching and learning (Lightbown, 2019). The application of NLP is undoubtedly beneficial for students in avoiding boredom and creating interest in learning using various methods (Kong, 2012). Thus, the NLP method can be applied in all aspects of language learning, especially writing and speaking.

##### D. *The NLP Method Used*

The NLP learning method that is used most often is adjusting the VAK learning style. This method adapts students' learning styles (Gholami & Bagheri, 2013). Learning style refers to a person's learning preferences in understanding, organizing, and processing information and experiences in learning (Bakri et al., 2019; Feng et al., 2020; Willis, 2017). A review by Willis (2017) proved that VAK learning style adjustments are widely used in language learning because they make it easier for students to understand the subject. In addition, the VAK method has principles and benefits that extend to all types of learning and development (Gholami & Bagheri, 2013). Applying NLP modeling by adjusting the VAK learning style positively impacted students' cognitive and kinesthetic approaches (Grosu et al., 2014). Therefore, NLP-based language learning is recommended through the VAK method.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this review was to review the effectiveness of the NLP approach in language learning based on language acquisition abilities, and the psychological changes in students during learning, aspects of language learning, and NLP-based language learning methods. NLP-based language learning can positively improve students' language and psychological skills during language learning. In its implementation, the methods used vary from the most frequently used, namely, VAK, desuggestopedia, and adjustment of the four pillars of NLP. NLP can be used as an approach in language learning in all aspects, especially writing and speaking.

Several factors may limit the findings in this review. In particular, studies not published in English were excluded, meaning that there may be additional relevant evidence relating to the application of NLP in language learning that was



not included in this review. Furthermore, several articles reviewed here were published in less well-known journals. However, this review uses trusted references and theories to present quality reviews for readers.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank Hasriani, S.Kep., Ns., M.Kep (HSR) and Prof. Dr. Hj. Sabarti Akhadiyah (SA) for their assistance in the article search, retrieval, and selection.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Alamdar, F. S., & Karbalaie, A. (2015). The Relationship between Neuro-Linguistic Programming and Anxiety and Self-Esteem among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 2(8), 108–130. Retrieved February 20, 2022, from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Relationship-between-Neuro-Linguistic-and-and-Alamdar-Karbalaie/e16b7ca6c8ac8c6e58fd8fb84180363e6dbb0f9e>
- [2] Almusharraf, N., & Bailey, D. R. (2021). A regression analysis approach to measuring the influence of student characteristics on language learning strategies. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(4), 463–482. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14428a>
- [3] Alroudhan, H. E. (2018). The Effect of Neuro-linguistic Programming Coaching on Learning English. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 7(4), 184. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.7n.4p.184>
- [4] Bakri, R. A., Rahman, M. A., Jabu, B., & Jassruddin. (2019). Exploring the impact of vak learning style on teenager level language learners in indonesia. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 10(4), 807–814. <https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1004.17>
- [5] Bandler, R., & Grinder, J. (1979). *Neuro Linguistic Programming*. Real People Press. Retrieved May 23, 2021, from [papers3://publication/uuid/9D455CA8-C68C-410C-88DE-AC9ED6C5DBFD](https://papers3://publication/uuid/9D455CA8-C68C-410C-88DE-AC9ED6C5DBFD)
- [6] Bashir, A., & Ghani, M. (2012). Effective Communication and Neurolinguistic Programming. *Pakistan Journal of Commerce & Social Sciences*, 6(1), 216–222. Retrieved May 23, 2021, from <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=78098387&lang=es&site=ehost-live%5Cnhttp://content.ebscohost.com.v.biblioteca.ucuenca.edu.ec/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=78098387&S=R&D=bth&EbscoContent=dGJyMMTo50Sep7E4xNvgOLCmr02eprZSrq4TLOW>
- [7] Caballero, D. R., & Rosado, N. (2018). Neurolinguistic Programming and Regular Verbs Past Tense Pronunciation Teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 11(11), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n11p1>
- [8] Dash, P. K., & Rahaman, A. (2021). Using The Tenets Of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) In Alignment With Desuggestopedia To Assess The Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Of Secondary Level Students: A Case Study Of Selected Schools In Cuttack And Bhubaneswar, India. *International Journal of ELT, Linguistics and Comparative Literature*, 9(3), 12–27. <https://doi.org/10.33329/elt.9.3.12>
- [9] Farahani, F. (2018). The Effect of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) on Reading Comprehension in English for Specific Purposes Courses. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, 6(1), 79. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijels.v.6n.1p.79>
- [10] Feng, Y., Iriarte, F., & Valencia, J. (2020). Relationship Between Learning Styles, Learning Strategies and Academic Performance of Chinese Students Who Learn Spanish as a Foreign Language. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 29(5), 431–440. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-019-00496-8>
- [11] Fidinillah, M. A. (2018). The Effects of Neurolinguistic Programming (NIP) Methods Towards Students' Speaking Skill. *Scope : Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(01), 56. <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v2i01.2273>
- [12] Genç, G., Kuluşaklı, E., & Aydin, S. (2016). Exploring prospective EFL teachers' perceived self-efficacy and beliefs on english language learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 41(2), 53–68. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2016v41n2.4>
- [13] Gholami, S., & Bagheri, M. S. (2013). Relationship between VAK Learning Styles and Problem Solving Styles regarding Gender and Students' Fields of Study. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4(4). <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.4.4.700-706>
- [14] Grosu, E. F., Grosu, V. T., Preja, C. A., & Iuliana, B. B. (2014). Neuro-linguistic Programming based on the Concept of Modelling. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 3693–3699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.825>
- [15] Hamid, M., & Marzieh, A. (2017). The Impact of Neurolinguistic Programming on EFL Teachers' Reflective Teaching. *I-Manager's Journal on English Language Teaching*, 7(3), 22. <https://doi.org/10.26634/jelt.7.3.13589>
- [16] Karami, A., & Bowles, F. A. (2019). Which strategy promotes retention? Intentional vocabulary learning, incidental vocabulary learning, or a mixture of both? *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 44(9), 25–43. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2019v44.n9.2>
- [17] Keezhatta, M. S. (2019). The Impact of Neuro-Linguistic Programming on English Language Teaching: Perceptions of NLP-Trained English Teachers. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(6), 454. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n6p454>
- [18] Khalandi, C., & Zoghi, R. (2017). The Effect of NLP (Accelerated Learning) on Iranian EFL Learner's Listening Comprehension. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7(11), 1139. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0711.25>
- [19] Kim, K. J., & Pae, T. Il. (2018). Social psychological theories and sustainable second language learning: A model comparison approach. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11010016>
- [20] Kong, E. (2012). The potential of neuro-linguistic programming in human capital development. *Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management*, 10(2), 131–141.
- [21] Kotera, Y., Sheffield, D., & Van Gordon, W. (2019). The applications of neuro-linguistic programming in organizational settings: A systematic review of psychological outcomes. In *Human Resource Development Quarterly* (Vol. 30, Issue 1, pp. 101–116). John Wiley and Sons Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21334>
- [22] Lashkarian, A., & Sayadian, S. (2015). The Effect of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) Techniques on Young Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation, Learning Improvement, and on Teacher's Success. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 510–

516. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.540>
- [23] Li, S. (2021). Psychological Wellbeing, Mindfulness, and Immunity of Teachers in Second or Foreign Language Education: A Theoretical Review. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12(July), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.720340>
- [24] Lightbown, P. M. (2019). Perfecting Practice. *Modern Language Journal*, 103(3), 703–712. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12588>
- [25] Palfreyman, D. M., & Benson, P. (2019). Autonomy and Its Role in English Language Learning: Practice and Research. In *Springer International Handbooks of Education* (Gao X.). Springer. pp. 1708-2305. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2\\_38](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2_38)
- [26] Petersen, S. C., McMahon, J. M., McFarlane, H. G., Gillen, C. M., & Itagaki, H. (2020). Mini-Review - Teaching Writing in the Undergraduate Neuroscience Curriculum: Its Importance and Best Practices. *Neuroscience Letters*, 737(June), 135302. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neulet.2020.135302>
- [27] Pratama, H. N., Setiyadi, B., & Nurweni, A. (2019). The implementation of neuro linguistic programming techniques on Indonesian student's self efficacy and writing ability in the context of English as foreign language. *Journal of English Teaching*, 8(2), 1-11.
- [28] Ranjan, R., Philominraj, A., & Saavedra, R. A. (2021). On the relationship between language learning strategies and language proficiency in Indian Universities. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(3), 73–94. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.1435a>
- [29] Rogozińska, E. (2016). Neuro-Linguistic Programming for Teaching and Learning. *The Journal of Linguistic and Intercultural Education*, 9(2), 149–159.
- [30] Rumawan, M. T., & Suharti, D. S. (2018). Neurolinguistics Programming Technique On Students' Writing Narrative Text. *Syntax Literate : Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 3(21), 1–9.
- [31] Rustan, E. (2017). Learning Creative Writing Model Based on Neurolinguistic Programming. *International Journal of Language Education and Culture Review*, 3(2), 13–29. <https://doi.org/10.21009/IJLECR.032.02>
- [32] Rustan, E., & Hasriani, H. (2020). Communication pattern between nurses and elderly patients through a neuro-linguistic programming approach. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi (Indonesian Journal of Communications Studies)*, 4(1), 75. <https://doi.org/10.25139/jsk.v4i1.2180>
- [33] Sturt, J., Ali, S., Robertson, W., Metcalfe, D., Grove, A., Bourne, C., & Bridle, C. (2012). Neurolinguistic programming: A systematic review of the effects on health outcomes. *British Journal of General Practice*, 62(November), 757–764. <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp12X658287>
- [34] Vaezi, S., & Shahroosvand, H. R. (2015). Iranian EFL Learners' and Teachers' Sensory Preferences and the Learners' Speaking Ability. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 3(2), 14. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v3i2.7627>
- [35] Wikanengsih, W. (2013). Model Pembelajaran Neurolinguistic Programming Berorientasi Karakter Bagi Peningkatan Kemampuan Menulis Siswa SMP. *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Negeri Malang*, 19(2), 104445.
- [36] Willis, C. (2017). Literature review on the use of VAK learning strategie's. In *University of Cumbria* (Vol. 4, Issue 2), pp. 590.
- [37] Yao, J., & Han, J. (2013). Bilingual Beginning Mandarin Teachers' Classroom English in Sydney Schools: Linguistic Implications for Teacher Education. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 22(2), 127–136. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-012-0005-5>



**Edhy Rustan** an Indonesian language lecturer at the State Islamic Institute of Palopo (IAIN Palopo) was born on August 17th 1984 in Kampubbu. He completed his Master studies in 2008 at the State University of Makassar, Indonesia. His Doctoral Degree in Linguistics was completed in 2016. His research interest includes higher education, academic integrity, writing academic, creative writing, Language Learning and Teaching.

Dr. Rustan is currently working as a lecturer at the State Islamic Institute of Palopo (IAIN Palopo), Indonesia. He is also a deputy director of the graduate program at IAIN Palopo.

# A Bibliometric Analysis on Teaching Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language Outside Mainland China (2001-2020)\*

Siqi Deng

School of Chinese Language and Literature, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China

Xiao Xie<sup>1</sup>

Department of English, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

**Abstract**—This paper analysed a total of 334 English language articles on teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language from the Web of Science, during the period from 2001 to 2020. By examining the bibliometric indices of the literature, the analysis found that: 1) The numbers of research publication and citation have gone through slow growth in the first decade and strong growth in the second decade. 2) Highly cited journals are mainly from four categories: educational technology, linguistics, education and psychology. 3) Highly productive authors are mainly from the fields of computing and education, with research interests focused on the use of digital technology to help Chinese language learning. 4) Highly co-cited articles include keywords related to young Chinese learners, foreign language, English context and character learning. 5) The topical trends in Chinese language education research have evolved from an early focus on Chinese writing, learning strategies and cross-cultural language teaching to a mid-term focus on issues such as classroom management and task-based teaching, and further expansion to a more recent focus on the integration of digital technologies and multimodal approaches to teaching and learning. By reviewing these five areas, this study aims to provide a complete picture of the research on teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language outside mainland China. It is intended to help build bridges of collaboration between researchers and institutions within and outside mainland China by highlighting the researchers who have made significant contributions and the wide range of issues being explored.

**Index Terms**—teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language, international journals, bibliometric analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

As Chinese plays an emerging international language role in the linguistic diversity in the world (Gong et al., 2020; Ma et al., 2017; Moloney & Xu, 2015; Qi & Lai, 2017; Wang, 2010), an increasing number of scholars have taken note of the development of Chinese language education overseas (Gong et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2014). Existing reviews provide useful insights into teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language (CSL/CFL), but most of these reviews focus on the research publications in the Chinese-speaking world within mainland China (Gong et al., 2018; Ma et al., 2017). For example, Gong et al. (2020) systematically reviewed 60 pieces of empirical research literature on CFL/CSL published in relevant academic journals in mainland China between 2014 and 2018. Ma et al. (2017) conducted a review of the themes, methods and findings of relevant studies published in four major journals in mainland China between 2005 and 2015 and found that researchers in mainland China had explored a wide range of issues such as language policy and planning, language pedagogy, and teacher development, but a large number of non-empirical articles continued to be published in these journals. Furthermore, most researchers worked primarily to meet local needs and interests, i.e. with a local learner orientation, which has led to research findings that significantly impact CSL/CFL teaching and learning within mainland China (Gong et al., 2020), while the impact on international language education research and pedagogical development remains limited and marginal (Ma et al., 2017). Gong et al. (2018) compared 1358 Chinese language articles from CNKI and 175 English language articles from WoS from 2004-2016 in order to analyse the frequency of keyword co-occurrence and thematic trends of related research. However, this study used a coarse granularity of search terms and did not use wildcards, in addition to examining fewer measures to provide a detailed index of network structure.

Research on CSL/CFL teaching and learning within and outside mainland China seems to be in two worlds (Gong et al., 2018), and a complete picture of the overall status in international journals seems to be lacking. In order to build bridges of knowledge sharing and mutual exchange, a review of relevant research on CSL/CFL published in

---

\*This work was supported by the Fundamental Research Funds for the Central Universities (Project Number: 2019JX062).

<sup>1</sup> E-mail: [gs58879@student.upm.edu.my](mailto:gs58879@student.upm.edu.my)

international journals is undoubtedly crucial and urgent. With this in mind, in this review we focused on the aspects of authors, journals, articles and keywords in the field of CSL/CFL teaching and learning and conducted a bibliometric analysis of 334 articles published in Web of Science's Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) databases from 2001 to 2020, to answer the following five research questions:

- (1) What are the trends in the number of publications and citations of relevant articles?
- (2) Which are the most co-cited international journals?
- (3) What research issues have been focused on by the most published authors?
- (4) What are the characteristics of the clustering of keywords discussed in the related articles?
- (5) What are the changing trends in related research topics?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Database Selection

The Web of Science (WoS) database is a relatively comprehensive collection of most of the literature in the social sciences, arts and humanities, and its core collection includes a wide range of high-quality peer-reviewed academic journals, which is useful for researchers to understand advances and trends in their disciplines (Bärner et al., 2003). Therefore, we focused on the English-language journal articles from the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts and Humanities Index (A&HCI).

### B. Article Selection

This review tends to observe relative research developments from 2001 to 2020, and the search employed a wildcards strategy, a method that covers as wide a range of topics and journals as possible (Chen et al., 2012), to ensure that the data are comprehensive. After several rounds of testing, we identified search terms with “Chinese as \$ second/foreign language; Chinese language teach\*/learn\*/class\*”, where the dollar sign (\$) denotes zero or one character; the asterisk (\*) denotes any group of characters, including null characters, to contain most CSL/CFL related publications.

### C. Inclusion Criteria

Articles searched from the WoS were limited to the research categories “Linguistic”, “Language Linguistic” and “Education Educational Research”, the main type of document was “Article” and the search language was “English”. The data was retrieved on 5 January 2021 and the research needed to be relevant to CSL/CFL. Two authors read the title and abstract of each retrieved data item to ensure that the content of the article was consistent with the purpose of the research, and in the rare case where an item was disputed, the full text was read and assessed. The resulting 334 valid data articles were generated and were checked and collated prior to analysis.

### D. Research Tools

This review used Citespace (version 5.7.R2) as the data processing software, to visualise and present the bibliometric index, including authors, journals, articles and noun terms, by generating a scientific knowledge map, and to reveal the current status and cognitive structure of the research field in these areas (Chen et al., 2012).

## III. RESULTS

### A. The Overall Numbers of Publication and Citation

The overall number of articles published provides an indication of the disciplinary activity and maturity of the research area, while the frequency of citations reflects the level of academic interest in the field (Chen, 2016). As shown in Figure 1, the total number of articles published in relation to CSL/CFL teaching and learning has trended upwards over a 20-year period from 0 articles in 2001 to around 50 articles in 2020, indicating that the field is beginning to gain attention and is growing as a vibrant research area (Chen et al., 2012). On the other hand, the number of citations shows a similar trend to the number of publications, with the number of citations increasing slowly until 2010 and at a high rate every year since then. Excluding self-citations, the total number of citations over the 20-year period is over 2,500, with an average of about 7.5 citations per article.



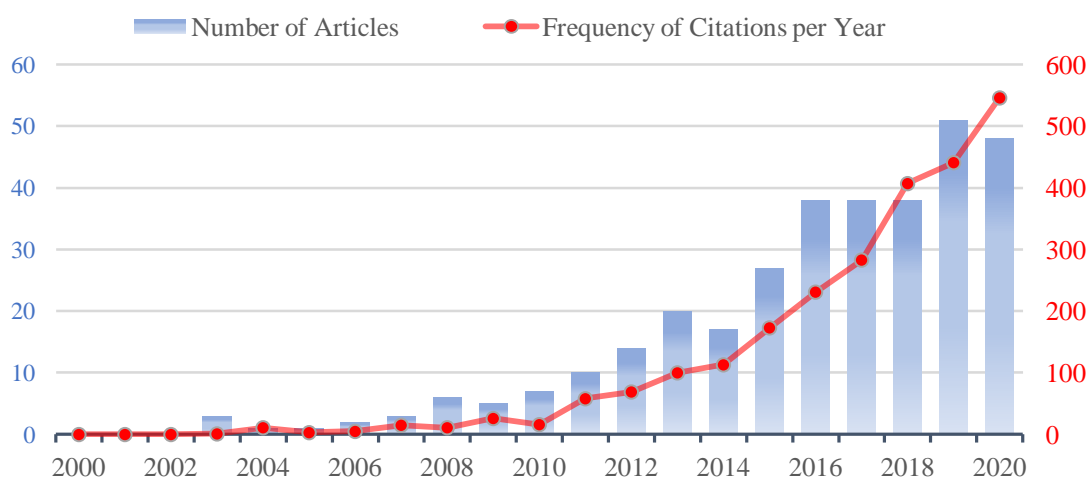


Figure 1: Numbers of Articles Published and Cited in SSCI and A&amp;HCI Indexed Journals (2001-2020)

### B. Co-Citation Analysis of Journals

The co-citation analysis of journals can help researchers understand the distribution of information in a field of knowledge to quickly focus on important journals (Chen, 2016). Table 1 summarises the top 10 co-cited journals in the field of Chinese language teaching research, which can be broadly classified into four categories. Firstly, journals in the discipline of linguistics represented by *Applied Linguistics*, mainly focus on the dissemination of theoretical knowledge and applied innovation. Secondly, there are educational technology journals represented by *Language Learning and Technology*, which publish articles mostly related to the use of emerging information technologies to improve language teaching and learning, often of a cross-disciplinary nature. Thirdly, as represented by *System*, some international journals are concern with the teaching of foreign languages and publish articles that mostly combine applied linguistics and educational technology. Fourthly, the *Journal of Educational Psychology* is a psychology-oriented journal, with most of its articles dealing with neuropsychology and cognitive psychology, and relevant theories have begun to be cited in CSL/CFL related research, such as the relationship between orthographic awareness and reading and writing. Compared to other highly cited journals, the *Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association (JCLTA)* is to some extent a journal that concentrates on the teaching and learning of CSL/CFL and is a scholarly journal that specialises in publishing articles related to Chinese language education. The co-citation mapping of journals in Figure 2 shows that journals in the fields of applied linguistics and education provide the main platforms for CSL/CFL researchers to facilitate the mutual exchange of knowledge and experiences, which is cross-cited and relatively closely linked.

TABLE 1  
TOP 10 SSCI AND A&HCI INDEXED JOURNALS (2001-2020)

Rank	Name of Cited Journal	Journal Disciplines	Cites
1	<i>The Modern Language Journal</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	153
2	<i>System</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	120
3	<i>Foreign Language Annals</i>	"Linguistics"	98
4	<i>Language Learning</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	97
5	<i>TESOL Quarterly</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	91
6	<i>Applied Linguistics</i>	"Linguistics"	85
7	<i>Language Learning and Technology</i>	"Linguistics", "Education"	67
8	<i>Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	66
9	<i>Journal of Educational Psychology</i>	"Psychology"	64
10	<i>Reading and Writing</i>	"Linguistics", "Education and Educational Research"	52

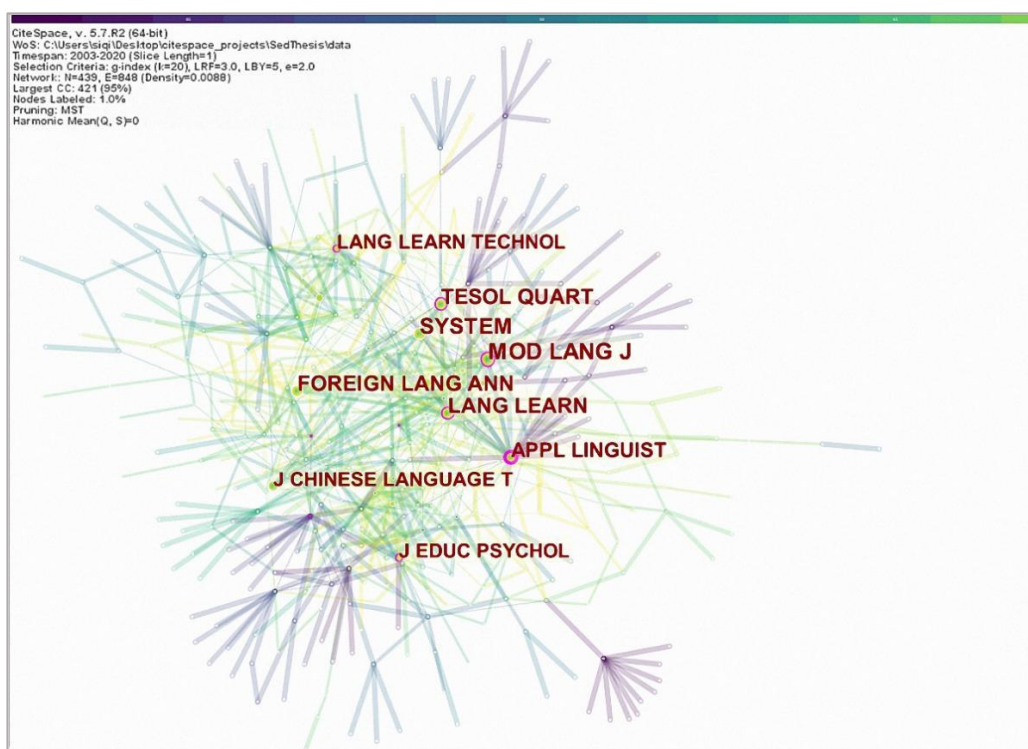


Figure 2: Co-Cited Network of SSCI and A&amp;HCI Journals (2001-2020)

### C. Leading Researchers and Publications

The number of articles published by leading researchers is somewhat representative of how active they are in the field (Chen, 2016). Table 2 lists the six researchers in the top four (including those tied for the top spot) in terms of the number of published articles. According to the timing of their first publications, most of the authors had already focused on the field of CSL/CFL and conducted research on related issues around 2010.

TABLE 2  
LEADING INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS IN TERMS OF JOURNAL PUBLICATION (2001-2020)

Rank	Author	Number of Articles Published	Year of First Publication
1	Chun Lai	10	2011
1	Yuju Lan	10	2010
2	Lung-Hsiang Wong	9	2011
3	Ching Sing Chai	7	2011
4	Yu-Ka Wong	6	2017
4	Kuoen Chang	6	2010

In terms of the total number, the six authors with the highest number of publications from 2001 to 2020 and their research areas are as follows. Chun Lai (10 articles) focuses on the intercultural awareness and teacher development of Chinese language teachers, the Chinese language learning of South Asian minorities in Hong Kong, as well as on the Chinese language teaching methods, such as the teaching of Chinese characters and the use of task-based teaching in Chinese classrooms. Yuju Lan (10 articles) focuses on how to effectively use mobile learning devices, such as the Second Life (SL), to improve Chinese language proficiency in terms of writing, oral communication, and listening comprehension. Lung-Hsiang Wong (9 articles) focuses primarily on computer-supported collaborative learning and seamless Chinese language learning, exploring the impact of digital devices on the development of orthographic awareness among young students. Ching Sing Chai (7 articles) focuses on the relationship between the development of technological knowledge and teacher beliefs among Chinese language teachers in Singapore, and the relationship between students' Chinese computing input skills and their performance in composition. Yu-Ka Wong (6 articles) focuses on the effects of good orthographic knowledge and fluent Chinese character recognition skills on Chinese learners' reading performance, and the relationship between Chinese character reading and listening comprehension. Kuoen Chang (6 articles) focuses on mobile assistive devices to improve Chinese language learners' proficiency and the grading of Chinese reading materials.

Apart from using a time slice of 20 years and a g-index algorithm for data thresholding ( $k=20$ ), a pathfinding algorithm was adopted to generate a map of leading researchers and institutions over the period 2001-2020. As shown in Figure 3, Ching Sing Chai and Lung-Hsiang Wong have collaborated extensively in the field of seamless teaching

and learning, focusing on the development of teachers' digital competencies and mobile device-assisted Chinese language learning. On the other hand, Kuoen Chang and Yuju Lan have had a closer collaboration, with three of the former's six articles being co-authored by the two researchers.

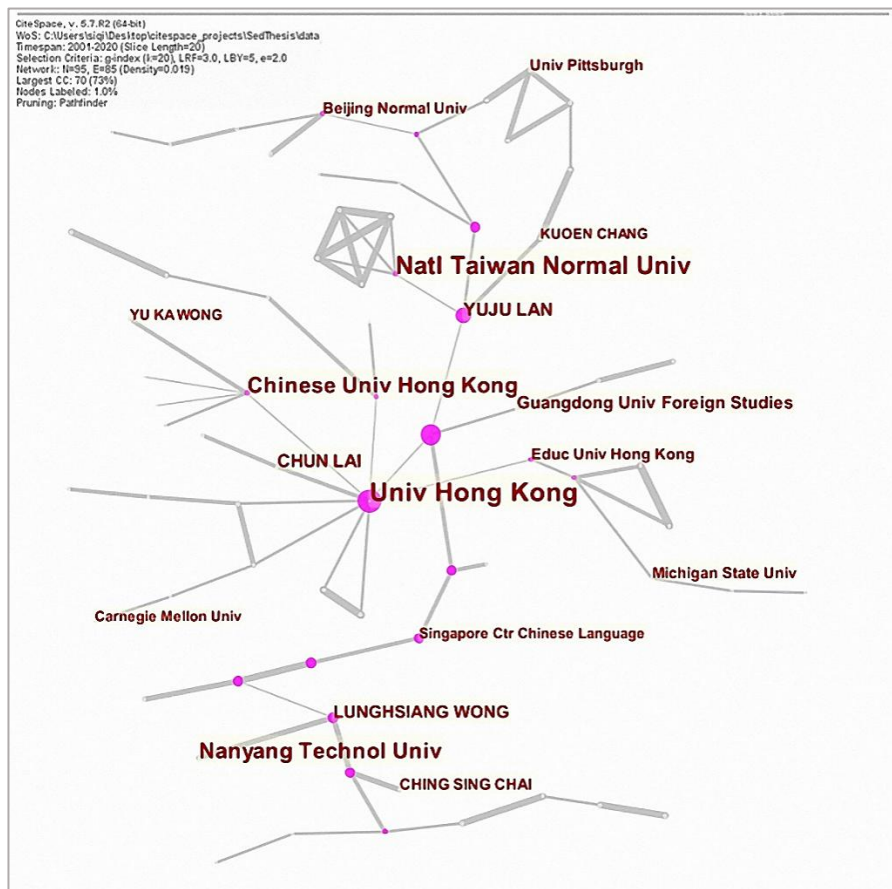


Figure 3: A Hybrid Network of the Leading Researchers and Institutions (2001-2020)

#### D. Co-Citation Analysis of Articles

Citing other articles can be seen as the flow of knowledge from a different research topic to the current research topic being conducted, meaning that knowledge moves from a state of wandering to reorganisation resulting in new knowledge. As scientific research continues to advance, papers on related topics then form citation networks (Chen, 2016). Co-citation analysis of articles refers to the fact that when two articles co-occur in the references of a third article, the two articles form a co-citation relationship and the clusters are formed to reveal the themes that these co-cited articles share (Chen et al., 2012). In this study, a time slice of one year was used for data thresholding with the g-index algorithm ( $k=20$ ), and the map was generated by a pathfinding algorithm. The log-likelihood ratio (LLR) algorithm was used for literature clustering. The modularity value of clustering  $Q=0.8678>0.3$  indicates a significant clustering network structure. The Silhouette value, a measure of network homogeneity,  $s=0.9655>0.7$ , indicates that the clustering has high reliability. Figure 4 shows the cluster analysis mapping of related articles, with the gradient colour band at the top showing temporal information; from left to right, the further to the right the colour block is, the closer the average publication date of the articles in that cluster is to the present time, such that orange and red clusters represent studies published in most recent years.

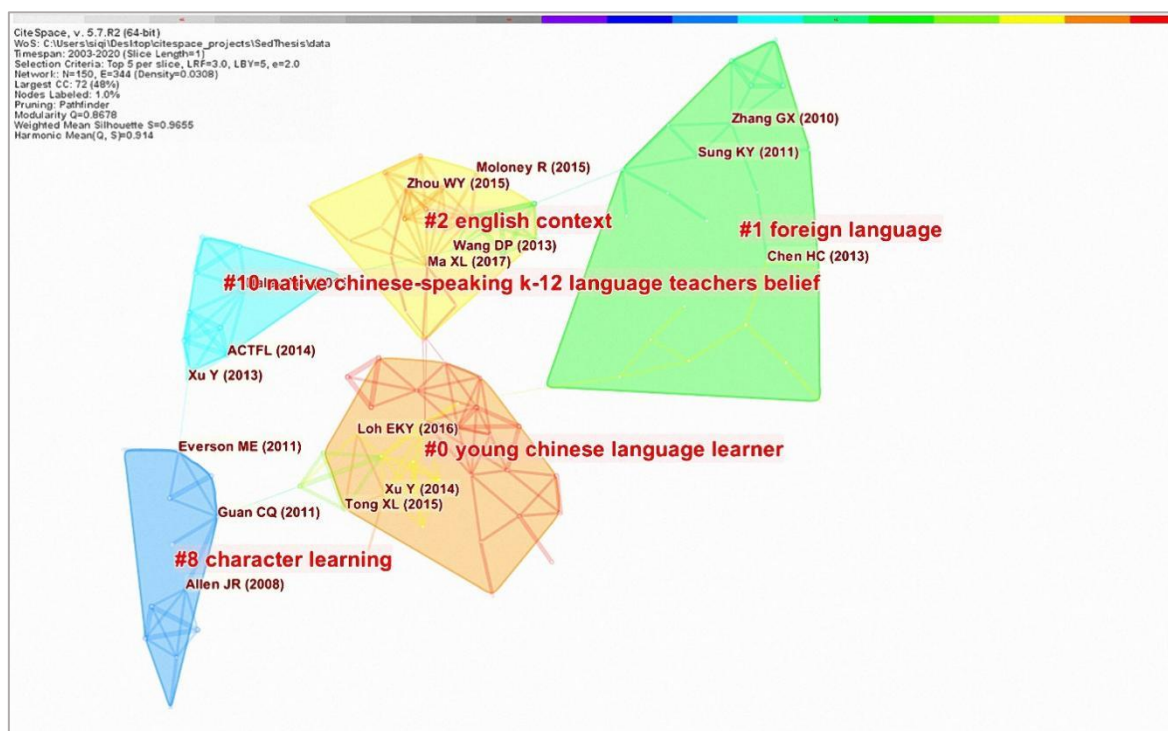


Figure 4: Trajectories of Relevant Research Shown in a Hybrid Network of Co-Cited Clusters and References (2001-2020)

Based on the clustering parameters, the largest cluster is #0, labelled as Young Chinese Learner, whose average article publication year is 2016. In a qualitative study of this cluster, Loh and Tam (2016) found that the social mobility of ethnic minority students was highly correlated with their Chinese language proficiency, suggesting that in light of recent demographic changes and classroom realities to make policy adjustments to help ethnic minority students improve their Chinese language proficiency and integrate into Hong Kong society to address intergenerational poverty. In a quantitative study of this cluster, Xu et al. (2014) explored the role of radical-based grouping pedagogy in Chinese character learning and examined the effect of radical-based grouping on the morphological, phonological and meaning representations of Chinese characters and the development of radical knowledge, and found that it is beneficial to introduce learners to recurring radicals in compound characters during the Chinese character learning process. In addition to this, Tong and Yip (2015) investigated whether CSL/CFL learners were sensitive to the orthography, phonological and semantic information of radicals, and whether this radical sensitivity was predictive of their Chinese word reading ability, and showed that CSL/CFL learners encoded new words using orthography, phonology and radical semantics in a way that was largely similar to that of native Chinese readers.

The second cluster is #1, labelled as Foreign Language, and focuses on issues such as language learning strategies, whose average publication of the literature is in 2012. Zhang and Li (2010) reviewed the changes in Chinese language learning and teaching in the UK between 2000 and 2010, and introduced the situation, background and characteristics of the communicative approach in the UK. Chen et al. (2013) conducted a quasi-experiment to examine the effect of a radical-derived Chinese character teaching strategy on improving the learning of Chinese as a foreign language, using a web-based teaching platform based on statistical data from the Chinese orthography database explorer as a supplementary teaching tool. Sung and Wu (2011) examined the effectiveness of a radical-derived Chinese character teaching strategy in improving foreign learners' awareness of Chinese orthography, and whether 108 American first-grade learners' Chinese character learning strategies were influenced by learners' gender, family background and previous foreign language experience.

The third cluster is #2, labelled as English Context, which focuses on the beliefs of CSL/CFL teachers, whose average publication of the literature is in 2015. Moloney and Xu (2015) used interviews with nine Chinese language teachers in New South Wales, and concluded that the Chinese teacher cohort's beliefs were in a transitional process of conforming to traditional Chinese educational principles, conforming to constructivist learning principles and flowing in between, in that they saw the need to transform their teaching beliefs in a foreign context, while demonstrating a willingness to learn and change, adjusting their conceptions of teaching to match their teaching practices. The findings and recommendations of this study on Chinese language teachers' belief transformation are useful references for designing more effective teacher training to promote success in Chinese language teaching classrooms. Zhou and Li (2015) collected the experiences and perceptions of six Chinese language teachers regarding classroom management in the U.S. The findings suggest that cultural differences in classroom management play an important role in influencing Chinese teachers' classroom teaching and need to be addressed at the pre-service stage. Wang et al. (2013) examined the differences in educational aims and objectives, learning content, teaching methods and assessment between the



curriculum designs of teacher education in China and Australia, and suggested that the curriculum needed to be adapted to meet the mobility and adaptability required in overseas teaching environments.

In addition to these, two smaller clusters are worth noting. The fourth largest cluster is #8, labelled as Character Learning, and these articles were published on average around 2009 and focus on reading and learning Chinese characters in an English context. Everson (2011) summarised research done before 2011 using non-Roman orthographic writing systems (e.g. Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew and Japanese), with the aim of helping subsequent researchers develop their own research agendas and pedagogical approaches. Guan et al. (2011) verified, through two experiments, that learning to write characters enhances orthographic awareness and thus improves the recognition process of specific words, and that combining handwritten Chinese characters with Pinyin typing can facilitate the learning of Chinese reading. The fifth-ranked cluster is #10, labelled as Native Chinese-Speaking K-12 Language Teachers' Beliefs and Practices, and the average publication of the literature is in 2011. Haley and Ferro (2011) explored the significant relationship between learner-centred approaches to language teaching and the education teachers had received in their own schools.

### E. Topical Trend Analysis

Extracting noun terms from titles, keywords, supplementary keywords and abstracts can reflect to some extent the emerging trend of a research topic in a specific period (Chen, 2016). In this study, a time slice of one year was used as the data threshold with the g-index algorithm ( $k=10$ ), and the log-likelihood ratio algorithm was used to cluster the extracted noun terms to obtain 16 topics (denoted by # plus the topic name), as shown in Figure 5. According to the average of publication dates of the articles, the 16 topics were divided into seven clusters in chronological order, resulting in the trajectories of topical trends of SSCI and A&HCI indexed articles between 2001 and 2020 shown in Figure 6.

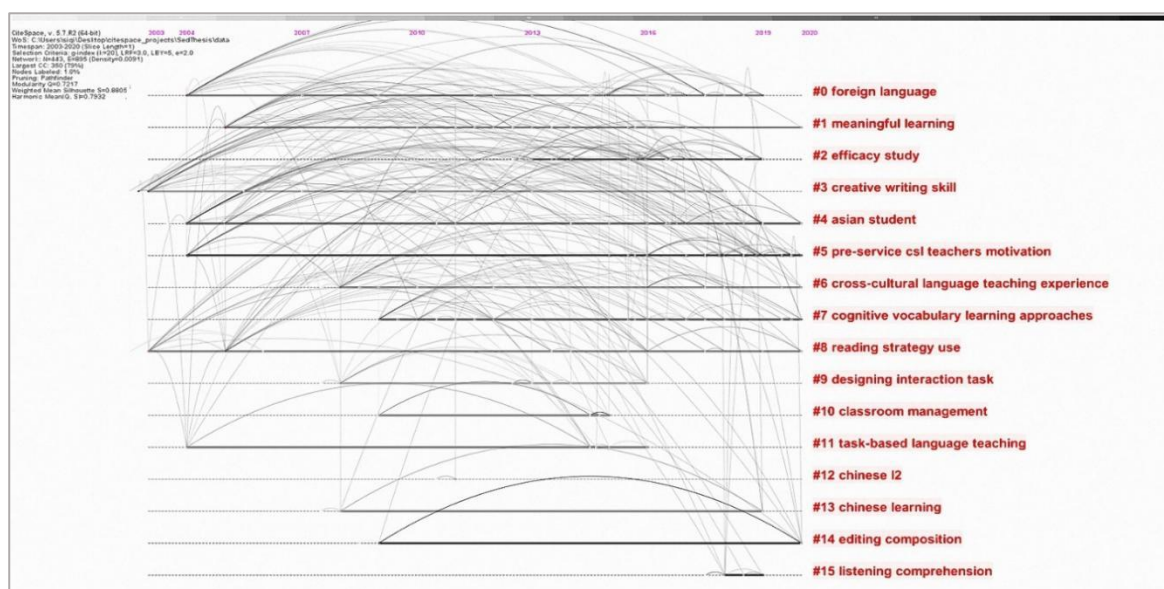


Figure 5: The Noun Term Topical Cluster Network (2001-2020)

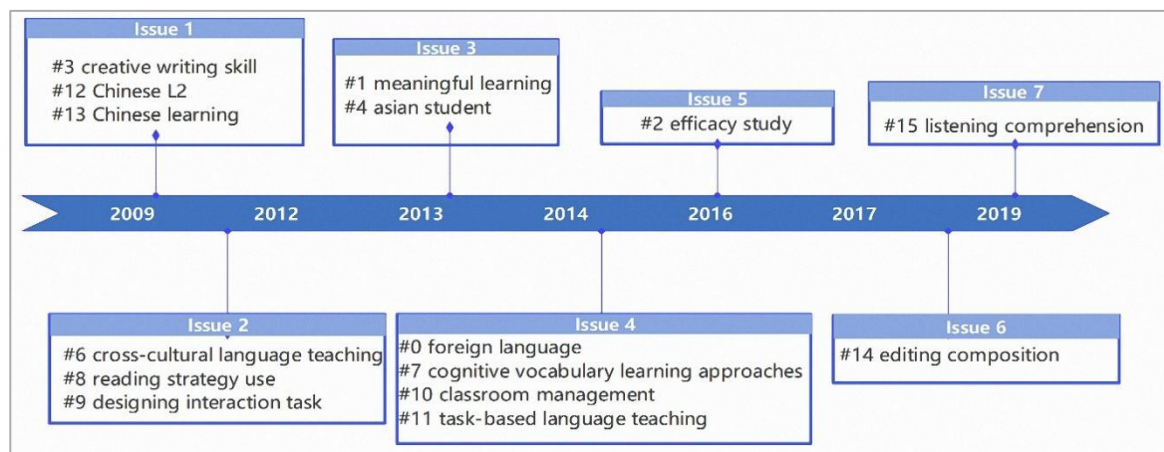


Figure 6: Trajectories of Topical Trends of SSCI and A&HCI Indexed Articles (2001-2020)

As shown in Figure 6, research in the field of CSL/CFL teaching and learning in international core journals has been enriched and developed during the time period of 2001-2020, and the topical trends show the following characteristics. First, as the topics in Issue 1 and Issue 2 show, the early research focused on Chinese writing (Guan et al., 2011), the development of language learning strategies (Lee-Thompson, 2008; Winke & Abbuhl, 2007), and then the research focus has gradually expanded to include cross-cultural language teaching (Hall Haley & Ferro, 2011; Yang, 2008). Secondly, as Issue 3, Issue 4 and Issue 5 demonstrate in terms of topic labels, the mid-term content extended to classroom management (Shen & Xu, 2015; Zhou & Li, 2015), task-based teaching (Bao & Du, 2015; Ruan et al., 2015) and cognitive theory related to Chinese character and vocabulary learning (Xu & Padilla, 2013). Third, the topic labels in Issue 6 and Issue 7 show that the topics have recently expanded further and new features have emerged, such as closer integration with mobile devices (Lan et al., 2019), the emergence of research on multimodal elements in Chinese reading (Godfroid et al., 2017), and integration with machine translation (Xu, 2020). In addition to this, the professional development of Chinese language teachers (Loh & Tam, 2016; Yue, 2017; Zhang et al., 2020) is also a topic of interest during this period. It can be seen that the research concerns in the early stages focused on improving students' language skills, learning strategies and intercultural communication skills, reflecting the traditional notion of the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge. The mid-term research focused on the classroom management skills and professional development of language teachers, reflecting the ongoing exploration of the discipline in response to the needs of the real state of Chinese education worldwide. More recent research has focused on the integration of digital technology and language teaching, in line with the evolution of educational tools and instruments.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION

The development of teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language is a discipline that requires regular categorisation and sorting. In this paper, we use Citespace, a bibliometric software, to analyse articles published in the Web of Science SSCI and A&HCI collections from 2001 to 2020, in terms of the total numbers of articles published and cited, highly co-cited journals, leading researchers, co-cited articles and topical trends. This study tends to help scholars in mainland China and abroad to strengthen their mutual understanding and cooperation in related fields, break the barrier of "two worlds", and form an academic community.

There are a number of limitations to this study. First, there might be much more literature related to CSL/CFL in the Web of Science database for the time period 2001 to 2020, while we only examined relevant articles in the two core collections, SSCI and A&HCI, which may make the results incomplete. Secondly, we only reviewed journal-type articles, as the open access nature of journals is valued more than other types of publications (Yang et al., 2020). Therefore other types of research, such as book reviews and book chapters, were excluded from the study, which may also have biased the findings. Thirdly, Citespace could be further mined for more detailed network structure indices such as citation bursts and the sigma metric, which could reflect critical nodes in more detail. Therefore, in future research, in addition to further examining other key points of network structure, it is also important to try to include more types of publications as well as to enhance the diversity of data sources to provide a broader perspective of the study.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Bao, R., & Du, X. Y. (2015). Implementation of task-based language teaching in Chinese as a foreign language: benefits and challenges. *Language Culture and Curriculum*, 28(3), 291-310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2015.1058392>
- [2] Börner, K., Chen, C., & Boyack, K. W. (2003). Visualizing knowledge domains. *Annual review of information science and technology*, 37(1), 179-255.
- [3] Chen, C. (2016). *CiteSpace: a practical guide for mapping scientific literature*. Nova Science Publishers Hauppauge, NY, USA.
- [4] Chen, C., Hu, Z., Liu, S., & Tseng, H. (2012). Emerging trends in regenerative medicine: a scientometric analysis in CiteSpace. *Expert Opin Biol Ther*, 12(5), 593-608. <https://doi.org/10.1517/14712598.2012.674507>
- [5] Chen, H. C., Hsu, C. C., Chang, L. Y., Lin, Y. C., Chang, K. E., & Sung, Y. T. (2013). Using a Radical-Derived Character E-Learning Platform to Increase Learner Knowledge of Chinese Characters. *Language Learning & Technology*, 17(1), 89-106. <https://doi.org/10.125/24511>
- [6] Everson, M. E. (2011). Best Practices in Teaching Logographic and Non-Roman Writing Systems to L2 Learners. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 31, 249-274. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190511000171>
- [7] Godfroid, A., Lin, C. H., & Ryu, C. (2017). Hearing and Seeing Tone Through Color: An Efficacy Study of Web-Based, Multimodal Chinese Tone Perception Training. *Language Learning*, 67(4), 819-857. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12246>
- [8] Gong, Y., Gao, X., & Lyu, B. (2020). Teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language to non-Chinese learners in mainland China (2014–2018). *Language Teaching*, 53(1), 44-62. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444819000387>
- [9] Gong, Y., Lai, C., & Gao, X. S. (2020). The Teaching and Learning of Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language: The Current Situation and Future Directions. *Frontiers of Education in China*, 15(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11516-020-0001-0>
- [10] Gong, Y., Lyu, B. N., & Gao, X. S. (2018). Research on Teaching Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language in and Outside Mainland China: A Bibliometric Analysis. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 27(4), 277-289. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-018-0385-2>

- [11] Guan, C. Q., Liu, Y., Chan, D. H. L., Ye, F. F., & Perfetti, C. A. (2011). Writing Strengthens Orthography and Alphabetic-Coding Strengthens Phonology in Learning to Read Chinese. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 103(3), 509-522. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023730>
- [12] Hall Haley, M., & Ferro, M. S. (2011). Understanding the Perceptions of Arabic and Chinese Teachers Toward Transitioning into U.S. Schools. *Foreign Language Annals*, 44(2), 289-307. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2011.01136.x>
- [13] Lan, Y.-J., Lyu, B.-N., & Chin, C. K. (2019). Does a 3D immersive experience enhance Mandarin writing by CSL students? *Language Learning & Technology*, 23(2), 125-144. <https://doi.org/10.125/44686>
- [14] Lee-Thompson, L.-C. (2008). An Investigation of Reading Strategies Applied by American Learners of Chinese as a Foreign Language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 41(4), 702-721. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2008.tb03326.x>
- [15] Loh, E. K. Y., & Tam, L. C. W. (2016). Struggling to Thrive: The Impact of Chinese Language Assessments on Social Mobility of Hong Kong Ethnic Minority Youth. *Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 25(5-6), 763-770. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-016-0315-0>
- [16] Ma, X. L., Gong, Y., Gao, X. S., & Xiang, Y. Q. (2017). The teaching of Chinese as a second or foreign language: a systematic review of the literature 2005-2015. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 38(9), 815-830. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2016.1268146>
- [17] Moloney, R., & Xu, H. (2015). Transitioning beliefs in teachers of Chinese as a foreign language: An Australian case study. *Cogent Education*, 2(1), 1024960. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2015.1024960>
- [18] Qi, X. D., & Lai, C. (2017). The effects of deductive instruction and inductive instruction on learners' development of pragmatic competence in the teaching of Chinese as a second language. *System*, 70, 26-37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.08.011>
- [19] Ruan, Y., Duan, X., & Du, X. Y. (2015). Tasks and learner motivation in learning Chinese as a foreign language. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 28(2), 170-190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2015.1032303>
- [20] Shen, H. H., & Xu, W. J. (2015). Active Learning: Qualitative Inquiries Into Vocabulary Instruction in Chinese L2 Classrooms. *Foreign Language Annals*, 48(1), 82-99. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12137>
- [21] Sung, K. Y., & Wu, H. P. (2011). Factors influencing the learning of Chinese characters. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 14(6), 683-700. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2011.571658>
- [22] Tong, X. L., & Yip, J. H. Y. (2015). Cracking the Chinese character: radical sensitivity in learners of Chinese as a foreign language and its relationship to Chinese word reading. *Reading and Writing*, 28(2), 159-181. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-014-9519-y>
- [23] Wang, D., Moloney, R., & Li, Z. (2013). Towards Internationalising the Curriculum: A Case Study of Chinese Language Teacher Education Programs in China and Australia. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(9), 116-135.
- [24] Wang, S. (2010). Chinese Language Education in the United States: A Historical Overview and Future Directions. In J. Cai, J. Chen & C. Wang (Eds.), *Teaching and Learning Chinese: Issues and Perspectives*. (pp. 3-32). IAP.
- [25] Winke, P. M., & Abbuhl, R. (2007). Taking a Closer Look at Vocabulary Learning Strategies: A Case Study of a Chinese Foreign Language Class. *Foreign Language Annals*, 40(4), 697-712. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2007.tb02888.x>
- [26] Xu, J. (2020). Machine Translation for Editing Compositions in a Chinese Language Class: Task Design and Student Beliefs. *Journal of Technology and Chinese Language Teaching*, 11(1), 1-18.
- [27] Xu, X., & Padilla, A. M. (2013). Using Meaningful Interpretation and Chunking to Enhance Memory: The Case of Chinese Character Learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 46(3), 402-422. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12039>
- [28] Xu, Y., Chang, L. Y., & Perfetti, C. A. (2014). The Effect of Radical-Based Grouping in Character Learning in Chinese as a Foreign Language. *Modern Language Journal*, 98(3), 773-793. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2014.12122.x>
- [29] Yang, S. H. (2008). Narrative of a cross-cultural language teaching experience: Conflicts between theory and practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(6), 1564-1572. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2007.12.003>
- [30] Yue, Y. (2017). Teaching Chinese in K-12 Schools in the United States: What Are the Challenges? *Foreign Language Annals*, 50(3), 601-620. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12277>
- [31] Zhang, G. X., & Li, L. M. (2010). Chinese language teaching in the UK: present and future. *Language Learning Journal*, 38(1), 87-97. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571731003620689>
- [32] Zhang, H., Wu, J., & Zhu, Y. (2020). Why do you choose to teach Chinese as a second language? A study of pre-service CSL teachers' motivations. *System*, 91(102242). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102242>
- [33] Zhou, W. Y., & Li, G. F. (2015). Chinese language teachers' expectations and perceptions of American students' behavior: Exploring the nexus of cultural differences and classroom management. *System*, 49, 17-27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2014.10.011>



**Siqi Deng** is a PhD candidate majoring in Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages, at the School of Chinese Language and Literature Beijing Foreign Studies University. She graduated from Shanghai Normal University and Fudan University, China. She takes an interest in second language acquisition and corpus linguistics. E-mail: dengsiqi05@bfsu.edu.cn



**Xiao Xie** (Orlando) is a PhD candidate majoring in the English Language, at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia. He graduated from Sichuan University and Sun Yat-sen University, China. He takes a lively interest in peer feedback, argumentative writing and language assessment literacy. E-mail: [gs58879@student.upm.edu.my](mailto:gs58879@student.upm.edu.my)



# EFL Teachers' Practices and Challenges Towards Implementing Critical Thinking Skills Online During Covid-19 Pandemic

Nasser Alasmari

Department of English & Translation, University of Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—This study examined the extent to which EFL teachers at the University of Jeddah are aware of the importance of implementing critical thinking skills. It also investigated their practices of such skills while teaching remotely and discussed the current impediments that distract the effective application and acquisition of such skills by the Saudi learners. Data came from a teacher's questionnaire and semi-structured interviews carried out online. The results found were congruent with other topic-related researches in some aspects and incongruent in some other aspects. As a matter of fact, the EFL teachers in this work believed in the importance of teaching critical thinking to their learners, however, their teaching practices do not reflect this belief. One of the important variables that distract the effective development of critical thinking is the learners' disengagement. More and more researches need to be conducted to investigate the relationship between the aforementioned variables.

**Index Terms**—online learning, critical thinking skills, English as a foreign language (EFL), Covid19 pandemic, challenges

## I. INTRODUCTION

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought about changes in the global economy as well as booms in technology which makes the acquisition of learning strategies, technological skills and career competence a primordial demand that should be met by students all over the world irrespective of the discipline they are specialized in. In fact, these requirements have put much stress on schools which are the primary actors whose function is to reshape the educational picture, when need be, in a way that helps professional development, boosts e-learning innovation and promotes digital literacy (cited in Fandino, 2013). Learners, worldwide, are expected to acquire certain skills in order to function successfully in a rapidly evolving digital society. These skills, also defined as competencies are different from the traditional academic ones as they are not basically emphasizing "content". This shift from content-based approaches to process-based ones is justified by the fact that we are living in an era where information is very much more easily accessed than at any previous time therefore skills, not facts, are highly imparted. The way "how" information is gained becomes more important than the information itself. In more particular terms, in education, "teaching skills" or "teaching knowledge" has always been a debatable issue that was based on an assumption that the latter will detract from the former. However, new educational trends and reforms have foregrounded the importance of equipping learners with particular skills that would enable them to thrive in their future jobs. Such skills are particularly termed 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and derive their importance from the results the students will reap when developing and effectively practice them later in the marketplace. These skills are said to enable learners to "*meet the challenges brought about by technological advancements and changes in the global economic structure, and therefore play a more central part in sustaining the development of their society*" (Reynolds et al., 2016, p.6). Accordingly, the acquisition of these skills becomes a necessity. A common classification of these skills encompasses three main sets:

1. Learning and innovation skills: critical thinking and problem solving, communications and collaboration, creativity and innovation.
2. Digital literacy skills: information literacy, media literacy, Information and communication technologies (ICT) literacy
3. Career and life skills: flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural interaction, productivity and accountability.

No literature is available on whether one of the above-mentioned skills overtakes another. By contrast, each of these skills is identified as a key quality of progressive education that stresses the learner-centered approach, the current form of pedagogy. However, providing insights on the applicability of every single skill goes beyond the scope of this work which emphasizes the critical thinking skills. In fact, this emphasis is based on the claim of Rotherham and Willingham (2009) who foregrounded problem solving and critical thinking as the two skills mostly required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### A. Rationale

The effectiveness and advantages of learning and developing 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are evident nowadays. However, in Saudi Arabia, few researches, if any, were conducted on these skills in general and on critical thinking in particular. Hence, this work would potentially add to the critical thinking skills literature, their implementations, development, and the challenges associated with their online application as it provides insights on such skills in a relatively unexplored educational setting namely; University of Jeddah which is a newly founded establishment. This, in turn, would pave the way for more researches to be carried out in this field.

In more particular terms and when it comes to the critical thinking skills, many authors claimed that they are “hard to teach” which implies that they are hard to learn as well. Saavedra and Opfer (2012), for example, argued that it is difficult to teach these skills and owed this to their complex nature and the challenge they pose when being taught or assessed. They added that modern educational system is criticized in that it doesn’t do “enough” to teach such skills. The resort to distant learning in the recent years due to the covid- 19 pandemic doubled the challenge. To quote Tathahira (2020) “bringing critical thinking into online-based learning at the same time challenges educational practitioners, in particular the teachers” (p.84). This urges the conduct of this paper which will give the answer to the question if this holds true in a Saudi higher education setting namely; the University of Jeddah.

### B. Objectives

The current work aims to examine the extent to which EFL teachers at the University of Jeddah are aware of the importance of implementing critical thinking skills, it also investigates their practices of such skills while teaching remotely and discusses the current impediments that distract the effective application and acquisition of such skills. Pedagogical implications and guidelines on the effective online deployment of critical thinking skills make up the last objective of this paper.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Critical Thinking Defined

To begin with, it is crucial to maintain that a commonly agreed on definition of critical thinking does not exist but it varies according to the motivation behind applying it. In general terms, this skill refers to the ability to think in an organized and rational way so as to grasp connections between different ideas and facts. To quote Scriven & Paul (2007), critical thinking is “the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action” (p. 1).

Historically speaking, the roots of critical thinking date back to Socrates’ time who defended the technique of asking deep questions that probe profoundly into thinking before accepting ideas dogmatically. However, the critical thinking term was first introduced by Dewey (1910) as an educational goal to refer to “scientific attitude of mind”. He suggested such different terminologies to the same term as ‘reflective thought’, ‘reflective thinking’, ‘reflection’, or just ‘thought’ or ‘thinking’. Within educational boundaries, critical thinking is based on the idea of helping learners sense a problem and think critically and reflectively to find a solution. Thus, their work in the classroom becomes to solve a problem rather than merely learn a lesson. The Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association (1943) defined this skill as the “*quality of thought operating in an effort to solve the problem and to reach a tentative conclusion which is supported by all available data. It is really a process of problem solving requiring the use of creative insight, intellectual honesty, and sound judgment*” (745–746).

Al-Mubaid (2014) explained that critical thinking is a process of mental activity that involves high quality and high level of thinking and triggers the active and skillful conceptualization, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of facts and information in order to come up with conclusions about or solutions to a certain problem.

### B. Elements and Steps to Think Critically

The elements that make up critical thinking are strongly interrelated with its definition. Because critical thinking refers to the act of generating and processing information and contrast with the mere act of simple “retention” of such information, the major elements are identified as components that are sternly connected such skill namely;

- evaluating information
- creative thinking
- learning and problem solving
- communication

As a matter of fact, learners are said to think critically if they successfully:

- identify the problem or question: learners tend to be precise as they go straightforward to the issue. They find it easy to give solutions or answers.
- collect data, arguments and points of view: learners become able to use different sources of information with different ideas from different perspectives.
- analyze and evaluate information: learners are able to distinguish reliable information from those which are not. They come to provide enough information to support their hypotheses.
- identify assumptions: learners should make sure that they are unbiased when looking for answers.

- give meaning and establish significance: learners become skilled in identifying the most important information, provide appropriate sample size, and give opinions and arguments that are relevant to the raised issue.
- make decisions and come up with conclusions: at this stage, learners are able to come up with different conclusions and decide the ones that are sufficiently supported. They are also able to assume the strengths and limitations of each possible conclusion.
- present or communicate learners are now able to communicate and present the conclusion (s) they come up with.

### *C. The Need to Teach CT*

Critical thinking is depicted by Reynolds et al. (2016), among other skills under the umbrella of the same set, as “indispensable” for the students to develop in order to be prepared to overcome the pressures of the competitive global market in the future. Snyder and Snyder (2008), on the other hand, asserted that critical thinking skills enable learners to think effectively of and hence find solutions to all kinds of problems be they social, practical or scientific. They added that those who possess such skills can easily come up with feasible and particular solutions to both common and outlandish issues. Within similar lines of thought, Murawski (2014) confirmed that, when learning and developing critical thinking skills, not only do learners take charge of their learning, ask deeper questions that lead to more thoughtful approach to the learning process, but also get prepared to potentially invade the market place in a more effective way. At early stages of learning pupils may not need to develop their critical thinking skills. Rote learning is enough to help them acquire the basic knowledge by listening, watching, repeating and doing. In contrast, mature students need critical thinking because at higher education levels, they have to experience personalization, investigation and problem-solving (Hughes, 2014).

### *D. The EFL Teachers Practices of Critical Thinking*

Masadeh (2021) argued that teachers are the first actors who should be in charge of improving the critical thinking skills of their students and complained that most of them misunderstand this task. He stressed the need to focus on the teaching methods and beliefs of these teachers because “deep and meaningful learning that requires critical understanding of the learning material yields critical thinking” (p.186). In the same vein, Kavanoz & Akbaş (2017) stipulated that teachers will only be able to help their learners develop their critical thinking skills if they themselves have the appropriate understanding and knowledge of the skill. They should depict such skills as the cognitive process that involves raising the same issue from different perspectives. Other teachers’ practices should include training the learners to make appraisals, apply information and judge reasonably. Smetanová et al. (2015) insisted that one of the teachers’ responsibilities is to help their learners develop their critical skills. This can be achieved if they train them to focus on details in order to realize that there is always more than one way to look at the same issue. The same authors explained that such practices should be preceded by providing the learners with a theoretical overview of what critical thinking is. Ennis (2013), on the other hand, foregrounded the teacher’s understanding, interest and awareness of the importance of the critical thinking skill as primordial factors that guarantee the effective development of such skills. He reported that teachers’ role, in this respect, is “vital”. Concomitantly, Tosuncuoglu (2018) carried out a research in Turkey in order to examine the learners’ awareness and perception of critical thinking. He concluded that teachers should start by themselves and be trained to be critical thinkers in order to effectively play their roles as facilitators. Once done, they become more able to promote their students critical thinking abilities and practice them in classrooms. Additionally, Meiramova (2017) provided an example of how teachers can integrate critical thinking in their classrooms and suggested some helpful strategies to do so. She emphasized the fact that it is the instructor’s task to foster their learners’ critical thinking skills by motivating them to think autonomously. To this end, these instructors should “reevaluate and reconsider their ways of teaching”. She also added that their lesson plans need to incorporate “well-defined learning goals and objectives” where the aforementioned skills are considered. In practical terms, this author utilized a lesson designed for upper-intermediate level Kazakhstani learners. It contained such questions as what do you mean by....?, others for assumptions like: what are you assuming by that? and for reasoning like: how do you know? Which had as purpose to direct learners to construct knowledge? Results showed that learners were highly motivated to talk to each other, participate in the running discussion and thus think critically. This researcher stated that there is a way to integrate critical thinking in EFL by engaging students in well-planned tasks.

According to Snyder and Snyder (2008), critical thinking is a skill that can be acquired through instruction and practice. This implies the important role of teachers to help their learners develop such skills. To this end, they suggested few helpful steps such as the use of instructional strategies that would dynamically help learners engage in the learning process rather than focusing on memorizing content. This can be done when performing tasks that trigger their intellectual challenge rather mere memory recall. Instructors, according to the same authors, can also sensitize their learners of the importance of critical thinking skills by explaining the need to shift focus from lecture- based rote learning to process- based learning. Tathahira (2020) recommended that “the higher educational practitioners including teachers and institutions are challenged to design and choose the proper methods and techniques in teaching critical thinking supported by online activity” (p.85).

### *E. Challenges to Applying Critical Thinking Remotely*

Despite the evidenced importance of and need for critical thinking skills, their applicability in classrooms is still lagging behind. The situation is even more issuable when teaching remotely. As a matter of fact and with the spread out and evolution of the corona virus disease 19 (Covid-19), educators worldwide are left with no choice but using the virtual environment to support students education. As articulated by Rosalina et al. (2020), this transition from face- to-face to online learning would spawn more challenges to both teachers and students. The fact that teachers suddenly move to distant learning and still are required to incorporate critical thinking skills is a challenge itself. This implies that the implementation of critical thinking skills in online classes would not be an “easy” task as conveyed by Tathahira (2020). In another respect, Snyder and Snyder (2008) complained that instructors still “struggle” to incorporate critical thinking activities into the curriculum, and if done, learners do not engage in such activities, they rarely use such skills to solve authentic or complex problems. The same authors attributed these difficulties to the instructional methods used in academic settings.

#### *(a). Technology- Related Challenges*

Tathahira (2020) argued that the development of the students’ critical thinking skills is one of the criteria that measure the effectiveness of distant learning. She added that teaching critical thinking skills through an online based process would attract the learners’ interest and therefore help them reach a higher level of knowledge. As a matter of fact, the mastery of technology, nowadays, becomes a must for the teachers however some of them still lack this knowledge. Arend (2009), for example, complained that some EFL instructors ignore the way how to design and thus decide the best method through the online-based activity to foster critical thinking. Indeed, this issue of incorporating critical thinking skills has always been critical and becomes more complicated when combined with the lack of online instructional techniques mastery (Mandernach et al., 2009).

#### *(b). Learner- Related Challenges*

Becirovic et al. (2019) conducted a research in many schools in both Turkey and Bosnia and argued that the learners’ grade level correlates significantly to their critical thinking abilities. They argued that learners with a higher competency level outperformed their counterparts whose level is lower. Abdul Hafedh (2021), on the other hand, summarized the different barriers that may hamper the effective integration of the critical thinking skills and concern the learners in demotivation, the absence of interest and more importantly the “lack of information background”. He explained that learners found it difficult to relate the materials taught to their own lives. The same learners, as he claimed, do not use the internet as a source of information to bridge this gap and owed this defect to the old- fashioned educational system that focuses on memorization. Samanhudi and Sampurna (2010) carried out a research whose subjects were Indonesian university students and found that learners with no prior knowledge of the subject are less likely to develop critical thinking skills. They believe that a topic that does not raise the students’ interest or satisfy their desire for learning would not trigger their reasoning skill, a skill that mirrors critical thinking behavior. Lorencová et al. (2019) added that apart from the lack of motivation from the part of students, some of the latter are not prepared to use technology or certain methods such as “debate” to develop their critical thinking skills. Similarly, Kim and Pollard (2017) raised the issue of the learners’ disengagement in performing certain tasks as an impediment that distracts the incorporation of critical thinking skills, especially in case of remote learning where the teachers’ control is very limited. They complained that the learners showed a reluctance to perform tasks that trigger their critical thinking abilities or voice their views about topics discussed in online classes.

#### *(c). Challenges Related to Teachers and Their Teaching Method*

Teachers are complaining about the lack of time to explicitly teach critical thinking skills said to develop cognitive flexibility when the pacing guide of the course is mainly content- based rather than skill- based. The focus on “teaching to the test”, as revealed by Landsman & Gorski (2007), also undermines the learning process as it emphasizes the content. This makes the students less prepared or trained to practice and acquire such skills. As a matter of fact, building critical thinking abilities requires time. Time to support learners to explore, evaluate and discuss new ideas from different perspectives. However, time is devoted to rote learning and memorization which seems useless with the unlimited content available online.

Within the same lines of thought, Abrami et al. (2015) argued that despite the negative feedback the traditional mode of teaching receives, most English teachers still instruct their students to use rote memorization in classes that are mainly lecture- based. Active- targeted training through an inquiry- based instruction can improve the students’ critical thinking abilities. They maintained that the learners’ critical thinking skills develop when instructors focus on teaching such skills in an explicit purposeful way. Indeed, teaching methods that use intentional pedagogical instructions of critical thinking prove to be more effective than the implicit inclusion of such skills. In the same respect, Tosuncuoglu (2018) confirmed that the EFL teachers devote most of their teaching time to “transfer knowledge” thus ignoring, intentionally or unintentionally, their role to orient learners to think critically through interpreting, analyzing, synthesizing and evaluation. This only leads, according to the same author, to an “extensive coverage of content and mindless drill...”, which is no longer the ultimate end of modern education.

#### *F. Research Questions*

On the light of the objectives mentioned above, the present paper seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are the EFL teachers at the University of Jeddah aware of the importance of critical thinking skills?
2. How do the EFL teachers at the University of Jeddah help their learners develop their critical thinking skills online?
3. What impediments may distract the effective deployment and thus development of critical thinking skills in EFL online classrooms?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Subjects

The current work is based on data collected from a group of 26 non- native English language teachers who are currently working at the English Language Institute (ELI), a branch of Jeddah University, Saudi Arabia. These participants come from different countries and have a varying teaching experience ranging from 8 to 17 years. They are either holders of master or PhD degrees in applied linguistics or literature and teach the different English language skills namely; speaking, listening, reading and writing. All of them are practicing the online teaching as a part of their duties due to the sudden interruption of face- to- face mode of teaching.

#### B. Instruments

The first instrument used to gather data needed for the conduct of this research was a teacher's questionnaire (Appendix I) which was developed by the researcher himself and sent via email to the concerned subjects to complete. It includes three main parts. The first part aims to explore the extent to which EFL teachers are aware of the importance of implementing critical thinking skills especially online. The second part, on the other hand, investigates their practices of such skills while teaching online. Still, the third part focuses on the challenges they face while doing so. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (1= Not really – 2= No – 3= No idea – 4= True- 5= Definitely true).

The second instrument for data collection used in this work was a phone semi-structured interview (appendix II), whose aims were to measure the extent to which the EFL instructors are aware of the importance of critical thinking skills and their incorporation in the curriculum, to spot their practices when implementing these skills and to identify the difficulties that distract them from effectively doing so. The teachers' responses were thematically analyzed according to the goals to be met. As revealed by Dunn (2005), the semi-structured interview has some degree of predetermined order but still guarantee some degree of flexibility in the way issues are dealt with by the respondents. In effect, the interviewer follows the guide, but is still able to follow topical trajectories in the dialogue that could be different from the guide if necessary.

### IV. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

TABLE 1  
RESULTS RELATED TO EFL TEACHERS AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPLEMENTING CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

	Statement	NR (%)	N (%)	NI (%)	T (%)	DT (%)
1	I have a clear understanding of what critical thinking is and what it actually involves.	0	11	13	43	33
2	Critical thinking skills should be regarded as important as other components of the teaching process.	0	7	10	26	57
3	Development of these skills should take place from primary education and extends to higher education for the sake of developing students' problem-solving abilities.	19	31	3	26	21
4	It is necessary to integrate critical thinking into the ELT course.	2	0	0	88	10
5	Critical thinking is even more important for English language teaching classes than other subjects	3	4	4	65	24
6	It is the primary job of the EFL teacher to teach critical thinking	10	12	7	39	32
7	Training should be devoted to EFL teachers on how to incorporate critical thinking skills in the curriculum.	8	9	10	41	32

Table 1 above reflects the results concerning question one of the current research namely; the extent to which the EFL teachers are aware of the importance of the critical thinking skills. As a matter of fact, the responses towards the different statements did not have wide variations as the average response value almost reached 5. As such, the EFL teachers informing this research are evidently conscious of the importance of critical thinking skills for students to

master. Thus, perceive its integration in the curriculum as “necessary”. They find it especially important for higher education learners and it is even more needed in English language teaching classes. The interview’s findings supported those of the questionnaire as the informants confirmed the substantial role of critical thinking skills for the 21st century learners so as they become able to solve problems, take effective decisions and become efficient in their workplace at later stages. This goes in line with the findings of Al-Mubaid (2014) who asserted that “critical thinking is very crucial for delivering quality learning in any subject and content area” (p.34).

TABLE 2  
RESULTS RELATED TO EFL TEACHERS PRACTICES OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS WHILE TEACHING ONLINE

	Statement	NR (%)	N (%)	NI (%)	T (%)	DT (%)
8	I design a course content that sensitize my students of the importance of the critical thinking skills when learning online.	30	42	0	18	10
9	I always teach critical thinking explicitly to my students when learning online.	56	30	0	7	7
10	I guide my students to raise questions and issues in a clearly and precisely formulated way when learning online.	40	32	0	17	11
11	I help my students gather and assess relevant information when learning online.	62	33	0	3	2
12	I instruct my students to interpret abstract ideas to come up with reasonable solutions when learning online.	57	29	0	4	10
13	I instruct my students to use their previous knowledge to create new situations when learning online.	49	38	0	8	5
14	I build critical thinking explanations and exercises into most of my English online classes.	69	28	0	1	2

With reference to table 2 which aims to answer the second question of this paper, no noticeable variation in the informants’ responses was spotted. Indeed, the average response value did not go beyond 2. This entails that the teachers rarely incorporate critical thinking skills when teaching online. As the table shows, most of the respondents (86%) do not teach critical thinking explicitly. Most of their answers to such statements as “I instruct my students to use their previous knowledge to create new situations when learning online” (87%) and “I build critical thinking explanations and exercises into most of my English online classes” (97%), range between “not really” and “no”. This reflects that the EFL teachers do not use strategies or methods that help learners think critically or at least as frequently as they are supposed to do. This, in turn, could be attributed to the different challenges these instructors might have faced. Similarly, the informants’ answers to the different questions on the interview indicate that these teachers are not satisfactorily practicing such skills as they are not doing so on a regular basis. The same findings were come up with by Noulia (2018) who argued that the language instructors refuse to teach strategies that enhance their learners’ critical thinking skills and owed this behavior to their total reliance on traditional teaching methods which are mainly “content-based”.

TABLE 3  
RESULTS RELATED TO CHALLENGES THAT EFL TEACHERS FACE WHILE PRACTICING OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS WHILE TEACHING ONLINE

	Statement	NR (%)	N (%)	NI (%)	T (%)	DT (%)
15	Technology proficiency level of the teacher is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.	85	10	0	0	5
16	Technology proficiency level of the learner is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.	78	12	1	9	0
17	Language proficiency level of the learner is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.	23	52	2	6	7
18	The content of the digital book does not facilitate the incorporation of the critical thinking skills in online classes.	15	15	14	30	26
19	The students are neither motivated to nor engaged in doing tasks that boost critical thinking skills.	0	15	1	66	18
20	Teachers do not have enough time to provide tasks that develop critical thinking skills.	20	10	3	31	36
21	The teaching method used online does not help develop the students critical thinking.	10	9	4	56	21

As Table 3 above indicates, technology proficiency level does not stand as a strong impediment that hinders the practicing of the critical thinking skills neither from the part of the teachers nor the learners. This contrasts with the claims of Tathahira (2020) who insisted that some of the teachers still lack technology knowledge. As a matter of fact,

the smooth and successful transition to the online mode of learning proved the effectively established digital network in Saudi Arabia in general. Before the pandemic hit, information and communication technologies (ICT) in Saudi Arabia were available which asserted the continuity of instruction and learning when face- to- face teaching was interrupted during the pandemic (Mann et al., 2020).

Interestingly, most of the teachers asserted that the students' language proficiency level, despite its importance, does not stand as strong impediment that distracts the development of the critical thinking skills because most of them resort to their native language to express their ideas. This goes in line with the findings of Abdul Hafedh (2021) who found no significant relationship between the two variables namely; language proficiency and critical thinking development. As stated by his informants in the research, the language proficiency is not a huge barrier or at least not a basic one as learners can convey their ideas in their own language. To quote him "Of course, proficiency plays a role, but it cannot be the main barrier to teaching critical thinking in EFL classes." (p.3). Thematic analysis of the interview indicates that the use of the native language is very frequent among the Saudi learners and thus "their English level cannot be considered as one of the challenges that hampers the development of their critical thinking skills," as claimed by one of the teachers informing this study.

As seen in Table 3, the students demotivation and disengagement are considered as strong impeding factors that distract the implementation and incorporation of critical thinking skills as most of the answers ranged between "true" and "definitely true". As a matter of fact, the informants' responses in the interview highlighted this issue and insisted that it is not only related to critical thinking. They complained that despite their students advanced level in the use of technology, teaching online couldn't help engage them in the learning process in general which implies the difficulty to develop any skills including critical thinking. In effect, these results contrast with those found by Rizk and Davies (2021) who tried to answer the question if digital technology can bridge the classroom engagement Gap. These authors revealed that learners "engaged easily and enthusiastically with digital technology" (p.1). Given that this was not the Saudi case, more research is needed to identify the reasons why Saudi learners do not show signs of engagement even with the use of technology.

#### *A. Pedagogical Recommendations*

Even though they are conscious of the importance of the e critical thinking skills and the substantial role play in improving the performance of their learners, the current research participants still lack deep indulge in incorporating such skills in the teaching process. This is owed somehow to the different challenges these participants face but more researches are needed to profoundly investigate the reasons behind such gap and thus suggest more practical solutions to bridge it. For instance, training the teachers/ instructors on how to teach skills and helping them move from teaching knowledge to teaching skill will lead to improve their learners' critical thinking metrics.

As elucidated by Itmeizeh and Hassan (2020), the educational methods used to English language as a foreign language have a great influence on critical skills learning. As a matter of fact, the adoption of new educational practices in addition to the strong emphasis on the learner's self- regulation and autonomy that stems from the learner- centered orientation would promote the critical skills of the learner. To quote Clement (1979) stated that "we should be teaching students how to think. Instead, we are teaching them what to think" (p. 1).

The relatively advanced level in terms of technology mastery both instructors and students in the Saudi educational establishment display can stand as a strong pillar that help in engaging the learners in the learning process in general and in enhancing their critical thinking in particular. Instructors, in this very respect, should find ways how to develop digitally formulated tasks that can meet such goals.

Undeniably, teachers make up an integral part in the educational process, their stand as a support for the learners would yield to better achievements regardless of the point in focus. Their practices count. Such practices could include, clear instructions and appropriate guidance of the students to use critical thinking skills appropriately, the provision of relevant and life- related knowledge to avoid any confusion. Teachers can also be models for their learners and put critical thinking into action and support to help them acquire and develop these skills.

#### *B. Limitations*

Before moving on to concluding points, it seems worthy to note that the results of the current work might be confounded and thus limited by a number of issues, namely; the relatively short time taken to carry out this research. Hence the need for more studies that would focus on the application of the critical thinking skills over a considerable amount of time are very much higher recommended for the sake of reliability as suggested by Zhao (2003). Furthermore, the conclusions drawn through this research are mainly based on the opinions of a restricted number of teachers and despite their undeniable importance, attitudes alone cannot be reliable to measure the effective incorporation of skills in teaching. Thus, the use of classroom observation as a third data collection instrument would have added more reliability on the work. One more limitation has to do with the exclusion of students. According to Pelgrum and Plomp (1996), students are an important element in the teaching/ learning process, thus, their views about what helps to improve their learning is substantial. In this respect, an exploration of the students' views and practices of the critical thinking skills seem to be significant if a better understanding of these skills is to be achieved.

### V. CONCLUSION

Despite the substantial role critical thinking skills play in developing the learners which the instructors, in this paper, strongly believe in and are conscious about, a lack of practice for such skills predominantly exists in the Saudi online classrooms. Accordingly, a particular focus on such gap is highly required. Teacher training, for instance can help bridge this gap. In addition, the technological advancement and expertise both teachers and students enjoy in Saudi Arabia could help develop the students' skills in general and their critical thinking ones in particular. The use of digital devices would boost the learners' engagement which, in turn, would help them think critically. Future research may focus on such factor as student engagement and the different ways how to boost it in order to help learners master the critical thinking skills. In other words, research is needed to give a better understanding of the relationship between student engagement and critical thinking.

## APPENDICES

### A. A Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear colleagues, this questionnaire has as aims to explore the extent to which you are aware of the importance of incorporating critical thinking skills while teaching online. It also investigates your practices as well as the potential difficulties you could have faced while trying to implement such skills online. Please complete all items even if you feel that some are redundant. This may take 30-40 minutes of your time. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Instructions: Please read each statement and then tick the number which best reflects your answer.

1= Not Really    2= No    3= No Idea    4= True    5= Definitely True

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Your awareness of the importance of critical thinking skills</b>					
1. I have a clear understanding of what critical thinking is and what it actually involves.					
2. critical thinking skills should be regarded as important as other components of the teaching process.					
3. Development of these skills should take place from primary education and extends to higher education for the sake of developing students' problem-solving abilities					
4. It is necessary to integrate critical thinking into the ELT course					
5. Critical thinking is even more important for English language teaching classes than other subjects					
6. It is the primary job of the EFL teacher to teach critical thinking					
7. Training should be devoted to EFL teachers on how to incorporate critical thinking skills in the curriculum.					
<b>Your practices of critical thinking online</b>					
8. I design a course content that sensitize my students of the importance of the critical thinking skills when learning online.					
9. I always teach critical thinking explicitly to my students when learning online.					
10. I guide my students to raise questions and issues in a clearly and precisely formulated way when learning online.					
11. I help my students gather and assess relevant information when learning online.					
12. I instruct my students to interpret abstract ideas to come up with reasonable solutions when learning online.					
13. I instruct my students to use their previous knowledge to create new situations when learning online.					
14. I build critical thinking explanations and exercises into most of my English online classes.					
<b>The challenges that distract the implementation of critical thinking</b>					
15. Technology proficiency level of the teacher is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.					
16. Technology proficiency level of the learner is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.					
17. Language proficiency level of the learner is one of the impediments that distracts the effective integration of critical thinking skills when teaching online.					
18. The content of the digital book does not facilitate the incorporation of the critical thinking skills in online classes					
19. The students are neither motivated to nor engaged in doing tasks that boost critical thinking skills					
20. Teachers do not have enough time to provide tasks that develop critical thinking skills					
21. The teaching method used online does not help develop the students critical thinking.					

### B. Teacher Semi-Structured Interview

1. What is critical thinking?
2. What does "critical thinking skills" refer to?
3. How important is it to incorporate critical thinking skills in teaching your course?



4. How frequently do you apply critical thinking skills in your classroom?
5. What are the differences between incorporating critical thinking activities in regular classes and online?
6. What activities do you design to help your students promote their critical thinking skills?
7. What student- related challenges do you face when applying critical thinking activities raise online?
8. What teacher- related challenges do you face when applying critical thinking activities raise online?
9. What content- related challenges do you face when applying critical thinking activities raise online?
10. What technology- related challenges do you face when applying critical thinking activities raise online?
11. What other challenges do you face when applying critical thinking activities online?
12. Are the challenges you face when teaching online the same as the ones you confront when you deliver your course in regular classrooms?

## REFERENCES

- [1] Abdul Hafedh, A. (2021). *Critical Thinking: EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Barriers*. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356419011>
- [2] Abrami, P., Bernard, R.B., Borokhovski, E., and Waddington, D.I. (2015). Strategies for Teaching Students to Think Critically: A Meta-Analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 85(2), 275-314.
- [3] Al-Mubaid, H. (2014). A New Method for Promoting Critical Thinking in Online Education. *iJAC*, 7(4), 34-37. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654314551063>
- [4] Arend, B. (2009). Encouraging critical thinking in online thread discussions. *Journal of Educators Online*, 6(1), 1-23.
- [5] Bećirović, S., Hodžić, F., & Brdarević-Čeljo, A. (2019) The Problems of Contemporary Education: Critical Thinking Development in the Milieu of High School Education. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 8(3), 469–482. <http://doi.org/10.13187/ejced.2019.3.469>
- [6] Clement, J. (1979). Introduction to research in cognitive process instruction. In Lochhead, J. and Clement, J. (Eds.), *Cognitive process instruction*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- [7] Commission on the Relation of School and College of the Progressive Education Association. (1943). *Thirty Schools Tell Their Story*, Volume V of *Adventure in American Education*, New York and London: Harper & Brothers.
- [8] Dunn, K. (2005). *Interviewing*. In *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. 2nd ed. ed. Iain Hay. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [9] Dewey, J. (1910). *How We Think*, Boston: D.C. Heath. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from: [https://openlibrary.org/books/OL7236952M/How\\_we\\_think](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL7236952M/How_we_think)
- [10] Fandino, Y.J. (2013). 21st Century Skills and the English Foreign Language Classroom: A Call for More Awareness in Colombia. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*, 7, 190-208.
- [11] Ennis, R. H. (2013). "Critical thinking across the curriculum (CTAC)". OSSA Conference Archive. 44.
- [12] Hughes, J. (2014a). *Critical Thinking in the Language Classroom*. Recanati (Italy): ELI. Retrieved April, 10, 2022, from: <http://www.elionline.com/eng/teachers-area/critical-thinking>.
- [13] Itmeizeh, M, and Hassan, A. (2020). New Approaches to Teaching Critical Thinking Skills through a New EFL Curriculum. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24 (7), 8864-8885. <http://doi.org/10.37200/IJPR/V24I7/PR270871>
- [14] Kang, N., & Howren, C. (2004). Teaching for conceptual understanding. *Science and Children*, 42(1), 28–32.
- [15] Kavanoz, S., & Akbaş S. (2017). EFL teachers' conceptualizations and instructional practices of critical thinking. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET)*, 4(4), 418-433.
- [16] Kim, M.; Pollard, V. (2017). A modest critical pedagogy for English as a foreign language education. *Education as Change*, 21(1), 50–72. <https://doi.org/10.17159/1947-9417/2017/492>
- [17] Landsman, J., & Gorski, P. (2007). Countering standardization. *Educational Leadership*, 64(8), 40–41.
- [18] Lorencová, H., Jarošová, E., Avgitidou, S., and Dimitriadou, C. (2019). Critical Thinking Practices in Teacher Education Programs: A Systematic Review. *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(5), 844–59.
- [19] Mandernach, B. J., Forrest, K. D., Babutzke, J. L., & Manker, L. R. (2009). The role of instructor interactivity in promoting critical thinking in online and face-to-face classrooms. *Merlot Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 5(1), 49-62.
- [20] Mann, A., Schwabe, M., Fraser, P., Füllöp, G., and Ansah, G.A. (2020). *How the Covid-19 Pandemic is Changing Education: A perspective from Saudi Arabia*. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from: <https://www.oecd.org/education/How-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-changing-education-Saudi-Arabia.pdf>
- [21] Masadeh, T.S.Y. (2021). EFL teachers critical thinking behaviors and the challenges facing them in classrooms. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 10 (2): pp. 185-203. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v10i2.112215>
- [22] Meiramova, S. (2017). Applications of critical thinking research: Foreign language teaching in an intercultural context. *The Online Journal of New Horizons in Education*, 7(1), 24-36.
- [23] Murawski, L.M. (2014). Critical Thinking in the Classroom...and Beyond. *Journal of Learning in Higher Education*, 10 (1), 25-30.
- [24] Noula, I. (2018). Critical Thinking and Challenges for Education for Democratic Citizenship: an Ethnographic Study in Primary Schools in Greece. *Educação & Realidade, Porto Alegre*, 43(3), 865-886. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-623674799>
- [25] Pelgrum, W., and Plomp, T. (1991). *The use of computers in education worldwide: Results from a comparative study in 18 countries*. American Educational Research Association. Chicago, IL.
- [26] Reynolds, R., Notari, M., Taveres, N., and Lee, C. (2016). *21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Development Through Enquiry Based Learning from Theory to Practice*. Springer Science.
- [27] Rizk, J., and Davies, S. (2021). *Can Digital Technology Bridge the Classroom Engagement Gap? Findings from a Qualitative Study of K-8 Classrooms in 10 Ontario School Boards*. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10010012>

- [28] Rosalina, E., Nasrullah, N., and Elyani, E. P. (2020). Teacher's Challenges towards Online Learning in Pandemic Era. *LET: Linguistics, Literature, and English Teaching Journal*, 10 (2), 71-88. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18592/let.v10i2.4118>
- [29] Rotherham, A. J., and Willingham, D. (2009). 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills: The Challenges Ahead. *Teaching For the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 67(1), 16-21.
- [30] Samanhudi, U., & Sampurna, P. (2010). *Researching students' critical thinking in EFL writing class (a case study in English education department, Untirta)*. TEFLIN 57th Revitalizing Professionalism in ELT as a Response to Globalized World. Bandung, Indonesia: Indonesia University of Education.
- [31] Saavedra, A., & Opfer, V. (2012). *Teaching and Learning 21st Century Skills: Lessons from the Learning Sciences*. A Global Cities Education Network Report, New York: Asia Society.
- [32] Scriven, M., & Paul, R. (2007). Defining Critical Thinking. *The National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction*, 1-2.
- [33] Snyder, L. G., & Snyder, M. J. (2008). Teaching Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills. *Delta Pi Epsilon Journal*, 50, 90-99.
- [34] Tathahira, T. (2020). Promoting Students' Critical Thinking Through Online Learning in Higher Education: Challenges and Strategies. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, 8(1), 79-92. <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v8i1.6636>
- [35] Tosuncuoglu, I. (2018). Place of Critical Thinking in EFL. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 7(4), 26- 32. : <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v7n4p26>
- [36] Veronika Smetanová, V., Drbalová, A., and Vitáková, D. (2015). Implicit theories of critical thinking in teachers and future teachers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 171, 724 – 732. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.184>
- [37] Zhao, Y. (2003). Recent Development in Technology and Language Learning: A Literature Review and Meta-analysis. *The Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium*, 21 (1), 7-27.

**Nasser Alasmari** holds a PhD in Linguistics from UON, New South Wales, Australia. His areas of interest and research are in the cognitive and contrastive analysis and his main research area is cross-cultural perceptions which he formalised in a number of his current research on this subject. He has taught Applied Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and semantics. He has presented papers at conferences both home and abroad, published articles and papers in various journals, and contributed as a reviewer in several language and linguistics conferences.

# Marriage Break-Ups and Its Effect on Children's Future: An Exploration of the Novel *Custody*

Jayajothilakshmi V

Department of English, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankovil, Tamil Nadu, India

Mohan S

Department of English, Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankovil, Tamil Nadu, India

Kannan R

Department of English, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

**Abstract**—Marriage life needs true commitment, love and respect. Many marriage couples today lack understanding which results in break-ups and divorces. This affects the couple as well as their children. Successful marriage with the couple's loyalty and love make their children grow up in a pleasant atmosphere with good mindset. Optimistic approach of parents, their sacrifice and care among the family members give progressive societal environment to children. The present generation of children is very intellectual in scrutinizing the happenings around them and hence parents need to keep the surrounding perfect. Parental care and secure life are the principal things to be given to the children for their future life. When trust and respect between a husband and wife are ruined, children's trust and respect on their parents will too be spoiled. Especially the separation between a husband and a wife affects their children's future. Their lack of concentration on their children leads their lives to a drastic hole which results in devastation of their future. This study focuses on marriage break-ups and how parents' lifestyle affects children and their holistic growth. It has been applied in Manju Kapur's novel *Custody* which portrays marriage bond through a middle-class family and explains the impact of husband and wife's controversies on children. The existing condition of many families and general issues have been analyzed deeply and presented with reference to the novel. This research article represents essential needs of strong marriage bond and the significance of parents' love for the betterment of children's life.

**Index Terms**—marriage, infidelity, infertility, abandoned children, custody

## I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage life and children's future are interlinked. A happy couple with good understanding can provide an excellent atmosphere for their children to grow with morality and clear mentality. Success of a marriage life is both husband and wife holding their hands on marriage and continuing the bond till the end of their life. Happy marriage life does not lie on luxurious life and money but on understanding and trust. Marriage is a beginning of new life with life-long commitment. A couple should be very conscious in bringing up the child. A child begins to observe the expressions, attitudes, words of its parents and imitates it in one way or another from its childhood. Children are the replications of their parents. Parents' problem solving ability, compassion towards others, self-motivation, and tolerance on others have heavy impact on children. A father and a mother showing love and affection between each other will accomplish in bringing up their children in a proper way and make them good citizens in the society. Healthy mind helps children to lead a peaceful life and problem free days with contentment. In the current scenario, some couples do not stick on a strong bond and hence they get mutual separation after a few years of their marriage, giving lame excuses. Most of the couples are not ready to sacrifice even simple things for the spouse that result in misunderstandings and arguments. In this situation, they fail to think about their children. Unlike olden days, now many couples are leading nuclear family and so either mother or father alone needs to take care of the child. When misunderstanding arises between them, their children become abandoned. They get divorce and start a new life with another man or woman for their well-being. Being intolerable and selfish, they fail to think about the children's life. Those children can express their feelings only through their behavior like being arrogant, adamant, annoyed and disgusting. A child's longing for father or mother's love will be expressed through its action or seeking emotional support. It can be noticed only when the well-wisher of the child observes its behavior. The past life of many children being detached from others or being rude is the result of their parents' failure marriages and wrong decisions. They may be happy with their choices but they fail in fixing the lives of their children in a correct way. Manju Kapur in her novel *Custody* deals with failed marriages and its impact on children. This study shows the dismal marriage life and how it affects children's mentality and how their lives get blemished. Parents and children's lives are interlinked and children reflect what parents do. In this article, parents and children relationship, their impact on one another is carried out with illustrations from Kapur's novel. The real situation of many children is echoed and explored through the novel.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review helps to identify the specific point of this study. Committed relationship and formal arranged marriages are taking place all over the world. Success gained in marriage life differs from one couple to another. An analysis is done on different marriage life experiences of two women (Thomas, 2013) which states the glad and annoyed part of marriage life. Marital relationships are set up on culture, norms of the society where the couple live. Women dare to break out the conventional chains (Santhi, 2015). Studies have been carried out based on women empowerment, uncertainties of matrimony in modern society (Azhar, 2013), extramarital affairs and the consequences (Srilatha, 2016), and traumatic state and adoption healing of abandoned children (Muntean et al., 2012). Financial infidelity (Jeanfreau et al., 2019) is very common in which either man or woman moves into another relationship for financial support. A study has been done on the psychological crisis of the rejected children (Burnstein, 1981). Abandoned children's life with step parents is based on the parenting task or children's age and varies across countries (Arat et al., 2021). This study focuses on the problems in marriage life, post-marital affair of a woman and pathetic state of children who are affected by sociological and psychological problems. It exposes the deviation in marriage life, stress between parents and effect of it on their children.

## III. MARRIAGE IN MANJU KAPUR'S *CUSTODY*

Manju Kapur presents the psyche of women, their desire, conflict, motherliness, and courage in her novels. It marks her unique among other novelists in Indian English Literature. She epitomizes the real-life characters and sets the places, people, incidents and story from her direct observations by visiting many places, meeting various people, interacting with them about the incidents, reading newspaper, etc. These help her to bring out her novels with excellence. She has given life to her characters. "As her novels are based on the issues like marriage, divorce, infertility, infidelity, adoption, sexual abuse along with split up and severance in the family, she is rightly called an 'issue-based writer' by critics" (Sahoo, 2016, p.169).

Marriage is a sacred commitment between two souls with two different attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and thinking. Marriage includes physical, spiritual and emotional union. It is a life-long commitment with sacrificing mind, adjustment, and concern for each other. A husband and a wife being determined in their contrary opinions will result in miserable marriage life. Once the dispute occurs, proper guidance and counselling of practical marriage life are required for the couple's reunion. No couple can be free from controversies, but they could settle their disputes with others help or self-help. One partner's satisfaction and dissatisfaction are connected with each other's emotional well-being (Carr et al., 2015). Blissful marriage life is the couple being faithful to each other having love and understanding. On the day of wedding, several sacraments based on the couple's society will be followed and oaths will be taken. The couple may feel excited with the gathering of relatives and neighbours, and their blessings. Once the rituals and other ceremonies are over, the couple has to live without any dependency on others. Their life prospers in the way they treat and respect each other's feelings after marriage. The real accomplishment of the wedding lies on how the couple adjust each other with love and care till the end. Tolerance makes them to lead a healthy life and being a role model for their children. A good marriage, children and financial security all make a woman blessed (Geetha, 2011).

Manju Kapur, the great Indian woman novelist has dealt with marriage and abandoned children's life in her novel *Custody*. "... *Custody* unfolds a number of lesser-told tales of ordinary family life" (Clements, 2011, p.21). The importance of husband and wife relationship and the impact of that relationship on their children are carefully handled by the author through various incidents.

Manju Kapur's sense of esoteric themes, especially the conflict between husband and wife is the core issue.

The emotional attachment between the husband and the wife is on threat because of internal and external influences they face in their lives from time to time. (Singh, 2015, p.116)

Manju Kapur intensely scrutinizes the children's psyche of divorced parents. She offers an accurate silhouette to those minds via two children in the novel. The author moves her readers to comprehend how a family should be and should not be. She presents three different marriage lifestyles in the novel. These marriage lives are in three different directions, which teach the readers how a husband and a wife should be to nurture their children in a good environment and how they should not avoid leaving the children to a pathetic state.

*Custody* portrays how marital life in India is fast disintegrating and being shaped by extramarital affairs, materialistic pursuits, and so on. It also offers valuable insights into the vulnerability of children of broken marriages and new 'happily divorced and remarried' statuses of Indian couples. (Kumari, 2016, p.62)

Manju Kapur describes the middle class people and the worst circumstances of their marriage life. The story reveals the crises behind their life and the way they rectify the situation. Kapur casts both husband and wife as victims of social changes and modernity. Wife turns out to be the victim of her passion and husband the victim of wife's wrong verdict. Even children are victims without recognizing what really happens around them. Nitonde (2014) says,

The novel is an intimate portrait of marriage and family. It reflects the difficult reality of divorce especially when children are involved... The subject of marriage and divorce and the complications arising out of it have been handled by Kapur in a meticulous manner. (p. 107 – 108)

Conflict in marriage life can be rectified by changing the aspects of their life (Wagner et al., 2019). Nowadays many marriage bonds end easily for trivial reasons and the couples leave without taking any effort to prolong the relationship. Educated people are lined up to seek divorce than uneducated people. A couple bonded with love in the beginning may change after a few years. They imagine that their grand wedding happiness, blossomed love will be with them forever, and fail to realize the fact. In such a state the problem arises, in which some hold the bond overcoming all the problems by standing together, and some give up the bond because of ego. Some divide the bond when he/she finds a better person as partner. Marriage life being peaceful or tragic is in the hands of the couple. "The institution of marriage which in our country is much more than sex and children is thwarted of its sacredness through divorce" (Kumari, 2016, p.61).

In the novel *Custody*, Manju Kapur has dealt with the marriage life of Raman and Shagun, Raman and Ishita, and Ashok Khanna and Shagun in three different ways. Marriage is a beautiful bond uniting two souls. When the two souls have good understanding, true love, honesty, compromise and care for one another, their marriage life becomes a successful one. A couple's entire life will be in a mess when they lack loyalty in relationship. Husband and wife should consider each other alike and admire the spouse's desires. They should learn to take on the life situation they live. Growth in that couple's life needs both their involvements. Problem arises when one longs for a new sophisticated life leaving the spouse. This happens in the life of the middle class couple Raman and Shagun.

Infidelity and infertility are the two main streams of *Custody*. Kapur writes with honesty and emotion, a heart wrenching tale of infidelity, divorce and broken hearts. The story revolves around Raman's family and Ishita's family, the two characters who are the victims in the bond of matrimony. It deals with the trauma of divorce where Kapur explores the minds and hearts of the divorced couple Raman and Shagun, their future spouses and the traumatic effects of the complicated custody arrangement of the children, Arjun and Roohi (Kumari, 2016, p.58).

#### IV. INFIDELITY

"Disclosure of infidelity by a partner may cause feelings of deep pain, hurt, anger and resentment in the non-offending partner and feelings of guilt, shame and loss in the involved partner" (Duggal et al., 2011, p.45). Illegitimate relationship is another reason for increasing number of abandoned children. Men or women who undergo this relationship cannot expose it to the society. As a consequence, they throw their illegitimate child somewhere in orphanage homes or garbage can. It highly affects the children born out of those relationships and they long for parents' love throughout their life. In this taboo, the children are the victims of parents' act.

Raman and Shagun are happy in the beginning of their marriage life. Shagun is a dutiful wife to Raman and Raman is devoted in his love for her. She gets married in her young age and finds some discomfort in moving with the family after delivering two children. Though Raman and Shagun's opinions vary, they live their life adjusting each other. He provides everything that makes her happy and comfortable. They adapt living with the salary of Raman and find their happiness with children spending their time together. "He was the most committed father he knew, on holidays and weekends devoting himself to his son, giving his wife the break she needed" (Kapur, 2011, p.17). He believes that she is satisfied with what he provides her. But he is unaware of her inner feelings. He starts struggling to satisfy the requirements of his family but fails to devote his valuable time for them which is essential. The peace in them disappears when Ashok enters into Raman's life as a boss of the company where he works. Raman is blind to realize the end of his happy marriage life. Shagun's meet with Ashok in a function and Ashok's attraction towards her change the fate of the couple's life. Ashok identifies the need of a person before approaching him/her. "... he must first create a need before he could fulfil it. But he was used to creating needs, it was what he did for a living" (Kapur, 2011, p.4). Ashok's offer to Shagun to act as a model in an advertisement induces her hidden passion which was once suppressed by her mother thinking her future. But fate takes her to the path opposed by her mother. Shagun's desire of becoming a model and living a sophisticated life make her to turn towards Ashok, Raman's boss.

Had he been a home-grown Indian and not the boss, she would have found a way to refuse, but this man had been imported from abroad and she did not want to seem unsophisticated. So she went for coffee, and in the spirit of sophistication, dispassionately revelled in the admiration emanating from him, knowing she was still in a role, and it was nice to play away from home. (Kapur, 2011, p.11)

In the beginning of Ashok and Shagun's relationship, Raman fails to observe the behaviour of Shagun due to his trust on her. The moment he knows her illegal relationship, he is completely shattered. Shagun does not hesitate to move with Ashok leaving her husband and doesn't bother about her family reputation and dignity. She leaves her children to her mother whenever she meets Ashok. After a few months of their contact, Shagun marries Ashok for his fame, background and his promises to her. Raman's destitute state turns him like a mad without knowing how to recover from the situation and meet his children who are under the care of Shagun. He is mentally disturbed till he meets his children Arjun and Roohi. The sour experience in his marriage life converts him to be a new man deviating from his work, being lonely, and longing for something. Shagun doesn't consider her children's future while accepting Ashok Khanna. She imagines her modelling career and high-class life promised by Ashok. Her love for Ashok and her career is her priority than her husband Raman and her children.

Now the destroyer was in her heart, threatening what she had once held dear. All her energy was spent in keeping secrets. She had to be constantly vigilant, continuously invent excuses, convincingly justify absences from home, phone calls, even preoccupied expressions." (Kapur, 2011, p.33)

Manju Kapur has presented the life of women especially their marriage life in her works. She reveals the life of innocent village women living under patriarchal world and modern women struggling to achieve in their life. Kapur's protagonists constantly fight to come up in their life to reach their destinations like completing higher studies and succeeding in profession protesting against their family. Shagun is little different who frankly protests the living life as soon as she gets her dream achieved through another man, Ashok though she is married. She is valiant enough to throw away her family, dignity, and self-respect. She doesn't bother about anything in reaching her destination. She doesn't worry about the way reaching it. Ashok persuades Shagun even after knowing her marriage and motherhood.

The author has pictured Shagun as a negative character and discloses how a woman should not be. A woman like Shagun and a man like Ashok are the real enemies of the society and children's future. Shagun assumes that her dream to be a model has been spoiled by her husband Raman. He moulds her to be a dutiful wife, a sincere daughter-in-law and later a lovable mother of two children and so her entire life is tied around her family. She accuses Raman for her second pregnancy. She starts to think that she squandered her youth and beauty by becoming a wife in an earlier age and it makes her to keep worrying about her future. So this underlying feel turns her mind to accept Ashok when he offers her the chance of modelling and hence lighten her career. When there is a dispute between her new life with Ashok and her children's custody, she gives preference to her new life. She gets divorce from Raman only for her sake. She says, "It's hard to be a wife when your heart is somewhere else. If only I were not a mother, how happy it would be. To leave him, to live with you, just be happy" (Kapur, 2011, p.84). She is loyal neither to her husband nor to her children. Her one decision changes the fate of her children and her husband.

Ashok Khanna and Shagun's marriage is not of pure love but for beauty and passion. So, their marriage is like a dealing and illegitimate affair between an unmarried man and a married woman. They love their intimate life without any guilt, leaving Ashok and children suffer. Shagun is selfish and over ambitious woman who denies the fact that her infidelity is a blow on her children's life.

#### V. INFERTILITY

"In our Indian society infertility is constructed in such a way that even though it affects a couple it is the woman who gets the blame" (Srilatha, 2016, p. 80). In the novel *Custody*, Manju Kapur presents the pathetic state of a young woman Ishita. Ishita's husband leaves her for her infertility which makes her to think her life is a failure. Infertile women like Ishita keep on thinking to carry and own at least one child. Sometimes a couple's love for each other and emotional bond they had together for months or years vanish at the moment the husband confirms that his wife is barren. Kapur accurately portrays this concept through the couple Ishita and Suryakanta's life. To Suryakanta and his family, Ishita is nothing when she fails to deliver a baby. They forget that she has a heart and feelings in it and prick her often pointing her physical weakness. Suryakanta's parents decide to drive her away from his life and he too agrees with his parents' decision. His bond with his wife ends due to one reason, infertility. "A single man or a man without children is seen as unfortunate, but a woman in a similar situation is inauspicious, probably dangerous" (Kumari, 2016, p. 64). Inability to bear a child and others' pricking words bury Ishita when she is alive.

Temperament of infertile women is clearly painted by Kapur through the character Ishita. "The mental turmoil and physical torture of Ishita is a common sight to be found in many middle-class families" (Nitonde, 2014, p.116). Ishita's love for Suryakanta is vain. "Now instead of love all around her, there would be rejection" (Kapur, 2011, p.61). She decides to live alone without any dependency in future. This disappointed life and depressed state lead her to view her future in a different perspective. She expresses her aversion towards marriage life. Her mother's continuous pester for her second marriage is vain. But Ishita's love for children increases. Hence, she decides to take part in serving children by joining with Mrs. Hingorani. Her meet with Raman and his depressed state turn her fate and she starts to admire Raman for his genuineness and love for her daughter. Their concern for each other brings them physically close, resulting in marriage with mutual understanding of the two families. Though Ishita cannot give birth to a baby, she showers tons of love on Roohi like her own daughter.

Few people think that the foremost thing in marriage life is progeny, and so they discourage and spoil the life of infertile women. While describing Ishita's state, the author says, "The couple were young but it was better to prove that the machinery worked early on in the relationship. Producing grandchildren was a moral obligation" (Kapur, 2011, p.52). An infertile woman longing for a child can understand the feelings of children longing for mother's love. "In Indian society, the problem of infertility is considered as a curse for every female and mostly woman is considered responsible for it" (Sahoo, 2016, p.173). Infertility is another reason for marriage break-ups. Currently, infertility of a woman leads to divorce or beginning of a new relationship. Ishita's life is an apt illustration for this.

#### VI. CHILDREN'S STRUGGLE

Children's attitudes are mostly associated with the role of parents in their life. Usually, children observe their parents' activities and reflect it in their behavior. At the same time, children's behaviors should be monitored and corrected by their parents. "When one parent becomes a less visible participant in a child's life, the normal development of that child's mental health may be negatively impacted" (Wallenborn et al., 2019, p. 2). A child's dispositions are

highly impacted by the behavior of its parents. The role of father and mother is the most prominent thing in a child's life. It decides the future of their children.

The children of divorced parents lack stable mind and will always be in a state of depression. As they are raised by single parents, their depressed state keeps them aloof from others. "In the failures of these marriages it is the children who suffer mostly for no faults of theirs" (Nitonde, 2014, p. 108). Those children do not mingle with other children easily either in school or in family side. It is difficult for them to come out of the hectic state. They will entirely be in a destitute state when they are left in other's care. "The time spent by the abandoned child within child's protection services impacts the child's development very often bringing conditions that generate complex trauma" (Muntean, 2012, p. 276). Proper care and motivation are mandatory to make them strong, and to move ahead in their life with confidence. They ought to be treated in a friendly manner to bring them out from depression and solitude state.

The personal clashes and deviations between a husband and wife not only distress them, but also the people around. The best illustration for that is the couple Raman and Shagun in *Custody*. "It highlights clearly the wife's sense of suffocation, the husband's fear of abandonment and the pendulum shifting of children from one home to the other, with painstaking sincerity" (Azhar, 2013, p. 37). They prepare to separate mutually and also insist their children to accept the reality and adapt with the situation by choosing either father or mother. Being ignorant to the situation, the children struggle in between their father and mother and spend their time here and there according to the court order. In this struggle and often changing lifestyle, their behaviour, attitude, mind, mood change and they cannot live with their parents happily and fail to get their true love fully. "Much research over many years found that children who experience the divorce of their parents... are at higher risk for an extensive variety of negative outcomes" (Hashemi, Homayuni, 2017, p. 2).

Nitonde (2014) says, "It is these marriages it is the children who suffer mostly for no faults of theirs" (p. 108). Arjun and Roohi are too young to realize the happening between their parents Raman and Shagun. After Shagun's marriage with Ashok Khanna, her children are supposed to call him as father. Shagun trains them for that, but it is challenging for them to follow her words. Arjun is in chaotic state. He cannot perform well in his studies. He hesitates to go to school as everyone knows the problem between his father and mother. He decides to take the option of joining in a new boarding school as no one there is aware of his family problem. He can't be open to his own father about the happenings. He longs for the days he spent with his father and the subjects his father taught him. Shagun leaves Arjun in an International school and visits him once in few months which increase the communication gap between the two and she fails to teach him life and to pour love on him. He feels stress free in the new school but longs for his old friends and the old school. His new school offers him a new beginning to a new life with the new parental care. He changes into a silent boy who starts to skip visiting his father and behaves in a different way with Raman being very quiet at a certain point. His life goes only around the school and classmates. Parents' role in Arjun's life is least as he gets only financial assistance for his studies, few visits to a foreign country where his mother and step-father Ashok reside.

Roohi is a kid to realize the situation. During Shagun's affair with Ashok, she considers Roohi as burden and leaves her in toddler in her innocent stage. The child is rejected by her own mother in its childhood itself. After Shagun's marriage with Ashok, Roohi is like a ball moving to and fro between the foreign country where Shagun resides, and India where Raman resides. Roohi is reserved like Arjun, and innocent in understanding why she often travels from one place to another. During her custody period under her father, she meets Ishita, a young divorcee, who shows much attention and care towards her. Ishita's love gives Roohi a new feel and she begins to admire her. Their bond and Roohi's love for her father bring meaning to her life. Ishita's possessiveness for Roohi stops her to permit Roohi to visit her mother after her custody period. Ishita too feels completeness in her life after meeting Raman and Roohi and longs for a family.

A child's mental strength also includes courage, smart thinking, trust, genuineness, creativity, perfection, loyalty, and so on which are gained through parents in its learning stage. Parents are the inducing and hidden power of a child. Their proper guidance will reduce their stress and fear, giving them protection. When a child lacks this from its parents, it will become zero in future and will suffer with anxiety, emotional and behavioural disorders. Some children come up with their own effort being stubborn in their goal. They are rare but they too long for parents' love personally.

In *Custody* Shagun is not a perfect mother and her role is replaced by Ishita in taking care of Roohi by giving her motherly love. Ishita could understand the exact role of a mother and she performs it well. She can't leave Roohi for a second and not ready to send her to Shagun when the court custody turn comes. She is very curious in protecting Roohi than her father Raman. Roohi and Ishita have better understanding that even Roohi never thinks about her real mother Shagun. Roohi learns good manners from Ishita and melted by her care and love. The ways the two children, Arjun and Roohi are brought up get reflected in their behaviour. Arjun cannot move friendly even with his real father easily but Roohi can easily attach with Ishita and others. Children could be moulded easily in an earlier stage. The delicate stage should be occupied wittily by parents to shape them mentally and emotionally. When parents fail to do that, then their children's lives take different directions.

... in settings where women's roles are more closely tied to having children, where producing children for one's family is considered an important obligation and where marriage is defined in terms of producing and



raising children, infertility is likely to have a greater negative impact on couple relationships. (Greil et al, 2010, p. 164)

Infertile women know the real value of children in their life and they dream for that. Women like Shagun are also in this world who give up their children and live for self-pleasure by chasing another man leaving their family. Even after seeing their children's face, their mind doesn't change and look after their well-being alone. Shagun is entirely a selfish character who is unlucky to enjoy the simple and happy life with good name in the society.

"Destructive conflict behavior, such as verbal and nonverbal anger, disagreement, hostility, and withdrawal, lead to conflict escalation and thereby to dissatisfaction with the outcomes" (Huss, Pollmann-Schult, 2019, p. 4). On the other hand, parents who argue in front of children and show their back to each other are pushing their kids to the worst part of their life. On seeing their actions, the children will be mentally disturbed and lack good qualities. A baby cannot be decided to be good or bad on the day of its birth, but the lessons it learn from its parents will decide its character. Nowadays many grown-ups are difficult to handle by their own parents and become threatening persons in the society. When their backgrounds are analyzed, there may be some problems being deep between their parents result in the arrogant nature of the child. Arjun and Roohi's lives totally change with the wrong decision taken by their mother Shagun.

## VII. OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

A couple should move into a marriage life with hope and confidence to tackle all the situations and be united supporting each other both in happiness and regrets. When one thinks his or her spouse is a burden, from the very minute a gap arises between them which leads to a critical state of the relationship. The gap spoils both the couple and their children's life and degrades their family reputation. Problems next to their fight cannot be rectified when it affects the children. So, parents should be conscious and consider the life of their children too without being selfish. Their selfish attitude results in the worst situation and the blow will be on the entire family including children. In the novel *Custody*, Shagun's selfish decision results in the destruction of her children's life. Their life changes with different people and places.

Through the novel *Custody* the author has clearly presented the traumatic state of the divorced parents and their children's future. Raman and Shagun's life decision disturbs Arjun and Roohi. The kids are in confusion as they see new parents with new attitudes. Their minds are not calm or stable and their lives become fearful and threatening as they lack love from their parents. They face constant arguments between father and mother, and so they undergo stress often. When parents stop loving each other, their children too will stop loving their parents. After the second marriage of either father or mother, the child has to adjust with the step-parent, which is challenging and stressful. Children lack true love and whenever they see other children spending time with their parents, they may be ferocious towards their separated parents or hate themselves for being aloof. Their self-hatred makes them never care about their character and hence do whatever they like even if it is a sin, and sometimes against either father or mother's words who takes control over them. Arjun becomes a reserved boy when he is admitted in a new school by his step-father. His nature changes and he does not take anything seriously. His family time shrinks and he spends most of the time in school and hostel like an orphan. He is not emotional or sentimental to be attached with any relationship even his own father and mother. He finds no one as a loyal person to share his feelings like he shared once with his father.

The kid being away from father or mother may be stubborn being quiet and that may become their nature in future, which intakes many secrets consisting of feelings, depressions, emotions and cries. A correct person on time should involve in that kid's life to divert his/her mind and guide that kid to reach the destination in life. At the same time, the guidance should last long to achieve the target or else the child can never be brought back to normal. The novel *Custody* proves this through the life of the children Arjun and Roohi. Ishita takes full responsibility for the life of Roohi and she is not ready to leave her at any point. She considers herself as Roohi's own mother than step-mother. Her failure in marriage life, her infertility, hopeless mind all transfer into happy life with a girl child Roohi. The novel is the depiction of break-ups and children's mentality. It depicts the failed marriages and the psychological conflicts of the two children (Sangeetha, 2012).

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Manju Kapur as an Indian woman writer exposes the marriage life of Indian women and the consequences arise out of broken marriages with various reasons which may be silly or meaningful and the reflection of the couple's fight over children and their future. It is easy to break-up a relationship while finding another better partner, but the scar will be a permanent one either for the couple or for their children. Shagun finds reasons to avoid her children and husband to get connected with Ashok. Later, her desire to take her children abroad is destroyed and she feels alone without them. People who really care their children will never think to escape from the family, instead they will try to overcome every problem and be together forever. The novel *Custody* sketches the minds of husband and wife and the psychological problems they face through failed marriage. Raman and Ishita are fed up with the decisions taken by their partners and take much time to come out of that. Their feelings for children are different in the beginning and later they join to fight for the life of Arjun and Roohi. Their emotions help to bring Roohi in a good environment and good mind-set.



Children's physical, emotional and mental development can be strengthened by parents. Only they know their needs and emotions and feed them accordingly. Children who have stressful parents will have emotional instability and psychological distress. They may lack social support and fail to adjust with the society. This is crystal clear through the two kids portrayed in the novel. Thus, parents should have parenting efficiency for emotional regulation in children. Healthy parents give healthy children to the society. Manju Kapur highlights the consequence of broken marriages and ridiculous state of children through her novel.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Arat, Ece., Poortman, Anne-Rigt, & Lippe, Tanja van der. *Parental Involvement in Stepfamilies: Biology, relationship type, residence and gender*. Retrieved December 24, 2021, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jomf.12817>
- [2] Azhar, Darkhasha. (2013). Universal Angst of Modern Marriage: A Critique of Manju Kapur's Custody. *Cyber Literature*. 32(2), 37-46.
- [3] Burnstein, H.Michael. (1981). Child Abandonment: Historical, Sociological and Psychological Perspectives. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*. 11, 213-221.
- [4] Carr, Deborah., Freedman, Vicki.A., Cornman, Jennifer.C., & Schwarz, Norbert. *Happy Marriage, Happy Life? Marital Quality and Subjective Well-Being in Later Life*. Retrieved September 2, 2014, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4158846/>
- [5] Clements, Madeline. (2011). Fractured Families Rev. of Custody. *The Times Literary Supplement*. 8(11), 221-227.
- [6] Duggal, Chetna., Agrawal, Jyotsna., & Shah Anisha. (2011). Marriage after Infidelity: A Case Analysis. *Indian Journal of Social Psychiatry*. 27(1-2), 45-51.
- [7] Geetha, P.G., Ravichandra, C.P. (2011). Identity and the Domestic. *The Journal of Indian Writing in English*. 39(2), 78-87.
- [8] Greil, Arthur L., Slauson-Blevins, Kathleen., & McQuillan, Julia. *The Experience of Infertility: A Review of Recent Literature*. Retrieved from January, 2010, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3383794/>
- [9] Hashemi, Ladan., Homayuni, Halleh. (2017). Emotional Divorce: Child's Well-Being. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*. 21(1), 1-14.
- [10] Huss, Bjorn & Pollmann-Schult, Matthias. (2019). Relationship Satisfaction Across the Transition to Parenthood: The Impact of Conflict Behavior. *Journal of Family Issues*. 41(3), 1-29.
- [11] Jeanfreau, Michelle., Holden, Chelsey., & Brazeal, Michelle. (2020). Our Money, My Secrets: Why Married Individuals Commit Financial Infidelity. *Contemporary Family Therapy*. 42(5), 46-54.
- [12] Kapur, Manju. (2011). *Custody*. Penguin Random House, India.
- [13] Kumari, Janatha.R. (2016). Unimagined Uncertainties of Matrimony: A Peel into Manju Kapur's Custody. In Prasad, P.V. Laxmi (Ed.), *Critical Readings on the Fictional World of Manju Kapur* (ix, pp. 58-67). Jaipur: Aadi Publications.
- [14] Muntean, Ana., Tomita, Mihaela., & Stan, Violeta. (2012). Complex Trauma of Abandoned Children and Adoption as a Healing Process. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Vol. 46, 273-276.
- [15] Nitonde, Rohidas. (2014). *In Search of Feminist Writer*. Gurgaon: Penguin Random House.
- [16] Sahoo, Gobinda. (2016). Distorted Intricacies and Convolutions of Split in Marriage and Family Life: A Study of Criss-crossed Relation in Manju Kapur's Custody. In Prasad, P.V. Laxmi (Ed.), *Critical Readings on the Fictional World of Manju Kapur* (ix, pp. 58-67). Jaipur: Aadi Publications.
- [17] Sangeetha, V. (2012). Consequences of Marital Break-Ups and Psychological Conflicts of Children in Manju Kapur's Custody. *The Journal of Indian Writing in English*. 40(2), 52-53.
- [18] Santhi, S. (2015). Treatment of Women in Manju Kapur's Custody. *Trends in Kalis Research*. 8(1), 73-76.
- [19] Singh, K.K. (2015). *A Critical Companion to Manju Kapur's Novels* (vii, 213). Jaipur: Aadi Publications.
- [20] Srilatha, G. (2016). Motherhood Versus Freedom from Marriage in Manju Kapur's Custody. In Prasad, P.V. Laxmi (Ed.), *Critical Readings on the Fictional World of Manju Kapur* (ix, pp. 58-67). Jaipur: Aadi Publications.
- [21] Thomas, T.T. (2013). The Quest for Fulfillment in Manju Kapur's Custody. *Indian Journal of Postcolonial Literatures*. 13(2), 124-130.
- [22] Wagner, Adriana., Mosmann, Clarisse Pereira., Scheeren, Patricia., & Levandowski, Daniela Centernaro. (2019). Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Marital Quality. *Social Psychology*, 29, 1-9.
- [23] Wallenborn, Jordyn T., Chambers, Gregory., Lowery, Elizabeth., & Masho, Saba W. (2019). Marital Status Disruptions and Internalizing Disorders of Children. *Psychiatry Journal*. 1, 1-6.

**V. Jayajothilakshmi** has completed her M.A., B.Ed., M.Phil., M.Sc (Psy.), and pursuing her Ph.D in part-time in Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education. She is doing her research in Indian Writing in English. She has been working as Assistant Professor for seven years. Her teaching areas are Indian writing, British Poetry, Canadian Literature, American Literature and others at both under and postgraduate levels. She has presented papers at conferences and published six articles in various journals.

**S. Mohan** is a faculty of English at Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Tamil Nadu, India. He has taught a number of courses on World Literature and Language Teaching over the years, as well as more general courses on Communicative English, Business Communication and Soft Skills. His research and publication interests include ESP, ELT, African-American Literature and Education. He has published and presented more than fifty articles in various reputed journals and conferences. He also served as an External Examiner for Ph.D scholars in different universities and Associate Editor, Editorial member in various International Journal publications in home and abroad.

**R. Kannan** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Languages, Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Chennai, India. His research interests include Literature and ELT. He has published research articles Scopus Indexed Journals as well as in reputed national and international journals besides being actively participating in national and international conferences. He is a certified Speaking Examiner for Business English Certificate (BEC) Courses by Cambridge Assessment English, UK. Recognized research supervisor for Ph. D and an External Examiner for Ph.D. Scholars in Universities across India. He is also serving as a member in editorial board of various International Journals in home and abroad.

# A Corpus-Based Study on the Semantic Use of Reporting Verbs in English Majors' Undergraduate Thesis Writing

Yueyue Huang

School of Foreign Languages, Guangzhou Xinhua University, Guangdong, China;  
Department of Chinese and Bilingual Studies, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong SAR, China

**Abstract**—This study aims to add further pedagogical knowledge on students' academic writing by investigating the semantic patterns of reporting verbs (RVs) in L1 Chinese undergraduate English majors' theses in a southern Chinese university based on the semantic categories by Hunston et al. (1996) and Charles (2006a). A comparative analysis was conducted across L2 and L1 students' academic writing in the discipline of applied linguistics. The study yielded two major findings: 1) there was a significantly insufficient employment of RVs in general, particularly among three categories (Argue, Show, Find) by L2 students, who also presented a strong reliance on argumentation by intuition; 2) L2 students illustrated a restricted vocabulary repertoire of colloquial RVs and their usage of RVs was misrepresented in context, diverging from the intended rhetorical functions. These findings indicate that evidence-based argumentative writing practice and targeted lexical and rhetorical instructions on vocabulary knowledge require further promotion in L2 English learners' academic writing training.

**Index Terms**—reporting verbs, semantic category, L2 undergraduate thesis, academic writing

## I. INTRODUCTION

Undergraduate thesis, or Bachelor's dissertation, is a major academic writing task usually assigned during the final year of a Bachelor's degree program to examine students' critical thinking, rhetorical awareness as well as their disciplinary knowledge. Chinese students majoring in English are normally required to complete theses in their second language (i.e. English), following academic writing conventions, yet obstacles might occur when students are expected to shift from a general practice of English as a foreign language (EFL) to English for academic purposes (EAP).

To compose evidence-based argumentation, writers should exploit external sources to persuade target audience effectively, which is a complex, yet particularly crucial skill as it "situates the writer within a disciplinary framework" (Liardet & Black, 2019, p.37) and establishes his or her voice as a credible or "informed insider" (Hyland & Jiang, 2019, p.263). Successful academic arguers shall make their claims against a backdrop of existing perspectives, creating "a balance between introducing their own perspective, acknowledging the existence of other perspectives, and estimating what their audience's assumed perspective will be" (Miller et al., 2014, p.108).

Reporting verbs (RVs) are a key linguistic device that academic writers use to effectively synthesize and incorporate sources into their argumentation. It is a critical aspect of broader citation practices that student writers are to learn for evidence-based argumentation (Kwon et al., 2018). Inappropriate reporting practice marks the writer inexperienced and might result in spurious or tenuous argument pieces. Therefore, investigation on the employment of RVs in students' thesis writing can help teaching practitioners as well as students *per se* to better understand and respond to the challenges experienced by undergraduate thesis writers.

Relevant investigations have been pursued into the inclusion of RVs in academic writing mostly in terms of semantic categorization or evaluation (Kwon et al., 2018; Uba, 2019), syntactic patterns (Jarkovská & Kučirková, 2021; Shaw, 1992), types and functions by different populations (Liardet & Black, 2019; Marti et al., 2019; Thompson & Ye, 1991; Yeganeh & Boghayeri, 2015) as well as disciplinary differences (Hyland & Jiang, 2019; Jarkovská & Kučirková, 2021; Uba, 2019). All have provided valuable insights into the understanding of citation practice in scholarly writing. Among them, one central theme was the semantic and functional use of RVs, based on which taxonomies of RV have been proposed.

### A. Semantic Categorization of RVs

One early attempt to categorize RVs is Thompson and Ye (1991), where RVs were investigated across disciplines from the introduction sections and two distinct categories were proposed: denotation (textual, research and mental) and evaluation (writer's stance, writer's interpretation, as well as author's stance). The three-fold evaluative potential of RVs was further pinpointed by Hyland (1999), in which the term "discourse" was rephrased by "textual" and "cognition" by "mental" RVs, and evaluation RVs were restructured as "factive (writer acceptance)", "non-factive (author's stance)" and "counter-factive (writer disagreement)". Nonetheless, the overlapping nature of Thomason and

Ye (1991)'s systems rendered detailed examination difficult to proceed, and the generalization from the mere introduction section seemed to be simplified. Additionally, as Hyland (1999)'s taxonomy emphasized the rhetoric function of RVs, such categorization might be more congenial for semantic evaluation.

More focused attempt on elucidation of semantic patterns of RVs was made by Hunston et al. (1996), which extended their exploration into a COBUILD project and identified four semantic categories of RVs: Argue, Find, Show, and Think. Charles (2006a) explained this categorization as follows:

1. ARGUE verbs (*argue, suggest, propose, etc.*) are concerned with writing and other forms of communication. e.g. *Hofstede argues that Value is the general tendency of people to like one rather than another ....*

2. THINK verbs (*think, assume, feel, etc.*) are related to thinking, including having a belief; knowing or understanding; hoping or fearing. e.g. *...the scholar assumes that children's literature is an important part of the literary Polysystem...*

3. SHOW verbs (*show, demonstrate, reveal, etc.*) indicate a fact or situation. e.g. *The findings above demonstrate that Explication do abound through the text.*

4. FIND verbs (*find, observe, discover, etc.*) are concerned with coming to know or think something. e.g. *From the above narrative, we can find that accuracy is very important...*

This categorization has been commonly adopted to examine the patterns of RVs used by different populations, mostly by L1 English speakers. Charles (2006b) found that RVs from the Argue category were more frequently used by native English MA thesis writers than the Find and Show verbs across contrasting disciplines of politics (social science) and material science (natural science). Friginal (2013) compared the L1 upper-level college writers and the professional writers in forestry and found that students used more Show and Think verbs and fewer Argue verbs than professionals did. Marti et al. (2019) set out to explore differences by levels of expertise (expert/novice) and nativeness (L1 English/Turkish) in applied linguistics, and reported that both native and non-native expert writers show little variation in their reporting practices yet remarkable variation ("discursively hybrid") was found between non-native novice writers and the other groups (p.98). These studies pointed out several key variables in RV usage patterns, including disciplinary diversity, levels of expertise as well as native/non-native disagreement.

However, there are relatively fewer studies on the RV patterns by EFL learners, especially amongst L2 English undergraduate learners. One investigation by Kwon et al. (2018)'s did point out that L2 undergraduate writers across majors in a first-year writing program had a general preference for Argue verbs among the four categories in order by Think, Show, and Find. But it is unclear whether such pattern will replicate itself in different disciplines. Other studies, though not focused on the patterns of RVs, have reported a more restricted set of verbs (Hinkel, 2003; Liard & Black, 2019; Ramoroka, 2014) and preferred employment of conversational verbs (Granger & Paquot, 2009) in the reporting practice of English L2 writers compared with L1 professional writers, though learners deployed RVs with similar variability as their L1 classmates (Liard & Black, 2019). Nonetheless, to provide more pedagogical suggestions, it is still in need of a further inquiry into the patterns of L2 undergraduates' citation practice.

## B. Research Questions

The present paper thus aims to contribute to the pedagogical knowledge of undergraduate EFL students' academic writing practice by exploring the semantic patterns of their RVs employment with reference to Hunston et al. (1996)'s four RV semantic categories (i.e. *Argue, Show, Find, Think*). In particular, this study intends to probe into L2 students' reporting practices through undergraduate English majors' thesis writing in the discipline of applied linguistics. The research questions for this study then are:

RQ1: Among four semantic categories of RVs, what types of RVs are preferred in Chinese undergraduate English majors' theses compared with English L1 students' academic writing?

RQ2: What and how RVs are frequently used in undergraduate L2 English majors' theses compared with L1 student academic writing?

RQ3: What pedagogical suggestions can be proposed based on the comparative analysis of RVs between L2 undergraduate students and L1 English students?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Corpus and Text Selection

To answer the above questions, one main corpus (Undergraduate Thesis Writing Corpus, UTW) and a reference corpus (BAWE2) were compiled and processed via Sketch Engine, with comparable data size.

The UTW consists of 40 final draft theses written by the senior undergraduate English majors from 2015 to 2020, and each was revised at least three times before the final submission to ensure the maximum readability and fluency. All texts were cleaned and stored in an electronic form, and student names and any personally identifiable information were all removed. All students' first language is Chinese. To ensure generalizability, students' levels of English were not controlled. Each draft elaborated on a research topic either on Translation ( $n=34$ ) or Culture ( $n=6$ ), and contained introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, analysis, and conclusion.

The reference corpus (BAWE2) of English native speakers was compiled through the British Academic Written English Corpus (BAWE), a British Academic corpus of university-level student writing in the UK. It comprises texts produced with annotations of linguistics discipline and written by students with English as their first language. It can be accessed through Sketch Engine. Selecting a native student academic corpus instead of expert writing is to ensure the comparability of writing practices across groups of students. The reference corpus does not limit the levels of studies for another concern on broad comparability. Details of the two corpora can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
L2 LEARNERS AND L1 STUDENTS CORPUS INFORMATION

Name	Tokens	Words
UTW	310,382	~258,061
BAWE <sub>2</sub> (Ling+EngL1)	219,095	~183,136

### B. Variables

**Reporting Verbs.** The first stage of the analysis involved compiling a master list of RVs for the subsequent analysis. To efficiently identify the RVs in students' theses, the master list of this study was taken from the list proposed by Kwon et al. (2018), detailing 53 RVs. In the subsequent concordance search, four Argue verbs (*assert*, *hypothesize*, *remark*, *posit*) were removed in that no result was returned in UTW and due to low frequency in BAWE<sub>2</sub>. A following manual examination of each concordance line further revealed that one high-frequency RV (*add*) did not denote citation practices but rather was in relation to a translation technique, called addition or adding. This verb was also removed from the master list. All together a total of 48 RVs were searched and the correspondent concordance lines were retrieved.

**Semantic Category.** To examine the patterns of RVs, the framework of semantic categories was adapted from Kwon et al. (2018), which was adopted from Charles (2006b) and Friginal (2013). Applying the framework, the study retrieved the data for all 48 verb lemmas (e.g. *show*, *shows*, *showed*, *shown*, *showing*) in the four semantic categories (Argue, Show, Find, Think) in two corpora. The list of RVs by semantic category in this study is presented in Table 2. The rhetorical functions of RVs will also be examined following the study by Charles (2006a) and Charles (2006b).

TABLE 2  
REPORTING VERBS BY SEMANTIC CATEGORY

Argue (27)	argue, suggest, predict, write, explain, conclude, mention, admit, observe, accept, claim, imply, complain, point out, say, insist, maintain, propose, reply, speculate, stress, contend, state, report, postulate, acknowledge, talk about
Show (7)	show, illustrate, indicate, demonstrate, confirm, mean, reveal
Find (9)	find, realize, observe, discover, establish, infer, recognize, identify, note
Think (6)	think, hold, assume, feel, hope, know

### C. Research Procedure

A mixed-method comparative analysis combining both quantitative and qualitative procedures was conducted to explore L2 learners' academic reporting practices and to find any potential issues in comparison with L1 students' academic writing practices, following the procedure as follows:

(1). The comparative analysis was first made based on the overall frequency of each type of RVs across four semantic categories in each corpus. Each reporting verb was searched and frequency data was retrieved one by one based on the master list in the main corpus (UTW) and the reference corpus (BAWE2) (RQ1). Cross-references to the findings in other associated studies will be discussed to draw more insights on the RV practices for L2 students.

(2). The subsequent study summarized Top 10 frequently used RVs and manually examined the returned concordance lines to ensure the reliability of the results (RQ2). Scrutinization then zoomed in onto the concordance lines of two representative RVs in two corpora.

(4) The study then correspondingly provided pedagogical suggestions based on the findings (RQ3).

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The session will first illustrate the overall frequency of RVs across four semantic categories, and then discuss the most frequently used individual verbs in relation to these categories. To address a confusion emerging from the inquiry, the study conducted a collocational analysis for two node words. Cross-references to the findings in Kwon et al. (2018) and Friginal (2013) will be discussed below as they used the same semantic framework as did this study. The frequency data were normalized to instances per 1000 words due to the size of each corpus for clearer presentation. In the end, pedagogical suggestions will be provided based on the comparative analysis.

### A. Semantic Category of RV Employment in L2 and L1 Academic Writing

Following the procedure stated above, the frequency data of RVs in four semantic categories was retrieved and the result can be found in Table 3. Since the two corpora displayed disproportionate size of data, log likelihood was run to compare the frequency distribution across two corpora using a log-likelihood calculator<sup>1</sup> (Rayson & Garside, 2000).

TABLE 3  
FREQUENCY RATES OF REPORTING VERB ACROSS SEMANTIC CATEGORIES IN TWO CORPORA

	UTW			BAWE <sub>2</sub>			Log-likelihood	Sig.
	F*	NF*	Percentage to all	F	NF	Percentage to all		
Argue#	1025	330.6	36.5%	1497	683.3	44.2%	329.36	0.000 *** -
Find#	434	139.8	15.5%	675	308.1	19.9%	170.20	0.000 *** -
Show#	739	238.1	26.3%	794	362.4	23.4%	67.39	0.000 *** -
Think	609	196.2	21.7%	423	193.1	12.5%	0.07	0.799 +
Total	2807	904.7	100.0%	3389	1546.8	100.0%	444.43	0.000 *** -

(\*F: Raw frequency; NF: Normalized frequency)

In-group and cross-group comparison for frequency rates revealed some interesting phenomena. For starters, log-likelihood results suggested that there was **a significantly less use of RVs by L2 students than L1 students in general**, which can be particularly illustrated by three categories of RVs (i.e. Argue, Find and Show) in L2 students' academic writing. As reporting practice is part of construction of writer's stance in evidence-based academic writing, the findings, though centered on student writers, coincide with relevant previous studies on professional academic stance-taking practices in L2 English publications by Chinese researchers, implying that Chinese academic writers would often employ more confident stance as opposed to customary cautious positioning taken by Anglophone authors (e.g. Chen & Zhang, 2017; Hu & Cao, 2011; Yang, 2013).

A further vertical within-group examination in UTW found that students' preference over four semantic types of RVs followed the order by Argue > Show > Think > Find, while in BAWE<sub>2</sub>, students followed the order by Argue > Show > Find > Think. In general, it indicates **an overall preference for Argue verbs in both English L2 and L1 students in Applied Linguistics**. This was similarly found in L2 students' literature review section (Kwon et al., 2018) and L1 forestry academic papers (Friginal, 2013), yet different from the RVs choice by L1 forestry students (Friginal, 2013) (see Figure 1).

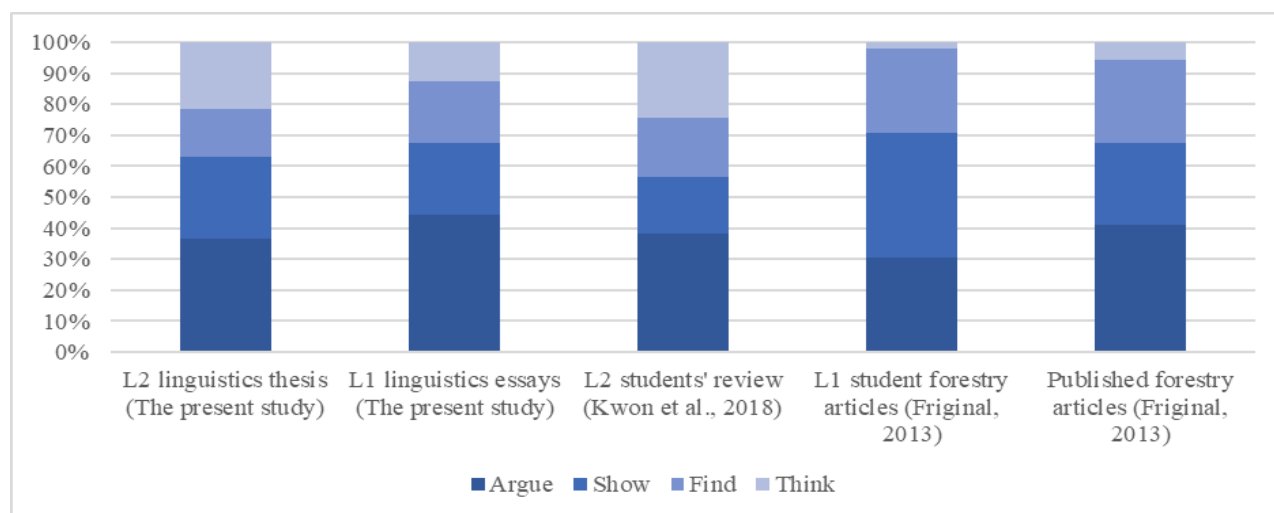


Figure 1 Cross-reference of RV Patterns in Four Semantic Categories With Kwon et al. (2018) and Friginal (2013)

Such similarity between the present study and Kwon et al. (2018) might imply that the preference for Argue verbs could be with no "disciplinary specificity" in L2 students' citation practice. However, a comparison amongst L1 linguistic essays in the present study, L1 student forestry articles (Friginal, 2013), and L1 published forestry articles (Friginal, 2013) point to **a much divergent pattern of Argue verbs at varied levels of L1 expertise**. Yet considering that the data for L1 forestry students (Friginal, 2013) was retrieved before a writing instruction session, this might suggest a highlighted need for argumentative writing training, regardless of academic components being included in such training or not. Nonetheless, it is unwarranted to generalize findings based on mere comparisons across studies without a similar baseline of contexts, even though such cross-reference might provide some insights and point to a space for further investigation.

One noticeable yet not statistically significant difference in RVs choice was found in **Think verbs** between UTW and BAWE<sub>2</sub> as L2 students overly relied on Think verbs (=21.7%) compared with what their L1 student peers did (=12.5%). Additionally, such cognitive reporting verbs were found to be similarly least favored in both Chinese and Anglophone academic journals (Liu & Wang, 2019). This further implied an over-reliance on intuitively persuasive

<sup>1</sup> <https://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>

manner amongst Chinese learners due to a **lack of rigorous training on evidence-based argumentation**. The generally less frequent use of RVs for L2 learners also echoes with such findings as insufficient training for L2 students.

#### B. Frequently Used RVs in L2 and L1 Academic Writing

A further analysis was conducted by summarizing the top 10 uses of RVs in both UTW and BAWE<sub>2</sub> (Table 4). A full list of frequency of all 48 RVs in two corpora can be found in Appendix. These top 10 RVs nearly account for the majority of all counts of RVs (2/3, =64% & 60% respectively), thus making further analysis reasonable.

TABLE 4  
THE 10 MOST FREQUENT REPORTING VERBS IN TWO CORPORA

UTW (top 10)					BAWE <sub>2</sub> (top 10)				
RV	Category	F	NF	Percentage of all (2807)	RV	Category	F	NF	Percentage of all (3389)
show	Show	294	94.7	10.50%	show	Show	373	170.2	11.00%
mean	Show	276	88.9	9.80%	suggest	Argue	352	160.7	10.40%
know	Think	238	76.7	8.50%	find	Find	338	154.3	10.00%
find	Find	210	67.7	7.50%	say	Argue	222	101.3	6.60%
say	Argue	203	65.4	7.20%	identify	Find	143	65.3	4.20%
think	Think	177	57	6.30%	mean	Show	135	61.6	4.00%
mention	Argue	107	34.5	3.80%	write	Argue	129	58.9	3.80%
write	Argue	102	32.9	3.60%	feel	Think	127	58	3.70%
explain	Argue	91	29.3	3.20%	know	Think	111	50.7	3.30%
realize	Find	90	29	3.20%	think	Think	107	48.8	3.20%
Proportion to overall no. of RVs					Proportion to overall no. of RVs				
64%					60%				

A close examination of the favorite RVs in UTW suggested a **rather restricted repertoire of colloquial verbs in L2 students' citation practice** (e.g. *know*, *say*) compared with that of L1 students (e.g. *suggest*, *identify*). Furthermore, in UTW, the top two frequent verbs, *show* and *mean*, both belong to Show category, while the Argue verbs (i.e. *say*, *mention*, *write*, *explain*) were used relatively less at an inconspicuous position. By comparison, though L1 students frequently used *show*, their choice of other RVs was evenly distributed among the three categories (Show, Argue, Find) and Argue verbs (*suggest*, *say*, *write*) were at a prominent position, especially the verb *suggest* (2<sup>nd</sup> most frequent). As explained above, Show verbs indicate a fact or situation, while Argue verbs are concerned with writing and other forms of communication (Charles, 2006b). **The divergent uses of Argue and Show verbs** thus can suggest that either L2 students tend to build up their argumentation more by introducing facts rather than by manner of arguing, or that their use of RVs was incompatible with the conventionally intended semantic functions of the chosen verbs.

To elucidate such confusion and to answer the second part of RQ2 (i.e. *how do RVs are frequently used by L2 students?*), the current study undertook an *ad hoc* scrutiny of the contextual information in which two node verbs were present, particularly in terms of their collocation with subjects. Two RVs were selected—*show* for being both the most favorite RV in both corpora, and *suggest* for being the second frequent item in BAWE<sub>2</sub> yet not even making its way into the list of UTW. As the purpose of answering RQ2 is to find pedagogical suggestions for EAP writing training, conducting closer examination of the two representative RVs should suffice.

Table 5 outlines the subject-object collocation of the node verbs, i.e. *show* and *suggest*. As a typical Show verb, *show* signals writers' clear acceptance of certain findings/studies/research (Charles, 2006b); it would thus be expected to be used in research- or finding-related contexts, precisely as what L1 English students presented via their collocational patterns of *show* in BAWE<sub>2</sub> (see Table 5 and example 4). However, such collocational representation was not detected in L2 writing corpus (UTW). In UTW, although students used it in a factive manner, they seemed to show **limited access to the intended rhetorical functions** of *show* (see Table 5 and example 1-3):

(1) This requires *translators to show more respect* to source language and approach the original text as closely as possible. (UTW)

(2) As a speech delivered at the 23rd China-ASEAN leaders' meeting and *the speech shows a relatively formal style*, the scales of formality can be observed. (UTW)

(3) *The table below shows the differences* between the two versions in the translation in a passage of Charlotte. (UTW)

(4) *Studies have shown* the importance of social attitudes and class in the construction of 'prestigious' language features. (BAWE<sub>2</sub>)

Moreover, the use of *suggest* by L1 and L2 students respectively demonstrated a notably divergent pattern. The Argue category of RVs is part of linguistic hedging devices, offering tentative explanations or bringing out claims in conflict or with uncertainty (Charles, 2006a, 2006b). It is thus normally accompanied by inclusion of the positions of other researchers, allowing writers to situate their own study within the perceivable field (Charles, 2006b). Concordance search for the collocation of the lemma *suggest* confirmed the use of such rhetorical function (see example 8, as *suggest* was used to implicitly situate the writer's stance between the cited studies). Table 5 also illustrated other research-related subjects being collocated with *suggest*, similar to the use in the example 8. In UTW, however, the intended rhetorical functions of *suggest* were found to be **misplaced into the rhetorical contexts** as with Show or Think verbs. For L2 students, a prominent type of collocated subjects with *suggest* directs to human agents, in particular, the writer

him/herself (see Table 5 and example 5-6). Additionally, non-human agents were not introduced for the purpose of tentative explanation, but rather explicit presentation of factual information (see example 7). There were no plausible subsequent opinions proposed through the meaning intention of tentativeness as frequently marked by *suggest* in L1 writing corpus:

(5) With the development of film industry, more subtitle groups have come into being, yet the quality of translation of different subtitle groups has been patchy. Standards and rules thus should be set up. And *the author suggests* to include academic institutions to offer courses on subtitle translation to train more qualified subtitlers. (UTW)

(6) In the writer's point of view, the expressive function also conveys information of films as film titles reveal the intentions of the directors and set the subject tone for audiences to be emotionally inspired. Therefore, *the writer suggests that* the expressive function related to the informative function. (UTW)

(7) The coherence principle, as *the name suggests*, means that the translation must conform to the expression habits of the target language. (UTW)

(8) Cappa et.al (2000) claim that neuroimaging work has shown 'right brain involvement in both language comprehension and production' (p.28). *These findings suggest that* language functions are located across the brain and may not just be limited to the left hemisphere. Having said this it is important to note that it is generally agreed that complex grammar skills are localized to only one hemisphere (Lustepal, 1995). (BAWE<sub>2</sub>)

Thus, the confusion aforementioned is tentatively clarified — L2 students may not be unaware of the conventional manner of argumentation in EAP thesis writing regardless of **their misuse of RVs in normally unintended contexts**. This is indicative of a possible lack of argumentative writing training on **specific rhetorical functions of each type of reporting verbs**.

TABLE 5  
SUBJECT-OBJECT COLLOCATION OF SHOW AND SUGGEST IN UTW AND BAWE<sub>2</sub>

UTW						BAWE <sub>2</sub>					
Show											
<i>Subject</i>	<i>F&gt;3</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>F&gt;3</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>F&gt;3</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>F&gt;3</i>	<i>logDice</i>
example	8	10.6	respect	7	10.4	study	11	8.5	adjective	9	10.3
word	4	9.1	style	6	9.8	research	9	8.8	agreement	5	8.7
translation	4	7.2	difference	5	9.1	example	6	9.2	difference	5	7.4
version	3	9.3	reader	5	9.0	result	6	8.1	use	5	7.3
			meaning	5	8.4	experiment	5	8.5	preference	4	8.8
			connotation	4	9.2	finding	4	8.9	variation	4	8.4
			image	4	9.0	word	3	8.2	pattern	4	7.6
			formality	3	9.2	blue	3	9.3	evidence	4	7
			trend	3	9.2	red	3	9.3	way	4	6.7
			sign	3	8.9	figure	3	8.1	result	4	6.2
			feature	3	8.6	language	3	7.9	lesion	3	8.9
			culture	3	8.2	evidence	3	7.3	understanding	3	7.4
									process	3	6.1
									change	3	6.1
Suggest											
<i>Subject</i>	<i>F&gt;2*</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>F&gt;2</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>F&gt;2*</i>	<i>logDice</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>F&gt;2</i>	<i>logDice</i>
author	4	9.1				finding	6	9.74	child	5	7.7
principle	2	10.4				research	5	8.03	cause	2	7.8
name	2	10.4				theory	5	7.56	reason	2	7.3
writer	2	10.1				sociolinguists	2	9.25	way	2	5.8
						question	2	7.47	woman	2	5.8
						evidence	2	6.81	theory	2	5.8

(\*minimum frequency set as 2 due to fewer uses of "suggest" in UTW)

### C. Pedagogical Implications from the Comparative Analysis

The above analysis points to a macro- to micro-level pedagogical implications that demand further attention in future academic writing training.

There is a lack of rigorous academic training noticed via the significantly lower deployment of RVs across three categories (Argue, Show, Find) and an over-dependence on instinctively persuasive manner amongst Chinese learners of L2 English. Curriculum designers of EAP or even basic-level second/foreign language writing courses should be particularly aware of the current need to promote the instruction of evidence-based argumentative (inferential or deductive) skills. As strong academic-oriented argumentative writing naturally involves a synthesis of other writers' findings and adoption of a carefully articulated stance toward cited statements, it is essential for teaching practitioners to highlight the rhetorical functions of various RV types in their academic writing instructions (also see Jarkovská & Kurková 2021).

Furthermore, this study also observes that students demonstrate a limited lexical repertoire of conversational RVs and that their use of only a few RVs was misconstrued in specific contexts. This heightens the need for EAP instructors to equip L2 students with a variety of reporting devices as well as a better understanding of the lexical or perhaps grammatical aspects of citation (also see Jarkovská & Kurková 2021; Nguyen & Pramoolsook, 2016). It would be



beneficial to novice writers if textbook designers could integrate rhetorical functions and authentic usage of reporting practices from native and/or expert writers, as this would allow student-writers to obtain access to academic writing in an authentic context.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the semantic categories of Hunston et al. (1996) and Charles (2006a), this study sets out to explore the semantic patterns of RVs in undergraduate theses written by L1 Chinese English majors. Through comparative analysis, the study found an overall preference for Argue verbs in both English L2 and L1 students. The examination of Think verbs between the two corpora suggests a seemingly intuitive argumentative manner and significantly less frequent use of RVs in three categories (Argue, Find and Show), both pointing to insufficient EAP writing training.

Further summarization of the 10 most frequent RVs in UTW and BAWE<sub>2</sub> reveals a restricted repertoire of colloquial verbs in L2 students' citation practice. A collocational analysis of two verbs (*show*, *suggest*) was then conducted to address a confusion emerging from the inconsistent preference for Show and Argue verbs in the two corpora. It indicates students' preliminary awareness of argumentative manner, but their use of RVs was misrepresented in context.

All of the above findings underline the central theme of the study— L2 English majors, though mostly trained to write argumentative essays, are still in need of further instructions on academic-driven argumentative writing. Pedagogical suggestions include more rigorous training on evidence-based argumentative processes, intensive language training on academic lexicons, and deepening academic writing practices with timely feedback.

The present study has limitations. Future studies could expand the master list (see Liard & Black, 2019), and efforts shall be made to closely examine the contextual information where RVs are in use, for which Hyland (1999)'s framework can be adopted. It is also unclear what voices and tenses of RVs are used by L2 English learners. In addition, discrepancy on RV employment is not a single-factor outcome, instead it should factor multi-variables (e.g. learners and experts, L1 and L2 English users, disciplinary difference) into the final linguistic representation. Investigations on other issues related to L2 undergraduate English learners are certainly unexhausted through the analysis of the study.

Nonetheless, by revealing some findings on L2 undergraduate academic writing behaviors, the study managed to provide two-fold pedagogical suggestions for undergraduate EAP writing course designers. The framework used in this study can also be good entry points for further investigations on other related concerns and it is the author's hope that this study can offer some insights for understanding L2 undergraduate EAP writing practices.

## APPENDIX. FULL LIST OF FREQUENCY OF REPORTING VERBS IN TWO CORPORA

SC*	RV	UTW		BAWE2		Log-likelihood	Sig.		
		F*	NF*	F	NF				
Show	show	294	947.22	373	1702.46	57.02	0.000	***	-
Show	mean	276	889.23	135	616.17	12.66	0.000	***	+
Think	know	238	766.8	111	506.63	13.59	0.000	***	+
Find	find	210	676.59	338	1542.71	91.29	0.000	***	-
Argue	say	203	654.03	222	1013.26	20.29	0.000	***	-
Think	think	177	570.27	107	488.37	1.62	0.203		+
Argue	mention	107	344.74	38	173.44	14.54	0.000	***	+
Argue	write	102	328.63	129	588.79	19.54	0.000	***	-
Argue	explain	91	293.19	83	378.83	2.83	0.092		-
Find	realize	90	289.97	0	0				
Think	feel	89	286.74	127	579.66	26.47	0.000	***	-
Argue	propose	71	228.75	43	196.26	0.64	0.425		+
Argue	conclude	68	219.08	64	292.11	2.71	0.100		-
Think	hold	65	209.42	39	178	0.65	0.419		+
Show	indicate	64	206.2	81	369.7	12.29	0.000	***	-
Argue	point out	61	196.53	45	205.38	0.05	0.823		-
Argue	accept	54	173.98	22	100.41	5.05	0.025	*	+
Argue	suggest	46	148.2	352	1606.61	385.35	0.000	***	-
Argue	talk about	40	128.87	27	123.23	0.03	0.857		+
Find	establish	39	125.65	25	114.11	0.14	0.706		+
Show	reveal	38	122.43	26	118.67	0.02	0.902		+
Think	hope	36	115.99	4	18.26	19.51	0.000	***	+
Argue	maintain	34	109.54	34	155.18	2.05	0.152		-
Show	illustrate	33	106.32	59	269.29	19.28	0.000	***	-
Argue	state	30	96.66	105	479.24	74.33	0.000	***	-
Show	demonstrate	28	90.21	105	479.24	78.31	0.000	***	-
Argue	stress	28	90.21	12	54.77	2.22	0.137		+
Argue	imply	24	77.32	28	127.8	3.27	0.071		-
Find	identify	22	70.88	143	652.68	146.28	0.000	***	-
Find	recognize	20	64.44	2	9.13	11.49	0.001	***	+
Find	discover	19	61.21	31	141.49	8.60	0.003	**	-
Argue	claim	18	57.99	61	278.42	42.09	0.000	***	-
Find	infer	14	45.11	10	45.64	0.00	0.977		-
Argue	insist	10	32.22	2	9.13	3.40	0.065		+
Find	note	10	32.22	73	333.19	78.44	0.000	***	-
Argue	observe	10	32.22	53	241.9	49.08	0.000	***	-
Find	observe	10	32.22	53	241.9	49.08	0.000	***	-
Argue	argue	8	25.77	42	191.7	38.70	0.000	***	-
Show	confirm	6	19.33	15	68.46	7.75	0.005	**	-
Think	assume	4	12.89	35	159.75	40.25	0.000	***	-
Argue	reply	4	12.89	2	9.13	0.16	0.685		
Argue	complain	3	9.67	4	18.26	0.70	0.402		
Argue	postulate	3	9.67	6	27.39	2.34	0.126		
Argue	acknowledge	2	9.67	23	104.98	28.79	0.000	***	-
Argue	predict	2	6.44	20	91.28	24.03	0.000	***	-
Argue	report	2	6.44	54	246.47	80.18	0.000	***	-
Argue	speculate	2	6.44	0	0				
Argue	admit	1	3.22	8	36.51	8.91	0.003	**	-
Argue	contend	1	3.22	0	0				
Argue	assert	0	0	13	59.33				
Argue	hypothesize	0	0	2	9.13				
Argue	posit	0	0	3	13.69				
Argue	remark	0	0	0	0				
Total=		2807	9046.93	3389	15468.1				

\*SC: semantic category; F.: Frequency; NF: normalized frequency/1,000

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Dr. Linda Lin (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University) for her meticulous academic instructions and valuable comments on this paper. Without Dr. Lin, the author cannot find her academic passion. This work was supported in part by a grant from the 2019 Research Project for Young Scholars of Guangzhou Xinhua University (2019KYQN11).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Charles, M. (2006a). The Construction of Stance in Reporting Clauses: A Cross-disciplinary Study of Theses. *Applied Linguistics*, 27(3), 492-518. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/aml021>
- [2] Charles, M. (2006b). Phraseological patterns in reporting clauses used in citation: A corpus-based study of theses in two disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(3), 310-331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2005.05.003>
- [3] Chen, C., & Zhang, J. L. (2017). An intercultural analysis of the use of hedging by Chinese and Anglophone academic English writers. *Applied linguistics review*, 8(1), 1-34. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2016-2009>
- [4] Friginal, E. (2013). Developing research report writing skills using corpora. *English for Specific Purposes*, 32(4), 208-220. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2013.06.001>
- [5] Granger, S., & Paquot, M. (2009). Lexical Verbs in Academic Discourse: A Corpus-driven Study of Learner Use. In M. Charles, D. Pecorari, & S. Hunston (Eds.), *Academic Writing: At the Interface of Corpus and Discourse* (1 ed., pp. 193-214). Bloomsbury Academic. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9781474211703.ch-010>
- [6] Hinkel, E. L. I. (2003). Simplicity Without Elegance: Features of Sentences in L1 and L2 Academic Texts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 275-301. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588505>
- [7] Hunston, S. & Francis, G., & Manning, E. (1996). *Collins COBUILD grammar patterns 1: Verbs*. HarperCollins.
- [8] Hu, G., & Cao, F. (2011). Hedging and boosting in abstracts of applied linguistics articles: A comparative study of English- and Chinese-medium journals. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(11), 2795-2809. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2011.04.007>
- [9] Hyland, K. (1999). Academic attribution: citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge. *Applied Linguistics*, 20(3), 341-367. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.3.341>
- [10] Hyland, K., & Jiang, F. (2019). Points of Reference: Changing Patterns of Academic Citation. *Applied Linguistics*, 40(1), 64-85. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amx012>
- [11] Jarkovská, M., & Kučírková, L. (2021). Reporting Verbs and Related Syntactic Choices in Students' Theses: A Study of Two Disciplines. *Journal on Efficiency and Responsibility in Education and Science*, 14(3), 130-142. <https://doi.org/10.7160/eriesj.2021.140301>
- [12] Kwon, M. H., Staples, S., & Partridge, R. S. (2018). Source work in the first-year L2 writing classroom: Undergraduate L2 writers' use of reporting verbs. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 34, 86-96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2018.04.001>
- [13] Liardet, C. L., & Black, S. (2019). "So and so" says, states and argues: A corpus-assisted engagement analysis of reporting verbs. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 44, 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2019.02.001>
- [14] Liu, R., & Wang, S. (2019). *How Citation Is Signaled: A Corpus-Based Study on Reporting Verbs in Chinese Academic Papers*. In (pp. 53-71). Singapore: Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-9505-53>
- [15] Marti, L., Yilmaz, S., & Bayyurt, Y. (2019). Reporting research in applied linguistics: The role of nativeness and expertise. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 40, 98-114. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.05.005>
- [16] Miller, R. T., Mitchell, T. D., & Pessoa, S. (2014). Valued voices: Students' use of Engagement in argumentative history writing. *Linguistics and Education*, 28, 107-120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.10.002>
- [17] Nguyen, T. T. L., & Pramoolsook, I. (2016). Citations in literature review chapters of TESOL master's theses by Vietnamese postgraduates. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 16 (2), 17–32. <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2016-1602-02>
- [18] Ramoroka, B. T. (2014). Integration of sources in academic writing: A corpus-based study of citation practices in essay writing in two departments at the University of Botswana. *Reading & Writing*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/rw.v5i1.41>
- [19] Rayson, P., & Garside, R. (2000). Comparing corpora using frequency profiling. *The workshop on comparing corpora*, 1-6
- [20] Shaw, P. (1992). Reasons for the Correlation of Voice, Tense, and Sentence Function in Reporting Verbs. *Applied Linguistics*, 13(3), 302-319. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/13.3.302>
- [21] Thompson, G., & Ye, Y. (1991). Evaluation in the Reporting Verbs Used in Academic Papers. *Applied Linguistics*, 12(4), 365–382. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/12.4.365>
- [22] Uba, S. Y. (2019). Semantic Categories of Reporting Verbs across Four Disciplines in Research Articles. *English Language Teaching*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n1p89>
- [23] Yang, Y. (2013). Exploring linguistic and cultural variations in the use of hedges in English and Chinese scientific discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 50(1), 23-36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2013.01.008>
- [24] Yeganeh, M. T., & Boghayeri, M. (2015). The Frequency and Function of Reporting Verbs in Research Articles Written by Native Persian and English Speakers. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 192, 582-586. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.097>

**Yueyue Huang** (BA, MA) is currently a doctorate student at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Hong Kong, China) in the field of Applied Language Sciences, and a lecturer at Guangzhou Xinhua University (Guangdong, China). Her research interests include corpus-based translation and interpreting Studies as well as second language reading and writing.

# Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL Teaching: A Sociocognitive Perspective

Sami Abdullah Hamdi  
English Language Institute, Jazan University, KSA

**Abstract**—EFL learners are often taught English in college mainly for academic purposes. They focus their efforts on improving their language skills with limited, if any, attention to the critical aspects of language use. This study attempted to examine EFL learners' capacity to critically evaluate news and information about world events. A focus group discussion was conducted to explore EFL learners' perceptions of fake news, revealing that their reading skills lacked a critical lens. A training program on critical discourse analysis skills was designed. The training utilized a worksheet based on van Dijk's sociocognitive approach to critical discourse analysis and included three workshops. Every workshop introduced two fake news stories from social media to be evaluated using the worksheet, starting with the native language before working on English texts. The participants showed a considerable level of improvement in using critical discourse analysis skills to approach news on social media. They developed awareness of their roles as members of society in effecting a positive change. They also realized the power of language to critically evaluate and judge world events.

**Index Terms**—EFL, CDA, critical language awareness, language teaching, language learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

In their endeavor to learn English, EFL learners are often trained in the basic receptive and productive language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing with the overall aim of improving their communicative competence. They are also exposed to a wide range of sociocultural aspects of language to enrich their learning experience. The field of foreign language teaching offers a plethora of methods and techniques to facilitate the learning process. However, the critical component of language learning is either not emphasized or is limited to critical thinking skills that are taught implicitly or explicitly in other subject areas. Language users and learners are social beings who influence and are influenced by the surrounding educational, social, cultural, and political context. It follows that classrooms should not be conceived as isolated from reality but as a starting point for a lifelong learning experience. Unfortunately, current EFL teaching practices lack a critical perspective for evaluating social reality. Scholars (see, for instance, Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 2001) have called for education that promotes a considerable level of critical capacity to question and criticize not only social surroundings but also teachers, with language learning as a fundamental means to exert these tasks.

Several frameworks have been proposed to address the critical aspects of language learning and teaching using various labels such as critical language awareness (Fairclough, 1992), critical literacy (Luke & Freebody, 1997), critical approaches to language policy (Philipson, 1992), critical sociolinguistics (Eades, 2010), and critical applied linguistics (Pennycook, 2001)<sup>1</sup>. A strand of research was also directed to the critical aspects of second or foreign language teaching, including critical approaches to second language education (Canagarajah, 1999; Norton, 2000), critical pedagogy, and second language education (Morgan, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2011); critical English for academic purposes (Benesch, 2001); and critical bilingualism (Walsh, 1991). These approaches or domains seek to raise language learners' awareness of the social structure, including—but not limited to—issues such as identity and ideology as well as social and economic justice.

The discourse analysis approach is thought to be the most crucial and relevant approach within communicative language teaching, since language is used as both the target and the method for the teaching and learning process (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001). Alsoraihi (2019) views observation and recording as the most appropriate methods for examining discourse analysis for language classroom research. Discourse analysis, although it is a major area in the study of language, is often neglected in foreign language teaching; this is particularly true for critical discourse analysis (CDA). This shortcoming is, consequently, reflected in EFL teachers' and students' lack of sufficient training to develop an attitude toward critical social issues. This skill may be improved by incorporating CDA into language teaching. Naturally, teachers and students may not be ready to accept training on CDA due to an assumption that associates foreign language learning with limited communicative purposes, rather than the development of critical skills. This unwise assumption needs to be changed by raising awareness of the power of language to teach about the social reality and devising practical training programs appropriate to EFL learners' needs.

This study aims to promote EFL learners' awareness so that they may use language critically to examine and judge

---

<sup>1</sup> Pennycook (2010) provided a list of the domains of critical applied linguistics.

world events. It is motivated by the fact that the social world is full of ongoing events and a stream of information that require evaluation to make an informed judgment. EFL learners, as part of the social world, are expected to contribute to the construction or reconstruction of their world. One of the possible ways to contribute to such a goal is by developing a critical stance toward language use within a social context while, at the same time, learning and communicating in the target language.

## II. DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND EFL TEACHING

Discourse analysis examines stretches of real language use beyond the sentence level. Approaches to discourse analysis may be divided generally into the categories of descriptive and critical (see Gee, 2004, Schiffrin et al., 2008; McCarthy, 1991). Both descriptive analysis (DA) and CDA study the correlation between form and function; however, CDA further explicates this correlation concerning particular social practices. These social practices are believed to be controlled by an uneven distribution of power and may be attributed to sociocultural and sociopolitical reasons that render one or more social groups as dominant and others as dominated. Some of the well-known approaches in CDA include the dialectical-relational (Fairclough, 1995), the sociocognitive (van Dijk, 2015), and the discourse-historical (Wodak, 2001). The critical issues or topics vary among different societies, yet power abuse, inequality, and ideological struggle are central concerns.

EFL teaching is also a form of social practice in which knowledge and skills are developed and distributed to learners to enable them to use English properly. There is substantial research using DA in EFL/ESL teaching and learning (see Derin, 2020, for a recent review) compared to CDA. Researchers have made attempts to incorporate methods and techniques from CDA into teaching English using one of the CDA frameworks. They have focused on improving one or more of the general language skills and these skills' applications to selected critical issues such as ideology and identity construction (Carolina & Lobaton, 2011). For instance, Cots (2006) and Martínez (2014) have proposed practical teaching strategies to raise EFL students' critical awareness of language use based on Fairclough's CDA approach. CDA has also been applied to improve EFL students' reading, writing, and critical thinking skills (Dar et al., 2010; Najarzadegan et al., 2018; Rahimi & Sharififar, 2015; Rashidi & Asgarzadeh, 2012). Other researchers have employed CDA to study EFL textbooks and their representations of ideology (Xiong & Qian, 2012) and gender (Sulaimani & Elyas, 2017; Aljuaythi, 2018; Setyono, 2018). The literature on utilizing CDA in EFL teaching reported positive findings and interaction from the students' side, which is promising. However, the diversity of CDA approaches that inform EFL teaching should be also encouraged to come up with shared effective teaching or training strategies.

## III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The materials consisted of a set of questions (see Appendix A) that were used in the focus group discussion, a worksheet based on the selected categories from van Dijk's sociocognitive approach (SCA) to serve as an analytical framework to guide analysis, and a set of fake news stories from social media. The questions were formulated to gain an in-depth understanding of learners' practices for reading information and news on social media. They were designed to elicit learners' perceptions, attitudes, and general practices in reading daily circulating news on social media.

The fake news stories were exchanged on social media in the Arab world. These stories were selected because they were widely spread on social media and often addressed critical issues. The selected news stories were disproved by the Anti-Rumors Commission (see Appendix B), which is an independent organization that reviews contentious news or information published on social media and reports on its credibility. The commission presents the erroneous news along with the original source, if one exists, on its webpage and Twitter account. Some of the news stories were local, with others being regional or global. Six false short news stories on various topics were selected for the training purpose. Two of them were in Arabic to familiarize the participants with the analysis task in their mother tongue. The remaining four news stories were in English, with two of them translated into Arabic.

The methods employed in this study were qualitative, including a focus group and a training program adapted from the SCA (Van Dijk, 2014, 2015, 2016). The choice of a focus group was due to the nature of the topic, which requires discussion and observation of learners' interaction with the training materials. This interaction should help the researcher explore learners' beliefs and perceptions before and after conducting the training program. The SCA to discourse places cognition at the interface between discourse and society and argues for the absence of a direct link between these two elements. The cognitive component of SCA consists of mental models that represent the shared knowledge, attitudes, and ideology of a social group. SCA examines the discourse structure as influenced by the cognitive interface. Discourse structure may be divided into substructures that include the phonological, semantic, syntactic, or rhetorical. The social component addresses discursive power abuse and the domination of the social groups/organizations that influence public discourse. The present study focused on basic selected categories from SCA: the semantic structures (lexical items, phrases, sentences) from the discourse component, power abuse from the social component, and knowledge and attitude from the cognitive component. These categories have been simplified into questions, tips, and hints to guide the analysis of the texts during training.

### A. Participants

A convenient sample of EFL learners was recruited for this study. The participants were 20 male college students studying English as a foreign language. Their native language was Arabic and they were of approximately the same language level and age. In addition to the researcher working as a moderator, a co-moderator was recruited to participate and take notes on the discussion and interaction during the training workshops.

### *B. Procedures*

The researcher informed the participants in advance of the study to attend the training program if they were interested so that they would be mentally prepared to participate. They gave informed consent that the focus group discussion would be recorded and that the co-moderator would write notes. To provide a friendly environment, instead of the regular classroom, they were moved to another one that is often used for professional training. The researcher and the co-moderator prepared seating arrangements and divided the participants into three groups, with each group assigned a leader. The focus group discussion session was followed by a training program of three workshops (see Appendix B). Every workshop lasted approximately one hour.

## IV. IMPLEMENTATION

### *A. Focus Group Discussion*

The session started with welcoming the participants, introducing the topic and objectives of the study, and presenting the co-moderator. The moderator shared a personal experience of having received a news story about a topic that was viral when he received it, before finding out that it was false. The participants were encouraged to share a similar experience, and this paved the way for the first question, which asked them to talk about the last time they had encountered fake news. The participants reported various fake news stories on several topics, such as sports, distance/face-to-face education due to COVID-19, and traffic fines. They pointed out that they read fake news stories mostly on social media (Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, and YouTube). They expressed a negative attitude toward social media, although they used them heavily. Most participants held social media primarily responsible and politicians partly responsible for publishing fake news. Some of the participants stated that about half of social media content is false. They also explained that they feel bad, uncomfortable, and sometimes scared when receiving unfavorable news.

The participants reported that they often relied on official sources and TV channels to learn about important news and information. Inconsistency of news stories' narratives on different platforms or sources urged the participants to keep searching for authentic news if needed. The issues that triggered disagreements or conflicts and, accordingly, were frequent topics for fake news were football matches, politics, and advertisements. Furthermore, the participants pointed out that language skills and reading about politics may help them identify fake news but did not mention relevant strategies or techniques that described their critical reading practice. They showed an overall awareness of the risk of fake news, but they lacked a critical stance and reading strategies in their everyday communication on social media.

### *B. Training Program*

The first workshop of the training program started by introducing the participants to the SCA using the suggested worksheet. The related concepts (e.g., attitude, knowledge, power abuse, role, and identity) were explained in English and Arabic. The participants were allowed to consult the dictionary if needed and to use primarily English—and Arabic sparingly—during the discussion. The worksheet used throughout the workshops is reproduced here:

#### *(a). Semantic Analysis*

The semantic analysis emphasizes macrostructures including headlines/titles of the news stories and local meanings (words, phrases, sentences) that introduce the topic, describe events/situations, and make references to individuals or particular social groups and organizations. The following questions and items may be raised:

- What is the topic of the news story?
  - The topic is the subject matter of the news story.
  - Identify the topic or title if available.
  - Use the title, headline, and content to understand the overall meaning.
- Explain what this news story is about.
  - Describe the content in your own words
  - Find out if there are differences or contradictions between the title and the content.
- Who are the parties mentioned in the news story?
  - Identify the author/writer or publisher.
  - Any reference to individuals, specific social groups, and organizations?

#### *(b). Cognitive Analysis*

The cognitive analysis addresses mainly mental models; that is, the subjective representations of events, settings, and participants (e.g., identities, roles, relationships):

- What do you know about the participants (author, parties mentioned in the news, audience)?

- Identity including gender, nationality, professional title/rank.
  - Role: job, position, profession, social status.
  - Relationships among groups or organizations.
  - What shared knowledge (about the topic, events, participants) was used in the news story?
- Refer to the information, data, and resources mentioned in the news.
- What attitude is expressed in the news story (positive/negative, good/bad)?
  - Identify negative/positive expressions used to describe the parties.
  - Is the description justified or supported by sufficient information?

### (c). *Social Analysis*

The social analysis is concerned mainly with power abuse.

- What tools or resources of power abuse were used to publish the news story?
- Social media platforms, position/authority, technical or professional experience.
- How was power abuse used to influence public discourse?
- By access to social media to publish unauthentic information.
- Some information or news may be manipulated to sway the public.
- Try to find out if the news is about critical or controversial social issues.
- Fame and personal connections with media or corporations may be exploited to reach a larger audience.

Two fake news stories in Arabic were utilized in the first workshop. They were about a robot preacher that was used to deliver Fridays' sermons in mosques and a venomous spider whose bite is deadly. The analysis process was typically initiated by projecting the fake news onto a large screen. The researcher asked the participants to examine the text by reading, thinking, and reflecting upon language use to assess its overall tone. Then, they were guided through the analysis step by step using the worksheet. The researcher maintained an interactive context during the analysis by providing explanation and background information and encouraging the participants to question, answer, comment on, and share their interpretations using the worksheet. The analysis process was repeated with the second news story, giving more room to the participants to apply the task individually with the researcher providing immediate feedback. The participants could understand and apply the semantic and partly cognitive analysis; however, the social analysis was difficult to deal with. They viewed a robot preacher as hurting Muslims' feelings rather than as an innovation. They thought that such news was written on purpose to misrepresent the UAE as an Islamic country. However, they suggested that non-citizens might be behind publishing such fake news. The claimed venomous spider was perceived as a way to scare people using their lack of knowledge of such types of spiders. Social media platforms—and possibly some software—were used as tools of power abuse in this case.

The second workshop included two fake news stories about the Chinese president's visiting a mosque to ask Muslims to pray for the end of the pandemic and about a six-year old child who died after falling into a well. These news stories were published originally in English but modified in Arabic. The researcher reviewed the worksheet and refreshed the participants on the process before they started working on the text. They were instructed to analyze the Arabic text first by following the worksheet's steps. Then, the English version of the news was projected to the participants, and they were instructed to analyze, compare, and contrast it with the Arabic version. The researcher encouraged the participants to look at the features that are not often typical of media language. They could use the worksheet to construe an overall meaning of the event, context models (topic, settings, participants), and an evaluative attitude toward the event. They could also explore the differences between the two texts in terms of language use and information. They questioned the use of colloquial language as well as the irrelevant information mentioned in the Arabic text. It was clear to the participants that the news had been manipulated to mean something else in the Arabic version. They raised questions beyond the worksheet, such as the motivation and the social group to which the author belonged. They could see that social media and knowledge of another language (English) were misused to reproduce a distorted version of the news in Arabic.

In the third workshop, the participants were given two fake news stories in English to examine while following the worksheet. The news stories were about a supernatural creature's appearing over a church and releasing 800 lions in Russia to force people to stay home. It took them more time to process the text, yet the researcher's role focused on assisting the participants who were finding difficulty with some words and expressions. With more explanation and simplification of the language of the text, they improved and became more confident in applying the worksheet. They could develop a mental representation of the event and context models and, accordingly, expressed their attitudes as criticism, questions, and comments. For instance, they argued against the exaggeration and deliberate involvement of religious aspects that were not related to the event. Also, they noted negative descriptions and associations that targeted specific people (political figures). The group work and the class discussion helped the participants to explore and question various aspects of the text, such as the intention and identity of the author. This, in return, challenged the groups to report implicit meanings, such as the sense of enmity and hatred based on the nationality of the author and other parties mentioned in the news. Social media and digital skills were thought to have been exploited to publish inauthentic content.

### C. *Participants' Feedback*

Following the end of the training program, the participants were asked to fill out a post-training survey (see Appendix C). The semantic macrostructure was the most convenient place to start their CDA of news or pieces of information. This is normal, since EFL learners would prefer to implement a practical strategy by looking for negative, positive, or neutral words/expressions to describe the events, individuals, or social groups. The cognitive and social structures might be difficult to apply due to the need for a deeper background in the sociocultural and sociopolitical context of the text. In response to a question regarding the implementation of CDA skills, the participants stated that they would use these skills to analyze news and information in their everyday communication. The SCA-based worksheet and the language of the text were reported as the difficult parts of the training. The critical aspects of texts required rigorous analysis with an emphasis on interpretative skills which, in turn, require intensive practice to develop. Their overall evaluation of the training was “good,” and this was the expectation of such a program.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The perception of fake news published on social media was generally negative, and this reflects the participants' awareness of the credibility issue. However, having a critical perspective to avoid the risk of believing fake news and to properly evaluate a story's underlying ideological purposes was lacking, despite the ongoing flow of information and news every day. Here, CDA emerges as a valuable resource to educate college students “CDA must be teachable, and hence comprehensible. If students do not understand us, they can neither learn from us, nor criticize us” (van Dijk, 2001, p.97). A major implication of this study agrees with Thornbury's (2009) call for fostering a critical teaching approach with an emphasis on connecting language learning to driving social change. Within the SCA, the social analysis was challenging, although it was limited to power abuse. This may be due to the abstractness of the concept along with the diverse forms and tools/resources to describe power abuse. This analysis becomes more difficult when the news includes audiovisual materials related to the event. However, having a working knowledge of social media and digital skills were identified as the main resources for power abuse, according to EFL learners. The acknowledgment of this influence by EFL learners is a positive sign of their ability to recognize the possible power abuse tools.

The use of the mother tongue in the first activity was helpful in focusing on the analysis process using the selected components from SCA. Some aspects of Arabic fake news included spelling mistakes, punctuation errors, and mixing styles (standard and colloquial Arabic). Also, the practice of combining news with personal comments and interpretations in Arabic was an interesting observation that often goes unnoticed by social media users.

The enthusiasm of the participants during the training and the transition between the activities and tasks attested to their readiness to explore aspects of bias and manipulation in the texts. This was apparent in their observation of the distorted translation from English to Arabic, which triggered their reaction of showing their disappointment in such an unjustified act. Dellinger (1995) points out that readers need to interact with the text to find out the author's intent and, thus, have a better comprehension of the meaning. This reaction should account for the learnability of the critical aspects of language use with appropriate training, which is consistent with the view of Dar et al. (2010) that a growing spirit of inquiry suggests a better learning experience. Furthermore, the exposure to international news that undergoes recontextualization or intentional modification in the local version was helpful in encouraging EFL learners to check the quality of translations. Manipulating news and information on social media may be associated with hidden agendas that need to be questioned. Zinkgraf (2003) draws attention to EFL learners' risk of transferring hidden ideologies in their professional lives as teachers or translators.

Although working on English fake news was interesting to EFL learners, they had some difficulty with the vocabulary, identifying implicit meanings, and language style. Consequently, they were more uncritical at first, as they were busy making sense of the texts. Wallace (1992) explains this behavior by referring to the nature of foreign language texts, which are seen as “vehicles for linguistic structure” in which the content is taken for granted. However, when the participants were encouraged to take a critical stance as they had done with the native language texts, they overcame this barrier. They noticed that the type of events and the approach of the writer/author of the news shared common features that included reporting strange news, making exaggerated statements or claims, exploiting trending topics, and mixing personal views with the news. This study developed EFL learners' critical awareness of news and information on social media using CDA. They realized that fake news is a global phenomenon, and, as language learners, they can utilize discourse analysis skills as a starting point to evaluate events. Fairclough (1999) noted that such critical awareness of discourse is required for personal success and social change. Also, as members of society, EFL learners are expected to assume responsible citizenship duties and respond to the risk of spreading fake news/information by maintaining a critical perspective before using or sharing content on social media. Naturally, EFL learners are not expected to practice CDA at every instance of language use. However, raising their awareness about CDA contributes to promoting what van Dijk (2001) and Cots (2006) call a “critical attitude” in language classes.

The limitations of the study were mainly three. First, the choice of news stories had to be made carefully, in line with the participants' language proficiency levels, so that EFL learners could perform text analysis. Second, deciding on a CDA approach was difficult and becomes more challenging when simplifying it into an analysis model. However, narrowing the approach to selected categories or items using straightforward language should help learners to understand the process. Finally, assessing participants' learning of CDA skills using the suggested worksheet required close observation, since their learning levels varied due to individual differences. Nonetheless, the group work and



frequent reviews of the analysis procedures during activities were useful in improving learning quality.

## VI. CONCLUSION

EFL learners lack a critical stance toward published textual materials, especially on social media. With the ongoing flow of news and information on social media, they are exposed to the risk of imperfect learning. This study attempted to train EFL learners to develop their reading skills using a worksheet based on van Dijk's SCA to CDA. The training program included three workshops and six news stories written in Arabic and English. The researcher guided participants throughout the training, providing support and further explanation to facilitate the analysis task by following the worksheet. The participants interacted positively with the training materials and activities, acknowledging their relevance to their daily lives. Following the training, they developed a critical attitude toward news and information published on social media in Arabic and English. The participants showed their awareness and readiness to evaluate texts reporting world events as responsible members of society using CDA skills.

### APPENDIX A. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Talk about the last time you came across/received false news?
2. What do you do to find out if the information/news you read is authentic?
3. How do you feel about false news?
4. How do you think we can use language to read critically?
5. How do you know if the news/information is biased?
6. What are the issues that are used to publish false news?
7. Who are the parties responsible for manipulating public discourse?

### APPENDIX B. TRAINING PLAN

	Aims	News Source	Summary
Workshop 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To introduce participants to SCA and guide them through the analysis task</li> <li>- To apply native language knowledge to interpret implicit meanings</li> <li>- To draw participants' attention to the use of positive/negative descriptions in news</li> <li>- To use background knowledge to evaluate cultural, social, and political events/situations</li> </ul>	1. <a href="http://norumors.net/?rumors=6788">http://norumors.net/?rumors=6788</a>  2. <a href="https://twitter.com/no_rumors/status/1210920237450878976?lang=ar-x-fm">https://twitter.com/no_rumors/status/1210920237450878976?lang=ar-x-fm</a>	1. The robot wasn't designed to deliver sermons but rather it was an interactive robot that speaks Arabic for educational purposes 2. The deadly spider false news is about Cyclocosmia Ricketti: a non-venomous spider that lives often in China. It was claimed to exist in the middle east.
Workshop 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To analyze foreign language news translated to Arabic using SCA</li> <li>- To apply native and foreign language skills to suggest implicit meanings</li> <li>- To compare and contrast meanings from both texts and explain the differences</li> </ul>	1. <a href="http://norumors.net/?rumors=7631">http://norumors.net/?rumors=7631</a>  2. <a href="http://norumors.net/?rumors=78678">http://norumors.net/?rumors=78678</a>	1. The Chinese president visited a mosque and asked Muslims to pray for the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. The visit was in 2016 to a mosque before the pandemic. 2. The real news was about a kid who had an accident in North Carolina. It was manipulated to refer to a Moroccan kid who fell into a well. The message was a comment that attributes the claimed accident to the state of oppression and backwardness.
Workshop 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To critically analyze false news written in English using SCA</li> <li>- To show autonomy and a more critical attitude toward news written in English</li> <li>- To assume a more responsible role as a social member</li> </ul>	1. <a href="https://twitter.com/to_rumors/status/1243974481011449857?s=24&amp;t=CLbCzCkngJXtUY8cEV7mxQ">https://twitter.com/to_rumors/status/1243974481011449857?s=24&amp;t=CLbCzCkngJXtUY8cEV7mxQ</a> 2. <a href="http://norumors.net/?rumors=the-truth-about-the-statement-russia-released-more-than-500-lions-to-make-sure-people-are-staying-home">http://norumors.net/?rumors=the-truth-about-the-statement-russia-released-more-than-500-lions-to-make-sure-people-are-staying-home</a>	1. A supernatural creature (half human and half bat) claimed to appear over a church and then over Muslim Minarets before it disappears. 2. A false news about the Russian president releasing 500 tigers and lions to force people either to stay home or to go to jail.

### APPENDIX C. POST-TRAINING SURVEY

1. What did you learn most from the training?

- A. Evaluating the semantic macrostructure of news/information
- B. Evaluating the cognitive structure of news/information
- C. Evaluating the social structure of news/information

ما الذي تعلمته أكثر من البرنامج التدريبي  
 تقييم التركيب الدلالي للأخبار والمعلومات  
 تقييم التركيب المعرفي للأخبار والمعلومات

- تقييم التركيب الاجتماعي للأخبار والمعلومات
2. How were you able to implement the skills you learned?
- كيف يمكن أن تُطبق المهارات التي تعلمتها من خلال التدريب
- A. By applying CDA skills to everyday communication
- من خلال تطبيق مهارات التحليل النقدي أثناء التواصل اليومي
- B. By applying CDA skills to academic texts
- من خلال تطبيق مهارات التحليل النقدي للنصوص الأكاديمية
- C. By transferring knowledge and skills to others
- من خلال نقل المعرفة والمهارات للآخرين
3. What are the difficult parts of the training program?
- ما هي الجوانب التي فيها صعوبة في البرنامج التدريبي
- A. The SCA-based worksheet
- ورقة التحليل الاسترشادية
- B. The language of the news
- لغة النصوص
- C. The researcher's training style
- أسلوب التدريب
4. How do you evaluate the quality of the training program?
- A. poor ضعيف
- B. satisfactory مُرضي
- C. good جيد
- E. very good جيد جداً

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aljuaythin, W. (2018). Gender representation in EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia: A critical discourse analysis approach. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 7(5), 151-157.
- [2] Alsoraihi, M. H. (2019). Bridging the Gap between Discourse Analysis and Language Classroom Practice. *English Language Teaching*, 12(8), 79-88.
- [3] *Anti-Rumors Commission*. (2022). Accessed March 2022. <http://norumors.net/>
- [4] Asgharzadeh, R. (2009). *The effect of teaching critical reading through critical discourse analysis on high school EFL learners' reading comprehension*. Master's thesis. University of Shiraz, Shiraz, Iran.
- [5] Benesch, Sarah. (2001). *Critical English for academic purposes: Theory, politics, and practice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [6] Canagarajah, A. S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- [7] Cots, J. M. (2006). Teaching 'with an attitude': Critical discourse analysis in EFL teaching. *ELT Journal*, 60(4), 336-345.
- [8] Dar, Z. K., Shams, M. R., & Rahimi, A. (2010). Teaching reading with a critical attitude: Using critical discourse analysis (CDA) to raise EFL university students' critical language awareness (CLA). *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory*, 3(2), 457-476.
- [9] Dellinger, Brett. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Retrieved April, 1, 2022. <http://www.utu.fi/~bredelli/cda.html>
- [10] Derin, T., Putri, N. S., Nursafira, M. S., & Hamuddin, B. (2020). Discourse Analysis (DA) in the Context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL): A Chronological Review. *ELSYA: Journal of English Language Studies*, 2(1), 1-8.
- [11] Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman
- [12] Fairclough, N. (1999). Global capitalism and critical awareness of language. *Language awareness*, 8(2), 71-83.
- [13] Fairclough, N. (Ed.) (1992). *Critical language awareness*. London: Longman.
- [14] Gee, J. P. (2004). Discourse analysis: What makes it critical?. In *An introduction to critical discourse analysis in education* (pp. 49-80). Routledge.
- [15] Gómez Lobatón, J. C. (2011). Peer interaction: A social perspective towards the development of foreign language learning. *Profile issues in teachers professional development*, 13(1), 189-203.
- [16] Hashemi, M. R., & Ghanizadeh, A. (2012). Critical discourse analysis and critical thinking: An experimental study in an EFL context. *System*, 40(1), 37-47.
- [17] Luke, A., & Freebody, P. (1997). Critical literacy and the question of normativity: An introduction. In S. Muspratt, A. Luke, & P. Freebody (Eds.), *Constructing critical literacies: Teaching and learning textual practice*, 1-18.
- [18] Martínez, D. F. (2014). *Teaching and learning discourse analysis: some ideas on the use of ICTs*. I Jornadas Iberoamericanas de Innovación Educativa en el ámbito de las TIC, 71-80.
- [19] McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers*. Cambridge University Press.
- [20] Morgan, Brian. (1998). *The ESL classroom: Teaching, critical practice and community development*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- [21] Najrazadegan, S., Dabaghi, A., & Eslamirasekh, A. (2018). The Impact of Practicing van Dijk's Model of Critical Discourse Analysis on the Improvement of Iranian EFL Undergraduates' Critical Thinking across Different Proficiency Levels. *Iranian Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 7(1), 1-16.
- [22] Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2011). Identity, language learning, and social change. *Language teaching*, 44(4), 412-446. Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*. Harlow: Longman.
- [23] Olshstein, E., & Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Discourse Analysis and Language Teaching. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, and H. Hamilton (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 707-724

- [24] Pennycook, Alastair. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: a critical introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [25] Pennycook, Alastair. (2010). 'Critical and alternative directions in applied linguistics'. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* 33 (2), 16.1–16.16. DOI: 10.2104/ara11016.
- [26] Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford University Press.
- [27] Rahimi, E., & Sharififar, M. (2015). Critical Discourse Analysis and Its Implication in English Language Teaching: A Case Study of Political Text. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5, 504-511.
- [28] Schiffrin, D., Tannen, D., & Hamilton, H. E. (Eds.). (2008). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [29] Setyono, B. (2018). The portrayal of women in nationally-endorsed English as a foreign language (EFL) textbooks for senior high school students in Indonesia. *Sexuality & Culture*, 22(4), 1077-1093.
- [30] Sulaimani, A., & Elyas, T. (2018). A glocalized or globalized edition? Contextualizing gender representation in EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia: A critical discourse analysis perspective. In *Conceptual Shifts and Contextualized Practices in Education for Global Interaction* (pp. 55-76). Springer, Singapore.
- [31] Thornbury, S. (2009). *Dogme: Nothing if not critical. Teaching English*. Retrieved April, 1, 2022. <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/dogme-nothing-if-not-critical>
- [32] van Dijk TA (2014) Discourse-cognition-society: Current state and prospects of the socio-cognitive approach to discourse. In C. Hart and P. Cap (Eds), *Contemporary Critical Discourse Studies*, 121–146.
- [33] van Dijk TA (2016) Sociocognitive discourse studies. In Richardson, J. and Flowerdew, J. (Eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies* (pp. 26-43. London: Routledge.
- [34] van Dijk, T. A. (1993). Principles of critical discourse analysis. *Discourse & society*, 4(2), 249-283.
- [35] van Dijk, T. A. (2001). Multidisciplinary CDA: A plea for diversity. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 95–120). London: Sage.
- [36] van Dijk, T. A. (2015a). Critical discourse studies: A sociocognitive approach. In Ruth Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse studies* (3rd ed., pp. 62–85). London.
- [37] Wallace, C. (1992). Critical Literacy Awareness in the EFL Classroom. In N. Fairclough (Ed.), *Critical Language Awareness* (pp. 59-92). London: Longman.
- [38] Walsh, C. E. (1991). *Pedagogy and the struggle for voice: Issues of language, power, and schooling for Puerto Ricans*. Praeger. Toronto: OISE Press.
- [39] Wodak, Ruth. (2001). The discourse-historical approach. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 63–94). London: Sage.
- [40] Xiong, T., & Qian, Y. (2012). Ideologies of English in a Chinese high school EFL textbook: A critical discourse analysis. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 32(1), 75-92.
- [41] Zinkgraf, M. (2003). *Assessing the development of critical language awareness in a foreign language (Report No. ED479811)*. The Educational Resources Information Center. Retrieved April, 1, 2022. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED479811>

**Sami Abdullah Hamdi** is an assistant professor at the English Language Institute- Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. He received his Ph.D. in Educational Linguistics from the University of New Mexico-USA in 2018. Dr. Hamdi's research interests include critical discourse studies/analysis, text analytics, and intellectual security. He has published several studies on linguistics and language learning issues. Currently, Dr. Hamdi works on an extended project on illegitimate forms of discourse on social media such as extremism and misinformation. He is also interested in training and teaching critical discourse analysis to develop a critical perspective toward world events.

# The Indonesian *Di-* Passive and Discourse Contexts

I Nyoman Udayana

Department of English Language, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

**Abstract**—The syntactic analysis of the formation of an Indonesian active clause into a passive one has been much done in the literature. However, the research of the Indonesian passive into its discourse contexts has been understudied. The present study seeks to fill the lacuna. The findings show that an active clause and its passive clause counterpart change in the topic-comment relation, characterized by a change of definiteness status in the NP subject of the passive clause (NP patient) which serves to maintain the semantic interdependence between the NP object of the active clause and the NP subject (of the passive clause). The prohibition of passive clauses with the first and second person agent by-phrases is dependent upon the type of verbs that the *di*-passive co-occur with. NP agent by-phrases is also affected by discourse contexts tied to (im)politeness. It is also shown that the definiteness status of NP patients in agentless *di*-passive is affected by that of the NP agent. In addition to this, the omission of the NP agent by-phrase is made to avoid attributing direct responsibility for the action to the agent itself.

**Index Terms**—*di*-passive clause, agent by-phrase, definiteness, cohesive relation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The standard syntactic operation that is related to the formation of an active clause into a passive clause is that the object of the active clause occupies the subject position and the subject of the erstwhile active clause is turned into a peripheral function (Quirk et al., 1985; Lingfelt & Solstad, 2006). In Indonesian, passivization is seen as a process whereby the verb of the active clause is AV-marked (agentive-focus verb) while the corresponding passive clause is marked with the prefix *di*-which is attached to the verb base, yielding *di*-passive.

- (1) a. Dia membeli buku itu  
3SG AV.buy book that  
'(S)he bought the book'  
b. Buku itu dibeli oleh dia  
book that PAS.buy by 3SG  
'The book was bought (by him/her)'

There is another form of a passive clause in Indonesian in which the preverbal prefix is instead filled by the *ter*-prefix, as in (2).

- (2) Buku itu terbeli oleh dia  
book that PAS.buy by 3SG  
'the book got bought by him/her'.

The passive that is marked with the *di*- prefix is called canonical passive while the *ter*-passive is termed the non-canonical passive. The *ter*-passive and the *di*-passive exhibit volitionality contrast. The former is associated with non-volitional passive while the latter is the volitional passive. The *ter*-passive has the same property as the get passive in English (which is categorized as non-canonical passives) (Reed, 2011; Alexiadou, 2012; Alexiadou & Schäfer, 2013).

A construction which is also claimed as belonging to passive in Indonesian is the preposed construction (Sneddon et al., 2010; Voskuil, 2000).

- (3) Buku itu dia beli  
book that 3SG OV.buy  
'(S)he bought the book'

This form has been rejected to be classified as passive by Arka (1998, 2003) for the reason that the argument structure having to do with the construction still bears its agent argument. Under this view, the construction in (3) remains transitive and the associated verbal predicate does not undergo a decrease in valence. This construction might have a passive meaning because it resembles the standard *di*-passive in that the subject equally bears the patient role; however, syntactically, it is referred to as "passive semu" (non-canonical passive) (Cole et al., 2006).

Research into Indonesian passivization has largely been conducted merely from the perspective of syntax. The present study is especially devoted to filling in this lacuna by examining the interface of syntax and discourse contexts in the *di*-passive. The structure of the paper is as follows. Section 2 focuses on the NP patient and its (in)definiteness. Section 3 talks about the NP agent by-phrase and (im)politeness. Section 4 discusses the omission of NP agent by-phrase and (in)definiteness, and section 5 is the conclusion.

## II. NP PATIENT AND (IN)DEFINITENESS

Information packaging related to the active-passive relationship, as has been noted, holds that an NP object of the active clause is promoted into subject function in the passive clause counterpart. The change of grammatical function status is not accompanied by semantic information status. That is, the subject of the passive clause which bears the patient role in the active clause remains a patient in the passive clause, ensuring that the two clauses are not isolated clauses but rather are connected.<sup>1</sup> The connectedness between them is shown by the change in the topic-comment structure. The object of an active clause which used to constitute the comment is changed into the topic in the passive clause. The change of topic-comment relation requires a change in the definiteness status (Halliday & Hassan, 1976; Simpson et al., 2011). That is the definiteness of the NP subject of the passive clause changes to guarantee that there is a texture between the active clause and the passive clause. In what follows, we are looking at the definiteness of the NP subject of the agentive passive clause.

The agentive passive here is seen as a passive which contains the agent by-phrase. Let us consider the active clause in (4a) which is turned into its passive counterpart in (4b).

- (4) a. Tono membeli buku  
       name AV.buy book  
       'Tono bought a book/books'  
       b. #Buku dibeli oleh Tono  
       book PAS.buy by name  
       'A book was bought by Tono'

The formation of an active clause into a passive one is not merely done by applying the rules of passivization (i.e., the attachment of the preverbal prefix *di-* to the verb base and the patient is made to occupy the subject position and the definiteness status of the promoted subject is simply retained or made unchanged). In a stretch of clauses, if the noun in the second mention remains indefinite as shown in (4b), the NP book is considered new information. Thus, semantically speaking, the book in (4b) does not belong to Tono because there is no cohesive relationship that holds between (4a) and (4b) in a discourse context, either in a spoken or written (discourse) context. The change of definiteness status here ensures that (4b) is taken as having an infelicitous reading in its relationship to the active counterpart. Importantly, it is correctly predicted that the NP subject in (4a) is best turned into a DP to guarantee that the object of the active clause and the subject of its corresponding passive clause are the same entity, as shown in (5).

- (5) Buku itu dibeli oleh Tono  
       book that PAS.buy by name  
       'The book was bought by Tono'

Sentence (4a) has its indefinite singular NP object of an active clause. Now, we wish to look at the indefinite plural NP object of an active clause. This bare plural NP object is rarely found; instead, the occurrence of the singular bare NP object predominates.

- (6) a. Mereka memperbaiki rumah/?rumah-rumah  
       3PL AV.repair house/houses  
       'They repaired a house/houses'  
       b. Rumah-rumah/?rumah bagus  
       house-RED/ house beautiful  
       (i) Houses are beautiful  
       (ii) ?A house is beautiful  
       c. Rumah-rumah itu/ #rumah-rumah diperbaiki oleh mereka  
       house-RED that/ house-RED PAS.repair by 3PL  
       'The houses/# houses were repaired by them'

There is some kind of subject-object asymmetry in the active-passive relationship shown in (6). The asymmetry shows that the plural bare NP fares well in the subject position in the active/passive or declarative clause but not in the object position. The idea is that the bare NP is interpreted as being generic (Wijaya, 2012). The genericness of the bare NP *rumah* indicates that it can either have a singular or plural interpretation in Indonesian (Loewen, 2011). However, there is a tendency (in discourse context) that such genericness interpretation does not apply to an NP occupying the subject position as shown in (6c).

Indefiniteness, instead of bare NP, can also be expressed with a classifier in Indonesian such as *sebuah*, *seekor*, and *seorang*. However, unlike the bare nouns, the nouns that combine with a classifier receive a singular interpretation as indicated by the morpheme *se-* meaning 'one' attached to the word *buah*, *ekor*, and *orang* which means 'fruit', 'tail', and 'person' respectively. Thus, *sebuah* as a classifier is generally associated with talking about fruits, *seekor* with animals, and *seorang* with persons/human beings. However, a motorcycle, for example, is an object that certainly cannot be linked to a human being or an entity having a tail. So in this respect, the classifier *sebuah* can be used; thereby qualifying *sebuah* as an unmarked classifier.

<sup>1</sup> For ease of exposition, the subject NP of the passive clause is called NP patient while the subject NP of the active clause or the object NP of the PP (by phrase) of the passive clause is called NP agent.

- (7) a. Dia membeli sebuah sepeda  
3SG AV.buy a bicycle  
'S(he) bought a bicycle'  
b. Sepeda itu dibeli oleh dia  
bike that PAS.buy by 3SG  
'The bike was bought by him/her'
- (8) a. Mereka memiliki seekor kucing  
3PL AV.own a cat  
'They own a cat'  
b. Kucing itu dimiliki oleh mereka  
cat that PAS.own by 3PL  
'The cat was owned by them'
- (9) a. Ali memanggil seorang teman  
name AV.call a friend  
'Ali called a friend'  
b. Teman itu dipanggil oleh Ali  
friend that PAS.call by name  
'The friend was called by Ali'

If the NP object of the active clause is already definite, the discourse process does not affect its status. In other words, the definiteness status of the NP subject of the corresponding passive remains the same, as shown in (10). However what is interesting here is that, next to demonstrative article *itu*, definiteness in Indonesian can be expressed with the bound definite marker *-nya* and the modifier *tersebut* 'already mentioned'. It has to be noted that the modifier *tersebut* indeed shows evidence in itself that a passive utterance/clause cannot commonly stand in isolation, i.e., without being derived from its active clause counterpart.

- (10) a. Mereka sudah mengirim sepedanya  
3PL PERF AV.send bicycle.DEF  
'They have sent their bicycles'  
b. John mengirim sepeda-sepedanya  
name AV.send bicycle-RED.POSS  
'John sent his bicycles'  
c. Ali menjual buah-buah tersebut  
name AV.sell fruit-RED that  
'Ali has sold the fruits that have been mentioned (lit.)/Ali has sold those fruits'
- (11) a. Sepedanya sudah dikirim  
bicycle.DEF PERF PAS.send  
'The bike has been sent'  
b. Sepeda-sepedanya dikirim  
bicycle-RED.DEF PAS.send  
'The bicycles have been sent'  
c. Buah-buah tersebut dijual  
fruit-RED that PAS.sell  
'The fruits have been sold'

The evidence that the change in definiteness status associated with an NP patient of an agentive passive comes from a narrative text /discourse talking about an object, as illustrated in (12).

- (12) Wanita itu mengambil sebuah buku. Kemudian buku itu dibuka dan dilihat oleh wanita itu. Lalu, wanita menulis dalam buku itu. Setelah itu, wanita tersebut membaca dan melihat-lihat isi buku tersebut. Kemudian buku itu ditutup dan ditinggalkan oleh wanita tersebut di atas meja. Tak berapa lama kemudian, datang seorang laki-laki. Laki-laki itu menghampiri buku tersebut. Kemudian, buku itu dibaca oleh lelaki tersebut.  
(The woman took a book. Then the book was opened and seen by the woman. Then she wrote something on it. After that, she read and looked at the contents of the book. Then it was closed and left by the woman on the table. Shortly thereafter, a man came. The man approached it. Then, it was read by the man)

It is clear from the texts above that the active clauses containing an indefinite NP patient are turned into definite NP in the subject of the passive clause, written in the bold type in the texts. Importantly, this sample text constitutes a thematic paragraph in which the same NP topic mentioned in the middle or final position of a paragraph must be definite (Givón, 1983, p. 10). This phenomenon is also in support of the fact that passives are taken as a strategy for topic continuity in discourse. That is, the known part bearing the topic function (in the discourse) occupies the clause-initial position (Guijarro, 2006).

Definiteness, as mentioned above, is the salient factor that determines the NP subject of passive constructions (more specifically in the agentive passive). This rule is universal. The claim is supported by Huddleston and Pullum (2005) by the English data. Sentence (13b) is acceptable because the subject NP (NP patient) is old information. However,

sentence (14b) is judged as marginally acceptable because the NP patient which used to be new information (marked by indefinite NP) in the active clause which now turns out to be the topic remains to be treated as new information in the passive clause.

Huddleston and Pullum (2005, pp. 242-243)

- (13) a. A dog attacked me in the park  
b. I was attacked by a dog in the park

- (14) a. I bought a tie  
b. ?A tie is bought by me

In conclusion, the change of the definiteness status is only applied to the NP Patient. However, the NP agent is not sensitive to the discourse as depicted in the following tables.

TABLE 1  
THE NP PATIENT

Active	Passive
Indefinite	Definite
Definite	Definite

TABLE 2  
THE NP PATIENT

Active	Passive
Indefinite	Indefinite
Definite	Definite

### III. NP AGENT BY-PHRASE AND (IM)POLITENESS

As has been indicated in the foregoing discussion, there are cases where the agent by-phrase is intently expressed in a discourse context. What is surprising here is that the explicit presence of the agent by-phrase in Indonesian is only limited to the third-person agent. In other words, the long passive (the name which is commonly associated with the passive with the agent by-phrase in the literature) with a person value other than the third person is taken as being prohibited (Sneddon et al., 2010). Let us first deal with the appearance of the first and second NP agent by- phrase.

The prohibition of a first and second agent by-phrase is compensated by a preposed construction, as illustrated in (15b).

- (15) a. Baju itu dibeli oleh \*saya/ \*kamu/\*kami  
shirt that PAS.buy by 1SG/ 2/ 1PL  
'The shirt was bought by me/ you/ us'  
b. Baju itu saya/ kamu/ kami beli <sup>2</sup>  
shirt that 1SG/ 2/ 1PL OV.buy  
'I/you/we bought the shirt.'

Both sentence (15a) and sentence (15b) are an instance of passive constructions (Sneddon et al., 2010). The former is categorized as passive type one while the latter as passive type two. However, sentence (18b), as has been previously explained, is categorized as an active clause because the agent *saya* and *kamu* are obligatorily present which shows that they are not a passive construction. What is more is that this preposed construction is, predictably, not only restricted to the first and second NP by-phrases but is also acceptable with the third-person agent. Conclusively, this suggests that the construction works similarly to the canonical active construction because there are no agent constraints. Alternatively, if one judges that sentence (15a) containing first and second person by- phrase as being prohibited, sentences in (15b) must be equally taken as being unacceptable.

The prohibition (of the first person and second person agent by-phrase) does not seem to have a strong ground. The obvious counterexample has to do with the passive imperative. Imperatives are clauses whose subject NP is commonly directed/ targeted to a second person (Rupp, 2003; Wurff, 2007; Alcázar & Saltarelli, 2014; Jary & Kissine, 2014). Imperatives in Indonesian may take a passive form as shown in (16). Like imperatives in other languages the agent, precisely the agent by-phrase, does not appear explicit. However, Balinese, which also possesses passive imperatives, can allow its presence (see Udayana, 2013). In Indonesian, given that we are committed to applying the rule of long passives that only makes it possible for the third person agent by-phrase, passive imperatives should be unavailable.

- (16) a. Mohon ditunggu!  
please PAS.wait  
'Let it be awaited!'  
b. Tolong dikirim hari ini!  
please PAS.send today

<sup>2</sup>The view in support of the claim that the OV construction (the construction containing the object-focus verb) here has active not passive interpretation comes from the notion of symmetrical voice system in which the OV construction is taken to encode the same function as the AV construction (the construction containing the agentive-focus verb), i.e. they are equally transitive. For more information on symmetrical voice system, see Arka (2002, 2003), Himmelmann & Riesberg (2013), Riesberg & Primus (2015).

‘Let it be sent today!’

It has to be noted that the use of passive imperative in (16a) and (16b) relates to politeness for the reason that although the addressee associated with the imperative does not appear overtly in surface syntax, passivization has the effect such that the addressee concerned is taken to be indirectly expressed resulting in the fact that the expression is used for indirect instruction. Therefore, it serves as a strategy for exhibiting a polite expression in Indonesian. On the other hand, a declarative passive whose agent by-phrase is filled by the first or second person is associated with impoliteness. Consider the following examples:

- (17) a. Saya/ kamu mencuri buku  
1'SG 2 AV.steal book  
‘I/you stole a book’  
b. Saya/kamu memarahi orang itu  
1SG/2 AV.anger person that  
‘I/you angered the man’
- (18) a. Buku itu dicuri oleh \*saya /\*kamu  
book that PAS.steal by 1SG /2  
‘The book was stolen by me/you’  
b. Orang itu telah dimarahi oleh \*saya/ \*kamu  
person that PERF PAS.anger by 1SG /2  
‘The man was angered by me/you’

Comparing (17) with (18), an interesting result emerges. The use of the first and second-person NP agent in the active clause, in (17a-b), does not pose any problem. However, their occurrence in the passive clause, in (18a-b), turns out to be ungrammatical. The reason for this is that the active clause is canonical construction in which there are no constraints associated with the use of any type of person. We have noted that a passive clause is a derived construction. This is manifested by the fact that, in an utterance, the active clause comes first the passive clause comes later. The co-occurrence of the two clauses enters into a discourse relation. As noted above, the book becomes definite in the passive clause to maintain the semantic interdependence, i.e. ‘the book’ being talked about in an active clause refers to the same referent in the passive clause. The NP agent of the active clause is turned into an NP agent by-phrase. The NP agents of the first and second person remain to become old information in the discourse. Recall that both the first person and second person are old information because they participate jointly in a speech event suggesting that they need to save each other’s face. The second mention of the first and second-person pronouns (in the passive clause) relates to directness which is evaluated as an impolite utterance (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Ogiermann, 2009; Leech, 2014; Culpeper et al., 2017).

Not all types of verbs used are sensitive to signaling politeness along the lines of (18). A case in point is shown by the verb such as *tandatangan* ‘sign’ and *terima* ‘receive’. The co-occurrence of the first and second person by-phrase with these verbs in this (discourse) context indeed constitutes a welcome sort of action that does not ultimately lead to a face-threatening act. That is, it can be said that the interactants involved satisfy each other’s face wants which of course does not engender any offense at all.

- (19) a. Dokumen ini ditandatangani oleh saya/ saudara  
document this PAS.sign by 1SG/ 2  
‘This document was signed by me/you’  
b. Buku ini diterima oleh saya/ kamu/ tadi pagi  
book this PAS.receive by 1SG/ 2 this morning  
‘This book was received by me/you this morning’

A clause such as (19a) is often found in a legal document in which there are several stipulations for the document to be implemented. The parties entering into a contract, for example, must agree to the same terms and the mark of approval in the form of a signature that must be made by them. Given the implementation of this sort of agreement, the use of the first person and second-person by-phrase (i.e. between the sender and the sendee) in (19b) also achieves the same purpose, i.e. it does not cause a face-threatening act.

Turning to the third person in the NP agent by- phrase, quite different from (15a), only the NP third-person by phrase is compatible with *di*-passive (Sneddon et al., 2010), as shown in (20).

- (20) Buku itu di-ambil oleh \*saya/ \*kamu/ dia  
book that PAS-take by 1SG/2/3SG  
‘The book was taken away by me/you/him/her’

However, if compared with *ter*- passive, the situation turns out to be different. That is, all types of person are permitted, ensuring the fact that the first, second, and third-person by-phrases can co-occur with the *ter*- passive and the resulting sentence is perfectly acceptable.

- (21) Buku itu terambil oleh saya/ kamu/ dia  
book that PAS.take by 1SG/2/3  
‘The book got taken away by me/you/him/her’



The characteristic difference between the two passives is triggered by the lexical semantics of the passive form. The *di*-passive is an instance of agentive passive while the *ter*-passive is accidental passive. Thus the insertion of agent-oriented adverbial *sengaja* ‘intentionally’ to a clause containing *di*-passive makes the status of the *di*-passive clear and the same is true with the *ter*-passive, the insertion of the adverb *tidak sengaja* ‘unintentionally’ corroborates its status as non-agentive/ accidental passive.

- (22) a. Buku itu sengaja diambil oleh \*saya/ \*kamu/ dia  
 book that intentionally PAS.take by 1SG 2 3SG  
 ‘The book was intentionally taken away by me/you/him/her’  
 b. Buku itu tidak sengaja terambil oleh saya/kamu/dia  
 book that NEG intentionally PAS.take by 1SG/2/3SG  
 ‘The book was unintentionally taken away by me/you/him/her’

Another piece of evidence to show the compatibility of the two passives, the *di*-passive and the *ter*-passive, to combine with the appropriate person-type in the NP agent by-phrase can be linked to the apology test. Apologizing is as an act whose purpose is to maintain the harmonious relationship between a speaker and a hearer (Ogiermann, 2009, p. 45). If one takes away someone’s book is taken as an offense, expressing an apology can thus help to maintain the relationship. For our purposes, we wish to show that combining apologizing with the lexical semantics of the *di*-passive and *ter*-passive results in the obvious (in)compatibility of the type of person in the NP agent by-phrase that can co-occur with the two passives.

- (23) a. Saya/kamu/dia minta maaf buku itu sengaja diambil oleh \*saya/ \*kamu/ dia  
 1SG/2/3SG ask apology book that intentionally PAS.take by 1SG/2/3SG  
 ‘I/you/(s)he apologized that this book was intentionally taken by me/you/him/her’  
 b. Saya/ kamu/ dia minta maaf buku ini tidak sengaja terambil oleh saya/kamu/dia  
 1SG/ kamu/ 3SG ask apology book this NEG intentionally PAS.take by 1SG/2/3SG  
 ‘I/you/(s)he apologized that this book was unintentionally taken by me/you/him/her’

(23a) shows that the co-occurrence of apology expression and the associated interpretation of the *di*-passive still hold that the first and second person agent by-phrase remains to be incompatible. This indicates that the act threatens the speaker and the hearer’s face. The speaker and the hearer need to value each other but combining an apology with an intentional action of this sort does not match to repair the relationship between the interactants it is quite in the opposite direction in that they harm each other’s face instead. On the other hand, we expect that the third person must undergo the same effect as the first person and second person but as also predicted, the third person by-phrase here seems to be unaffected because they are not involved or not co-present in the speech event, ensuring that the third-person’s face here does not get affected. The case with (23b) is contrary to (23a) the expression of apology matches with the unintentional eventuality involved, allowing for the situation that the apology is successful, and expressing apology here leads to showing all the persons’ intention of expressing politeness.

#### IV. OMISSION OF NP AGENT BY-PHRASE AND (IN)DEFINITENESS

Passive constructions undergo a decrease in valence or participant (Blevins, 2003; Lyngfelt & Solstad, 2006). That is, if an active clause is divalent (having two participants), its corresponding passive construction will be monovalent (having one participant) and if an active clause is trivalent (having three participants), its passive construction counterpart will be divalent.

- (24) a. John menjual buku (active = divalent)  
 name AV.sell book  
 ‘John sold a book’  
 b. Buku itu dijual oleh John (passive = monovalent)  
 book that PAS.sell by name  
 ‘The book was sold by John’  
 (25) a. Tini memberikan dia buku (active = trivalent)  
 name AV. give.APPL3SG book  
 ‘Tini gave him/her a book’  
 b. Dia diberikan buku oleh Tini (passive = divalent)  
 3SG PAS.give.APPL book by name  
 ‘(S)he was given a book by Tini’

Valence here is then exclusively related to syntax. Thus, it can be said that the presence of the agent by the phrase is required for a discourse process. That is, discourse allows the expansion of a clause more than just required by syntax. As a clause indicating the valence-decreasing phenomenon, the agent by-phrase is, therefore, generally omitted without affecting the grammaticality of the resultant clause. In other words, the NP agent of a passive clause is relegated to a peripheral function, or the agent is deemed to constitute a non-core function, leading to a situation that is no longer important in syntax.

The omission of doer/performer of a passive clause yields an agentless passive (Quirk et al., 1985; Arka & Kosmas, 2005). In a syntactic operation, there are three main ways for leaving out the NP agent by-phrase. First, the appearance of the agent by-phrase is redundant (because it is readily understood in the discourse context), as shown in (26).

- (26) a. Tono melawan Amir bermain bulu tangkis dan Amir dikalahkan  
 name AV.fight name MV.play badminton and name PAS.defeat  
 'Tono fought Amir playing badminton and Amir was defeated'
- b. John dan Ali saling berpukulan. John memukul Ali kemudian Ali dirobohkan  
 name and name REC MV.hit name AV.hit name then name PAS.knock.down  
 'John and Ali hit each other. John hit Ali then Ali was knocked down'

Second, the agent is unknown or unidentified in the discourse. Consider the active clauses in (27), whose passive counterparts are respectively given in (28):

- (27) a. Ada yang mengatakan tudingan ini dilatari motif pergeseran dari sesama  
 exist REL AV.say accusation this PAS.motivate motive shift from fellow  
 negara eksportir  
 country exporter  
 'There was someone who said that this was motivated by a shift in motives from fellow exporting countries' / 'Someone said that this was motivated by a shift in motives from fellow exporting countries'.
- b. Dulu orang mengasuransikan pabrik dan bangunan rumah.  
 formerly people AV.insure.CAUS factory and building house  
 'People used to insure factories and houses'
- (28) a. Dikatakan tudingan ini dilatari motif pergeseran dari sesama negara eksportir  
 PAS.say accusation this PAS.motivate motive shift from fellow country exporter  
 'It was said that the accusation was motivated by a shift in motives from fellow exporting countries'
- b. Dulu pabrik dan bangunan rumah diasuransikan  
 formerly factory and building house PAS.insure.CAUS  
 'Factories and houses used to be insured'

It has to be noticed that the material that occupies the subject position in the active clause is indefinitely marked by existential clause *ada* 'there is (someone)' in (27a) and an indefinite NP *orang* 'people', in (27b). Rendering the active clause of the type in (27a) into passive is commonly done by the fact that the subject of the passive clause does not consequently materialize or empty in Indonesian because it has no semantic content. In English, however, it can be filled by the empty *it* as shown in the translation. Note that the construction in (27a) involves an object which is realized by a clause. However, quite contrary to (28a), the resulting passive clause as shown in (29a) is judged unacceptable. There is another form of the passive clause that can be generated from the active clause in (27a). The empty subject of the passive clause in (27a) can be filled by the subject of the clausal complement giving rise to a raising construction, as given in (29b).

- (29) a. ?\*Bahwa tudingan ini dilatari motif pergeseran dari sesama negara eksportir  
 that accusation this PAS.motivate motive shift from fellow country exporter  
 dikatakan  
 PAS.say  
 'That this accusation was motivated by a shift in motives from fellow exporting countries was said'
- b. Tudingan ini dikatakan dilatari motif pergeseran dari sesama negara eksportir  
 accusation this PAS.say PAS.motivate motive shift from fellow country exporter  
 'This accusation was said to be motivated by a shift in motives from fellow exporting countries'

In a discourse context, a passive clause may lack its active clause counterpart because of the absence of the agent participant. This often occurs in an activity that requires a human agent.

- (30) a. Gencatan senjata/ #itu telah dicapai  
 ceasefire that PERF PAS.achieve  
 '#The/ ceasefire has been achieved'
- b. Pemerintah?/ Menteri itu?/ Jenderal Lee? telah mencapai gencatan senjata  
 government/ minister that/ General name? PERF AV.achieve ceasefire  
 'The government?/the Minister?/ General Lee?/has achieved a ceasefire'

Sentence (30a) shows that the agent is unknown, one cannot single out the agent as listed on the subject in (30b). It is not possible to get a unique active clause counterpart of (30a). The discourse context, in this state of affairs, then can be said to allow the choice of passive without prior exposure to the corresponding active clause. This, predictably, amounts to saying that, in contrast to agentive passive, the subject of the passive clause in question can therefore appear indefinite or without taking an indefinite marker. Notice that making the NP subject definite is judged here as infelicitous. This possibility is achieved because the passive clause in question is discourse-new information (Birner & Ward, 2004; Birner, 2006, 2012, 2013).

Third, the agent NP by-phrase is purposefully omitted. What sets this third type different from the second type is that, in the second type, the agent is unknown but the agent of the third type is identified but avoided for a certain reason.

- (31) a. Tono menyerang gadis itu  
 name AV.attack girl that  
 'Tono attacked the girl'  
 b. Mereka bahkan menentang suatu daftar indikatif.  
 3PL even AV.oppose a list indicative  
 'They even opposed an indicative list'
- (32) a. Gadis itu diserang  
 girl that PAS.attack  
 'The girl was attacked'  
 b. Daftar indikatif itu bahkan ditentang  
 list indicative that even PAS.oppose  
 'The indicative list was even opposed'

The preference for passive voice, precisely agentless passive, as illustrated in (32a-b), plays a strategic role, for example, in journalistic writing. This phenomenon is observed in the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework (Fairclough, 1995). The chief use of agentless passives is to intentionally leave the doer or performer of the action unspecified, thereby avoiding attributing direct responsibility for the action to the doer and more specifically "denying or minimizing" the possible involvement in violence associated with the doer (Van Dijk, 2008, p. 166). As in the case of (32a), for example, we have noticed the doer is Tono but for the speaker; the choice of passive, more importantly, the agentless passive, is preferred because the speaker wishes to conceal the responsibility of the doer.

## V. CONCLUSION

This paper demonstrates the effect of a discourse context on the Indonesian canonical *di*-passive. Three main points emerge. First, there is a change in the definiteness status of the NP patient. What is important in a discourse context is that the definiteness status of the NP subject of the passive clause shows an asymmetric relationship with the NP subject of the corresponding active clause. While the former is sensitive to definiteness, the latter is not. This stands to reason that it is the NP object that undergoes a promotion to a higher position in discourse while the NP subject of the active clause undergoes a demotion. Thus, as far as the active-passive process is concerned, it is the NP subject of the active clause that plays a very important role in the topic-comment relation and its connection to definiteness status.

Second, the presence of the NP agent by-phrase (in a passive clause) is deemed unimportant; leading to its optionality in surface syntax. However, the obvious presence of the first and second-person NP agent by-phrase is prohibited in Indonesian. This suggests that it is supposedly connected to politeness which might be possible because Indonesian can be said to somewhat have a speech style system as evidenced by, for example, the fact that Indonesian has different forms of second-person pronouns ranging from second person denoting formal one such as *saudara* to the form indicating non-formal use such as *kamu/kau*. However, there is a small portion of the discourse context that might lend support to this claim. Dishonoring first and second persons in which the persons involved use lexically inappropriate verbal expressions associated with the phenomenon and the use of verbs having no socio-cultural contexts make it impossible to tie it up with politeness which ultimately causes the possibility of the NP agent to be related to all persons (first, second, and third persons).

Third, the agentless *di*-passive is also tied to discourse context. The agentless passive works similarly to the long passive in that the NP patient must be turned indefinite in the corresponding passive clause. In some cases, the definiteness status of the NP patient can be parallel to the definiteness status of the NP agent. However, the NP patient in an agentless passive may remain indefinite because it appears as new information in the discourse (context).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Alcázar, Asier & Saltarelli, Mario. (2014). *The Syntax of Imperatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511794391>.
- [2] Alexiadou, Artemis & Schäfer, Florian (eds). (2013). *Non-canonical Passives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [3] Alexiadou, Artemis. 2012. 'Noncanonical passives revisited: Parameters of Nonactive Voice'. *Linguistics*: 50 (6), 1079-1110. DOI: 10.1515/ling-2012-0036
- [4] Arka, I Wayan. (2002). *Voice systems in the Austronesian languages of Nusantara: Typology, Symmetricality, and Undergoer orientation*. A paper presented at the 10th National Symposium of the Indonesian Linguistics Society, Bali-Indonesia
- [5] Arka, I Wayan. (2003). *Balinese Morphosyntax: A Lexical-Functional Approach*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics
- [6] Arka, I Wayan & Kosmas, Jeladu. (2005). Passive without Passive Morphology? Evidence from Manggarai in Arka, I W. & Ross, M (eds). *The Many Faces of Austronesian Voice System: Some New Empirical Studies*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics
- [7] Birner, B. & Ward, G. (2004). Information Structure and Non-canonical Syntax. In Horn, L. and G Ward (eds.). *The Handbook of Pragmatics*. London: Blackwell, 153-174.
- [8] Birner, Betty J. (2006). Inferential Relation and Noncanonical Word Order in Birner, Betty J. and Gregory Ward (eds.). *Drawing the Boundaries of Meaning: Neo-Gricean Studies in Pragmatics and Semantics in Honor of Laurence R. Horn*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [9] Birner, Betty J. (2012). *The Discourse Function of Inversion in English*. New York: Routledge.

- [10] Birner, Betty J. (2013). *Introduction to Pragmatics*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- [11] Blevins, James P. (2003). Passives and Impersonals. *Journal of Linguistics* 39 (03), 473 – 520. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4176832>.
- [12] Brown, Penelope & Levinson Stephen C. (1987). *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [13] Cole, Peter, Hermon, Gabriella, & Tjung, Yassir. (2006). Is there Pasif Semu in Jakarta Indonesian? *Oceanic Linguistics* 45 (1), 64-90. DOI:10.1353/ol.2006.0009
- [14] Culpeper, Jonathan, Haugh, Michael, & Kádár, Dániel Z. (eds). (2017). *The Palgrave Handbook of Linguistic (Im)politeness*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [15] Fairclough, Norman. (1995). *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. London: Longman
- [16] Givón, Talmy (ed.) (1983) *Topic Continuity in Discourse: A quantitative Cross-language Study*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing Company.
- [17] Guijarro, A. Jesús Moya. (2006). The Continuity of Topics in Journal and Travel Texts: A Discourse Functional Perspective. *Functions of Language* (13) 1, 37-76. DOI:10.1075/fol.13.1.03moy
- [18] Halliday, MAK & Hassan, Ruqaiya. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- [19] Himmelmann, Nikolaus P. & Riesberg, Sonja. (2013). Symmetrical Voice and Applicative Alternations: Evidence from Totoli. *Oceanic Linguistics*. 52 (2), 396-422. DOI: 10.1353/ol.2013.0021
- [20] Huddleston, Rodney & Pullum, Geoffrey K. (2005). *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [21] Jary, Mark & Kissine, Richie Mikhail. (2014). *Imperatives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- [22] Leech, Geoffrey. (2014). *The Pragmatics of Politeness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [23] Lingfelt, Benjamin & Solstad, Torgim (eds.). (2006). *Demoting the Agent: Passive, Middle, and Other Voice Phenomena*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [24] Loewen, Gina. (2011). *The Syntactic Structure of Noun Phrases in Indonesian*. The University of Manitoba Master Thesis.
- [25] Ogiermann, Eva. (2009). *On Apologising in Negative and Positive Politeness Cultures*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company
- [26] Quirk, Randolph et al. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
- [27] Reed, Lisa A. (2011). Get-passives in *The Linguistic Review* (28), 41-78. DOI: 10.1515/tlir.2011.002
- [28] Riesberg, Sonja & Primus, Beatrice. (2015). Agent Prominence in Symmetrical Voice Language. *STUF - Language Typology and Universals* 68 (4), 551-564. <https://doi.org/10.1515/stuf-2015-0023>
- [29] Rupp, Laura. (2003). *The Syntax of Imperatives in English and Germanic: Word Order Variation in Minimalist Framework*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [30] Simpson, Andrew et al. (2011). Bare Classifiers and Definiteness: A Cross-linguistic Investigation in *Studies in Language* 35(1), 168 – 193. DOI:10.1075/sl.35.1.10sim
- [31] Sneddon, James Neil, Adelaar, A., Djenar, D. N., & Ewing, Michael C. (2010). *Indonesian: A Comprehensive Grammar*. London: Routledge.
- [32] Udayana, I Nyoman. (2013). *Voice and Reflexives in Balinese*. Ph.D. Dissertation the University of Texas at Austin.
- [33] Van Dijk, T. A. (2008). *Discourse and Context: A Sociocognitive Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [34] Wijaya, David. (2012). Teaching English Generic Nouns: The Explorations of the Generic Idea in English and Indonesian and the Applications of Explicit Instruction in Classroom. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching* Vol. 8. No.1, 93-107. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25170/Fijelt.v8il.92>.
- [35] Voskuil, J.E. (2000). Indonesian Voice and A-Bar Movement. In Paul, Ileana, Phillips, V., & Travis, L. (eds.). *Formal Issues in Austronesian Linguistics*, 195-212. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- [36] Wurff, Wim van der. (2007). *Imperative Clauses in Generative Grammar*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.



**I Nyoman Udayana** is a senior lecturer in linguistics at the Department of English Language, Faculty of Humanities Udayana University. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin. His research interests are syntax, lexical semantics, and discourse grammar. He primarily focuses his research on verbs and argument realization and more specifically on the close relationship between verb-predicate's meaning and their argument(s) that lead to constructions related to reflexivization, logophoricity, and other similar constructions about valency-preserving or valency-changing phenomena. He is also interested in projects concentrating on the interface between syntax and discourse grammar in Indonesian and Balinese.

# Interactional Metadiscourse and Author Identity Construction in Academic Theses<sup>\*</sup>

Guobing Liu

Faculty of International Studies, Henan Normal University, Henan, China

Junlan Zhang

Faculty of International Studies, Henan Normal University, Henan, China

**Abstract**—Based on Hyland's (2005) interactional metadiscourse model and the identity construction category proposed by Sun (2015), this study attempts to make a comparative analysis on the characteristics of the frequencies of interactional metadiscourse between Chinese masters' theses and international journal articles, as well as on the similarities and differences of author identity constructed with interactional metadiscourse. The findings are as follows: (1) from the frequencies of interactional metadiscourse, Chinese masters employ significantly fewer hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions in their academic writing than international journal authors, while utilizing markedly more engagement markers. Regarding the subcategories of attitude markers, the two author groups possess notable differences in judgment markers, appreciation markers and affective markers, in which the significant difference in judgment markers is relatively low. The results suggest that the frequency of interactional metadiscourse utilized by Chinese masters in academic writing is inferior to that by international journal authors. (2) The identity categories constructed with interactional metadiscourse by the two author groups are in the descending order of researcher, interactor, and evaluator. Compared with international journal authors, significant differences are discovered in the identities of self-initiated interactor, other-initiated interactor, self-evaluator, other-evaluator, cautious originator, and confident researcher constructed by Chinese masters, whereas no difference is found in the careful advisor identity constructed by the two author groups. This study enriches the research of interactional metadiscourse from the perspective of identity construction, and the findings could provide references for improving students' awareness of academic writing.

**Index Terms**—interactional metadiscourse, author identity construction, academic theses

## I. INTRODUCTION

Academic discourse is a vital medium for knowledge dissemination and academic communication. In English academic writing, the author conveys personal viewpoints as well as displays himself through the discourse, which is crucial to construct the author's identity. And successful academic writing requires textual authenticity, objectivity and interactive elements to supplement the textual proposition information and then remind readers of the author's standpoints, which is precisely the function of metadiscourse. It could be considered that how to construct appropriate identity through metadiscourse in English academic writing is also a vital manifestation of the author's academic pragmatic ability.

Due to the function of interactional metadiscourse in academic writing, such as reflecting the author's attitude, introducing the findings, and interacting with readers, interactional metadiscourse has gradually received more attention. For example, studies on interactional metadiscourse mainly concentrated on comparing disciplinary differences of academic discourse (Liu & Yang, 2021), or contrasting the textual differences between first-language authors and second-language authors (Jiang, 2015), or investigating the discourse features of novice and senior scholars (Jiang & Ma, 2018), or analyzing academic texts of different genres (Xin & Huang, 2010), or paying attention to the identity construction of self-mentions (Tang & John, 1999; Wang & Lv, 2017). However, few studies investigate the identity construction of interactional metadiscourse in academic discourse across different author groups. And in-depth discussions are also seldom conducted on other types of interactional metadiscourse for constructing author identity (e.g. Rahimivand & Kuhi, 2014). Therefore, to fill in the research gap, based on Hyland's (2005) classification of interactional metadiscourse and Sun's (2015) category of identity construction, the present study will conduct a comparative analysis on the similarities and differences of interactional metadiscourse and identity construction in research articles written by Chinese masters and international journal authors.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

---

<sup>\*</sup> This research was supported by the Academic Degrees & Graduate Education Reform Project of Henan Province (2021SJGLX056Y), the Soft Science Research Program of Henan Province (222400410043) and The Higher Education Reform Project of Henan Province (2021SJGLX107).

### A. Interactional Metadiscourse

Interactional metadiscourse refers to the means adopted by the author to evaluate and intervene in the propositional information. Thompson and Thetela (1995) reckoned that the term “interactional” tended to occur between writers and readers, with the writer attempting to affect readers’ reactions and behaviors. In terms of the classification of interactional metadiscourse, Hyland (2005) advanced that interactional metadiscourse contained five sub-categories, namely, hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagement markers, and self-mentions. Specifically, hedges express the author’s cautious and incomplete commitment attitude, that is, it manifests that the author determines to acknowledge different statements and perspectives, thus retaining a full promise to the proposition (Hyland, 2005, p. 52), such as “*may, perhaps, possible*”. Unlike caution and self-deprecation implied by hedges, boosters permit authors to abandon other substitutes, eliminate conflicting views, and convey their confidence and certainty about their own views in the text (Hyland, 2005, p. 52), such as “*in fact, definitely*”. Attitude markers, which are mainly represented by adjectives, attitude verbs and adverbs, could evince the author’s affective attitudes towards propositions, such as consent, surprise, agreement, importance and so forth. However, no clear standard is stipulated for the definition and connotation of attitude markers. To cover the shortage, according to the classification of attitude system in appraisal system proposed by Martin and White (2005), attitude markers in this study are further subdivided into affective markers representing emotional reaction (e.g. *surprisingly, confident*), judgment markers showing judgment of humans’ behavior (e.g. *reasonable, fair*), and appreciation markers expressing evaluation of things (e.g. *important, worthwhile*). Engagement markers allude to the author instructing readers to participate in the discourse, interacting with readers, and forecasting their potential criticisms (Hyland, 2005, p. 151). Common markers contain “*consider, see ...*” and so on. In addition, Hyland and Jiang (2017) pinpointed that self-mentions (first-person pronouns) were powerful devices for authors to establish their identity and win discourse authority, such as first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives (such as *I, me, exclusive we*), and some indirect and implicit expressions (such as *the author, the researcher*). In the present study, Hyland’s classification of interactional metadiscourse is deemed as the analytical framework.

Through reviewing previous studies, it is found that three main categories of interactional metadiscourse study have been conducted in academic papers. (1) Comparative studies of interactional metadiscourse cross-language and cross-native language background. For example, Mu et. al (2015) produced a contrastive analysis on metadiscourse in English and Chinese applied linguistics journals. Lee and Deakin (2016) built three corpora to probe into the features of interactional metadiscourse in successful and unsuccessful English argumentative essays written by Chinese English learners, and then compared the discrepancies in the employment of interactional metadiscourse in the second language and first language argumentative essays. Yoon (2021) analyzed the utilization of interactional metadiscourse in papers written by Chinese, Japanese and Korean students from three aspects, including theme, L1 background and L2 proficiency. (2) Comparative studies of interactional metadiscourse among different disciplines. For instance, Hu and Cao (2015) analyzed the influence of disciplines and paradigms on interactional metadiscourse, intending to discover the differences in the employment of specific interactional metadiscourse between interdisciplinary and cross-paradigms. From the interpersonal perspective, Jiang and Hyland (2020) investigated the diachronic changes of interactional metadiscourse in academic papers of different disciplines. Similarly, Liu and Yang (2021) also conducted a diachronic study of metadiscourse in research papers across soft and hard disciplines. (3) Comparative studies of interactional metadiscourse in academic discourse. For example, Hyland and Tse (2004) probed into the metadiscourse applied in masters’ and doctoral English dissertations, who testified that both of them employed more interactive metadiscourse than interactional one. Xu (2015) made a comparative analysis on stance markers in English major dissertations and international journal articles, whose result was that language features employed by learners to express the author’s stance were significantly fewer. Wu and Paltridge (2021) delved into the differences in stance resources between Chinese masters’ and doctoral dissertations in applied linguistics.

### B. Identity Construction in Academic Theses

Academic writing is regarded as an act of identity (Hyland, 2002), in which the identity could be reflected through metadiscourse (Tas, 2010). Ivanič (1998) pointed out that the author negotiated self-hood in the academic community through different discourse strategies in his writing. He argued that the writer’s identity was represented by rhetorical resources, who advanced three categories of identity in academic writing, including autobiographical self, discursive self, and authorial self. Furthermore, Sun (2015) proposed that the identity constructed by metadiscourse could be divided into three types from the pragmatic aspect, namely, interactor, evaluator, and organizer. The three types had their own specific pragmatic functions. This framework also provides conducive references for the identity framework of this study. However, what should be mentioned is that since the present study pays emphasis on the identity constructed by interactional metadiscourse, the identity of organizer will not be contained in the analytical framework. In this study, the role of researcher has been proposed by the author on the ground of research purposes. Therefore, the identity constructed by interactional metadiscourse could be further divided into three categories, namely, interactor, evaluator, and researcher.

As for the previous studies on identity in academic papers, two characteristics are presented. Firstly, it mainly concentrates on the discussion of self-mentions such as first-person pronouns, among which first-person pronouns (such as “*I*” and “*we*”) are the most widely investigated. For instance, Kuo (1999) counted the usage of personal pronouns in

scientific papers, who reckoned that the selection of personal pronouns reflected how authors considered themselves and their relationship with readers. Tang and John (1999) analyzed first-person pronouns exploited in Singapore college students' thesis writing, and further classified their functions into six categories, including representative, guide, architect, recounter of the research process, opinion-holder, and originator. Hyland (2002) figured out that students excessively hid their authorship in academic papers and seldom employed the first person singular. Furthermore, Li and Xiao (2018) made a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences in the utilization of first-person pronouns and their constructed identity in academic papers between Chinese scholars and native English speakers. Lou and Wang (2020) investigated the textual functions and author identity construction features of learners' self-mentions through the comparison between masters' theses of English learners and international journal papers, and discovered that learners failed to completely grasp how to utilize self-mentions to build author identity. Secondly, it pays insufficient attention to the identity construction of other interactional metadiscourse. For instance, Rahimivand and Kuhi (2014) probed into the constructive role of evidential markers, hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mentions in the abstract, introduction, methodology, results and discussion sections of academic papers in international journals of applied linguistics. Sun (2020) examined metadiscourse and the identity construction employed by Chinese masters in comparison with international journal authors, who found that Chinese masters constructed less identity through metadiscourse than international authors.

The previous study suggests that studies on interactional metadiscourse are increasingly deepened and the research objects more refined. However, interactional metadiscourse studies mainly concentrate on Chinese masters' or doctoral theses, with less attention paid to the differences with journal articles. Furthermore, the studies on the construction of author identity by self-mentions are richer, but the research on the construction of identity of other interactional metadiscourse resources is relatively inadequate. On the ground of this, this study will center more on the differences in the use of interactional metadiscourse and their identity construction between Chinese masters' theses and international journal articles, to systematically grasp the use of interactional metadiscourse among Chinese masters.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### A. Research Questions

This study intends to answer two questions:

- (1) What are the characteristics of the frequencies of interactional metadiscourse utilized by Chinese masters and international journal authors in academic theses?
- (2) What are the similarities and differences in the author identity types constructed with the above interactional metadiscourse by the two author groups?

#### B. Corpora

Two corpora are self-built in this research, including Master Theses Corpus (MTC) and International Journal Articles Corpus (IJAC). The corpora are selected randomly from empirical theses in applied linguistics published from 2016 to 2020. MTC is composed of Chinese masters' theses in CNKI. The international journal articles are chosen from the top six international journals regarding Impact Factor released by Web of Science, including *Applied Linguistics*, *The Modern Language Journal*, *Language Learning*, *Language Teaching Research*, *English for Specific Purposes*, and *TESOL Quarterly*. To ensure the comparability of the two corpora, 20 masters' theses and 40 journal articles are selected respectively. And all selected papers are written by a single author. The final size of the two corpora is 319,782 and 316,417, respectively.

#### C. Research Procedures

The present study is carried out through three main steps, including (1) considering sentences as the analysis unit, mark interactional metadiscourse in MTC and IJAC by using UAM Corpus Tool. (2) Based on the first step, annotate identity types constructed by interactional metadiscourse marked above. And it is worth noting that each type of identity is counted and annotated merely once in a sentence. To ensure the reliability and accuracy of corpus annotation, the cross-validation method will be adopted in this study, and the final results are highly consistent. (3) Count the frequencies of interactional metadiscourse subcategories and those of their identity subtypes in MTC and IJAC. Results are reported in raw and normalized frequency (per 100,000 words). (4) Conduct data verification and compare similarities and differences in the application of interactional metadiscourse and their identity construction between the two author groups combined with the concrete examples.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Interactional Metadiscourse in IJAC and MTC

Table 1 displays the overall frequency of interactional metadiscourse in IJAC and MTC. It could be observed that 6949 cases of interactional metadiscourse are totally identified from the two corpora through manual analysis and annotation, with 4053 samples (1267.4 cases per 100,000 words, a proportion of 58.3%) in the IJAC and 2896 samples (915.2 cases per 100,000 words, a proportion of 41.7%) in the MTC respectively. It is apparent that interactional

metadiscourse presents a higher frequency in international journal articles than in Chinese masters' theses, and there is a significant difference in the use of interactional metadiscourse in the two corpora (Loglikelihood = 181.5,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). The result demonstrates that international journal authors utilize more interactional metadiscourse than Chinese masters in academic writing, which could be interpreted that international journal writers are more conscious of using linguistic and rhetorical devices to actively build relationships with their readers (Guo & Ma, 2016).

TABLE 1  
OVERALL FREQUENCY OF INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE IN IJAC AND MTC

Corpora	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency	Percentage
IJAC	4053	1267.4	58.3%
MTC	2896	915.2	41.7%
Total	6949	2182.9	100%

To probe into the specific characteristics of the employment of interactional metadiscourse in masters' theses and international journal articles, the similarities and differences of each interactional metadiscourse resource utilized by the two author groups will be discussed below. The frequencies and descriptive statistics of each subcategory of interactional metadiscourse are exhibited in Table 2. The following enters the detailed discussion and analysis.

(a) *Hedges in IJAC and MTC*

TABLE 2  
COMPARISON OF INTERACTIONAL METADISOURSE BETWEEN IJAC AND MTC

Interactional metadiscourse	IJAC		MTC		Loglikelihood	P-value
	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency		
Hedges	1584	495.3	932	294.5	164.1	0.000***
Boosters	935	292.4	653	206.4	47.4	0.000***
Attitude markers	539	168.6	253	80.0	102.7	0.000***
Judgment	38	11.9	20	6.3	5.5	0.019*
Affective	141	44.1	74	23.4	20.5	0.000***
Appreciation	360	112.6	159	50.3	77.8	0.000***
Engagement markers	430	134.5	728	230.1	-80.7	0.000***
Self-mentions	564	176.4	330	104.3	59.5	0.000***

(Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ )

Table 2 presents that the frequency of hedges wielded by international journal authors (occurring 1584 times) is much higher than that by Chinese masters (occurring 932 times), which could be also represented as 495.3 times versus 294.5 times per 100,000 words respectively. Loglikelihood test shows that hedges employed by the two author groups own a significant difference (Loglikelihood = 164.1,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). These results are congruent with that of Qin and Chen (2013), who found that Chinese students had slightly lower hedges than journal article authors (10.2:14.7 per 1000 words) in a comparison between Chinese engineering graduate students' conference papers and high-level academic journal articles. Moreover, it is also discovered that among the five subcategories of interactional metadiscourse, hedges are the most frequently used resource, similar to the results in the study of L2 successful and less-successful argumentative essays (e.g., Lee & Deakin, 2016) and those in published research articles (e.g., Hyland, 2005). These results evince that Chinese masters and international journal writers both prefer to utilize hedges to cautiously express their own standpoints, increase their credibility, and provide an open dialogue for readers. However, Chinese masters' mastery of hedges is still inferior to that of international journal authors. This may be because in English writing teaching, teachers often unknowingly give students the wrong impression that English academic writing should require direct assertions, instead, the employment of hedges could actually weaken these assertions (Wishnoff, 2000). The following is an example contracted from IJAC.

- (1) A **possible** explanation is that PSTM capacity **may** tap into the skills necessary for the establishment of stable, long-term mental representations of novel phonological material.

[IJAC-MLJ02]

In the above example, the juxtaposition of two hedges "possible" and "may" indicates that the writer attempts to make his explanation more acceptable and avoid being criticized by readers. It is clear from this example that hedges convey the writers' reservations about the truth and definiteness of the proposition and express their unwillingness to make a complete commitment to the proposition.

(b) *Boosters in IJAC and MTC*

Table 2 also demonstrates the frequency of boosters in IJAC and MTC and the values of statistical significance tests. As suggested in this table, boosters appear 935 times in IJAC, i.e. 292.4 cases per 100,000 words, while they occur 653 times in MTC, i.e. 206.4 cases per 100,000 words, revealing that Chinese masters utilize noticeably fewer boosters than international journal authors in their academic papers. The loglikelihood test also testifies this result, demonstrating that



two author groups possess a significant difference in applying boosters (Loglikelihood = 47.4,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). These differences reside in that international journal writers have a more explicit epistemic attitude towards the propositions than Chinese masters. They seem to prefer to choose boosters to demonstrate their affirmative voice so that the innovativeness of their research findings is fully highlighted. This result is inconsistent with that of Qiu and Ma (2019), whose research found that Chinese masters utilized more hedges and boosters than doctoral and expert authors in applied linguistics. The reason for the differences may be that, in the current academic community, experienced scholars, for purpose of highlighting the certainty of their research and the acceptance of their opinions in the academic community, will resort to boosters to emphasize the accuracy of their research results and attract readers to accept their views. However, novice authors, who have lower status and discourse power in the academic community, will be hesitant and unconfident to emphasize their own claims and avoid the use of boosters in their academic writing to respect the standpoints of their research field (Xu, 2015). There are some instances extracted from the two corpora.

- (2) Differences *found especially* in clause boundary pause durations, with G1 producing longer pauses than G2 in both L1 and L2, could reflect G2's more efficient use of the planning time.

[IJAC-MLJ04]

- (3) In this study, the author *found* that many students would add or delete the verb "be" in their English writings.

[MTC19]

The verb "*found*" and the adverb "*especially*" in example (2) collectively illustrate the differences in clause boundary pause durations, which implies that the author promotes the interaction between readers and himself by attracting readers' or scholars' attention to those differences. In example (3), the booster "*found*" follows the abstract person pronoun "*the author*". It is important to note that boosters, especially when accompanied by first-person pronouns, could assist authors to increase their commitment to the claims of knowledge, assert their authority, and position themselves as privileged researchers within the disciplinary community (Hu & Cao, 2015).

#### (c) Attitude Markers in IJAC and MTC

As illustrated in Table 2, a significant difference exists in the overall frequency of attitude markers in IJAC and MTC (Loglikelihood = 102.7,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). Attitude markers in international journal papers occur 539 cases (168.6 per 100,000 words), which are twice as many as those in Chinese masters' theses (totally 253 cases, 80.0 per 100,000 words). This result is consistent with Xu's (2015), who found that Chinese learners (70/million words) utilize attitudinal adverbs significantly less than international scholars (110/million words), indicating that learners are not adept at expressing personal emotions and attitudes directly. Similarly, the present study also manifests that experienced authors are more likely to make objective evaluations of propositions or ideas in academic papers, and more consciously employ language devices to actively construct relationships with readers. In contrast, Chinese authors possess less language awareness and fewer devices, but more implicit personalities, and in most cases do not clearly convey their cognitive and emotional attitudes (Guo & Ma, 2016).

Considering the three categories of attitude markers, the author notices that congruent with international journal authors, Chinese masters employ the most appreciation markers, followed by affective markers, and the least judgment markers. Furthermore, with regard to the frequencies of three subcategories, judgment markers, affective markers, and appreciation markers are utilized 20 times, 74 times, and 159 times respectively by Chinese masters, all of which are less than those by international journal authors. And Loglikelihood tests also signify that Chinese masters have significantly fewer affective markers (Loglikelihood = 20.5,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ) and appreciation markers (Loglikelihood = 77.8,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ) than international journal authors. This implies that Chinese masters may be uncomfortable or nervous when explicitly marking personal attitudes in their writing, so they seldom utilize attitude markers. It is also possible that authors consider explicit emotional positions as the expression of subjectivity rather than objectivity, which conflicts with their academic writing norms (Lee & Deakin, 2016). Furthermore, the frequency of judgment markers are applied less by Chinese masters than by international journal authors, and a significant difference is also discovered in the two author groups (Loglikelihood = 5.5,  $p = 0.019 < 0.05$ ). The results are in accord with Sun's (2020), who found that Chinese masters employed obviously fewer judgment markers than international journal authors. It could be interpreted by the phenomenon that the overuse of judgment markers in academic writing does not meet the requirements of objective and rigorous academic discourse. The objectivity of academic discourse demands authors to evaluate the study itself, including the content, significance, or results of the study, rather than expressing the author's emotion or judging his behavior (Sun, 2020).

In (4)-(6) the author gives some detailed examples of three types of attitude markers.

- (4) *Unfortunately*, there is a dearth of research on second language learning among adult migrants in naturalistic settings. (Judgment marker)

[IJAC-AL03]

- (5) *Interestingly*, Table 3 reveals that there were no significant relationships between verbal GWD characteristics and motivated behavior. (Affective marker)

[IJAC-LTR07]

- (6) The result is *consistent* with studies which found that Asian students showed higher academic anxiety level compared to western students and Chinese students showed more academic anxiety than American students. (Appreciation marker)

[MTC05]

As shown in example (4), the judgment marker “*unfortunately*” is utilized to evaluate the state of the current research, which reveals the insufficient research on second language learning among adult migrants. By highlighting the deficiency, the author emphasizes the importance of his study and guides readers to pay attention to his research results. The expression “*interestingly*” in example (5), deemed as an appreciation marker, manifests the writer’s surprise at the result, and explains the unanticipated findings to readers. In example (6), the adjective “*consistent*” belonging to appreciation markers as well, predominantly compares the writer’s present study with the previous study to figure out the similarities. In the above examples, readers are invited to engage the text and share the writer’s attitude towards the propositions, which could be beneficial to narrow the distance between writers and readers.

(d) *Engagement Markers in IJAC and MTC*

Table 2 explicitly displays a significant difference in engagement markers between the two corpora (Loglikelihood = -80.7,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). In other words, the frequency of engagement markers is significantly higher in masters’ theses than in journal papers, with 728 occurrences in masters’ theses (230.1 cases per 100,000 words) compared to 430 occurrences in journal papers (134.5 cases per 100,000 words). This result is in line with Sun’s (2020), who found that Chinese masters employed significantly more engagement markers than international journal authors, suggesting that they were likely to interact with readers by referring to others. The obvious high frequency of engagement markers in masters’ theses signifies that more and more Chinese masters are influenced by objective writing styles, and are reluctant to interact with their interlocutors in an explicitly direct or personal way (Hyland & Jiang, 2016). Below are examples of engagement markers in the two corpora.

- (7) As *we* know, Argument Diagramming is a knowledge visual tool of thinking, and it can help students clarify their thoughts, hackle the composition structure, and improve the writing efficiency.

[MTC12]

- (8) *Of course*, socioaffective factors can rise and fall without necessarily changing L2 development.

[IJAC-MLJ01]

The personal pronoun “inclusive *we*” in example (7) is recognized as a reader pronoun. The readers are invited into the text to acknowledge the function of Argument Diagramming proposed by the writer. The expression “*of course*” in example (8) indicates that the writer perhaps shares the knowledge of socio-affective factors with readers. The readers could only agree with the author by building on what has already been tacitly acknowledged. By this explicit reference, the author constructs himself and his readers as members of the same academic community (Hyland & Jiang, 2016).

(e) *Self-Mentions in IJAC and MTC*

Contrary to engagement markers, self-mentions could help authors manifest their status in the discourse, promote themselves, and establish, maintain, and realize the interpersonal function of interaction with readers. From Table 2, it can be summarized that self-mentions employed by Chinese masters are significantly fewer than those by international journal authors (Loglikelihood = 59.5,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). This result is consistent with that of Mur-Dueñas (2007), who also found that American-based scholars were more likely to present their authorial identity by self-mentions in the academic community. Respective corpora examples are presented in (9)–(10).

- (9) In this section, *I* will first present the two qualitative dimensions of metacognitive judgments’ accuracy that were identified in this study.

[AL05]

- (10) And in her final revision draft, *we* found that she followed her peers’ advice to change “develop” into “advance” and “promote” into “enhance”.

[MTC06]

In example (9), the first-person pronoun “*I*”, referring to the writer of this research, could emphasize the author’s status in the discourse. And the first-person plural pronoun “*we*” in example (10) also indicates the author’s self. Note that masters’ theses are all written by a single author. The analysis of journal articles also indicates that authors usually employ first-person singular pronouns such as “*I/my/me*” to achieve the pragmatic function of self-mentions. Therefore, it could be expounded that the utilization of “*we*” in masters’ theses to reflect their participation in the text belongs to a kind of misuse. Sun (2015) also proposed that since the research results are found by Chinese masters themselves, such self-mentions not only fail to build an equal relationship between the author and readers but also prevent them from constructing a confident researcher identity. Also, this phenomenon indicates that on the one hand, Chinese masters intentionally imitate the academic norms formed by the co-authorship of journal papers, which causes misuse; on the other hand, they deliberately shun authorship and weaken the author’s visibility (Kuo, 1999).

B. *Identity Types Constructed by Interactional Metadiscourse in IJAC and MTC*

Academic writers adopt different linguistic strategies to interact with readers and construct their identity in academic discourse. From Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5, it can be seen that three main identity categories constructed by interactional metadiscourse in the theses of Chinese masters and international journal authors appear in descending order of frequency as researcher, interactor, and evaluator. A detailed analysis will be presented below.

(a) *Interactor Identity Constructed by Interactional Metadiscourse*

Table 3 illustrates the frequencies of subcategories of interactor identity in IJAC and MTC. The total number of interactors constructed by Chinese masters is slightly higher than that by international journal authors, showing 310.0 versus 277.1 per 100,000 words. A significant difference is also found in the two corpora (Loglikelihood = -5.9,  $p = 0.015 < 0.05$ ), which is due to the fact that interactor identity is mainly constructed by engagement markers and self-mentions. Chinese students utilize more engagement markers and relatively fewer self-mentions than journal authors. Overall, the total frequencies of them are approximate, but the statistics show that a small difference occurs in the constructed interactor identity.

TABLE 3  
COMPARISON OF INTERACTOR IDENTITY BETWEEN IJAC AND MTC

Interactor	IJAC		MTC		Loglikelihood	P-value
	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency		
Self-initiated interactor	473	148.0	314	99.2	30.7	0.000***
Other-initiated interactor	413	129.2	667	210.8	-63.0	0.000***
Total	886	277.1	981	310.0	-5.9	0.015*

(Note: \*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ )

However, there are significant differences between self-initiated interactor and other-initiated interactor in both corpora (Loglikelihood = 30.7,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ; Loglikelihood = -63.0,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). Self-initiated interactor appears 314 times in Chinese masters' theses, amounting to 99.2 cases per 100,000 words, while it occurs more in journal papers, i.e., 473 times (148.0 cases per 100,000 words). Other-initiated interactor appears 667 times (210.8 cases per 100,000 words) in masters' theses, while 413 times (129.2 cases per 100,000 words) in journal papers. This result is in line with Sun's (2020), who discovered that compared to international journal authors, Chinese masters constructed less self-initiated interactors and more other-initiated interactors. As Tang and John (1999) explained, student writers perceived themselves at the bottom of the academic hierarchy, and therefore, felt insecure about their own identity. Moreover, a significant difference is also tested between self-initiated and other-initiated interactors constructed by Chinese masters (Loglikelihood = 129.9,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ), demonstrating that Chinese masters express their interactor identity to interact with readers by referring to others rather than themselves. Conversely, international journal authors prefer first-person singular expressions to highlight the uniqueness and novelty of their study (Li & Xiao, 2018).

This study explicitly illustrates that self-mentions are the most visible marker of reflecting authorial identity, which is crucial in the author's personal promotion. The findings of Harwood (2005) support the utilization of self-mentions as a means of promotion, and therefore, are similar to the findings of this study. Furthermore, this study also finds that the employment of interactional metadiscourse to construct interactor identity by Chinese masters is different from that by journal authors, i.e., there is a deficit in the ability to trigger interaction with readers in Chinese masters. The reason is that Chinese masters have a tendency to express their viewpoints through academic groups or communities in the writing. To make their opinions more acceptable to readers, they avoid embodying self-hood identity (Hyland, 2002) and instead more highlight their collective identity (Li & Xiao, 2018). On the contrary, to emphasize their outstanding achievements in scientific research, international journal authors are more likely to highlight the innovativeness of their research results and individual contributions through self-mentions (Mur-Dueñas, 2007), especially in the international academic community, where highlighting self-hood identity is more conducive to the promotion of research results. Next, let us see some instances in the two corpora.

- (11) *Note that* by comparison, Yeldham (2018) had previously found no advantage for the processing of formula words over nonformula words. (Other-initiated interactor: Engagement marker)

[IJAC-LTR01]

- (12) In order to analyze the changes of students' EALA at the end of the semester, *the author* conducted independent samples t-test to the result of the post-questionnaire (*see* Table 11). (Self-initiated interactor: Self-mention) (Other-initiated interactor: Engagement marker)

[MTC01]

In example (11), the directive "*note that*" constructs the identity of the other-initiated interactor, which could attract the readers' attention to the findings of Yeldham, lead readers to engage the discourse, and facilitate the interaction with them. As shown in (12), "*the author*" constructs the self-initiated interactor, while "*see*" constructs the other-initiated interactor. The writer realizes multiple communicative demands in a single sentence by constructing the identity of self-initiated and other-initiated interactors. The phenomenon that the simultaneous construction of multiple identity types by the author under the particular communicative demands precisely indicates the dynamic selectivity and discourse construction of pragmatic identity (Chen, 2013).

(b) *Evaluator Identity Constructed by Interactional Metadiscourse*

Table 4 presents the differences of frequencies in the evaluator identity constructed by Chinese masters and international journal authors. Overall, Chinese masters construct 250 times evaluator identity compared to 530 times for

journal authors. In addition, the frequency of evaluator identity per 100,000 words appears much lower in Chinese masters' theses than in journal papers, shown in 79.0 cases versus 165.7 cases. The above data bespeaks that Chinese masters construct significantly fewer evaluators than international journal authors (Loglikelihood = 99.9,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ), indicating that Chinese masters are not adept at constructing identity by applying interactional metadiscourse such as attitude markers. Since the identity of the evaluator is constructed by appreciation markers, affective markers, and judgment markers, this result could be said to be accordant with the previously mentioned characteristic that Chinese masters are less likely to utilize attitude markers.

TABLE 4  
COMPARISON OF EVALUATOR IDENTITY BETWEEN IJAC AND MTC

Evaluator	IJAC		MTC		Loglikelihood	P-value
	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency		
Self-evaluator	446	139.5	209	66.1	85.2	0.000***
Other-evaluator	84	26.3	41	13.0	14.7	0.000***
Total	530	165.7	250	79.0	99.9	0.000***

(Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ )

In respect of subcategories of evaluator identity, a significant difference is discovered in the construction of self-evaluators between Chinese masters and international journal authors (Loglikelihood = 85.2,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). This identity in Chinese masters' theses is 209 times, obviously fewer than in journal papers at 446 times, which could also be expressed as 66.1 versus 139.5 per 100,000 words. Similarly, Chinese masters construct significantly fewer other-evaluator identities than journal authors (Loglikelihood = 14.7,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ), which is shown as 13.0 versus 26.3 per 100,000 words. These results suggest that Chinese masters are loath to express their own emotions and attitudes in their theses, which are straightforwardly influenced by the norms of Chinese academic writing. In addition, congruous to the study of Sun (2020), a significant difference between self-evaluator and other-evaluator is also tested in Chinese masters' theses (Loglikelihood = 123.5,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ), revealing that when employing interactional metadiscourse to express evaluation, they chiefly evaluate their own research.

The analysis above enunciates that compared to international journal authors, Chinese masters construct fewer evaluators, where the self-evaluator identity is more frequent. These differences could be elucidated by the fact that Chinese masters are unlikely to express their own attitudes in their academic writing, but concentrate on presenting their opinions through data or facts. Based on the genre characteristics of academic writing, the author will employ fewer attitude words to avoid excessive subjective evaluation (Xu, 2015). Meanwhile, the avoidance of employing expressions with personal emotions and attitudes would be conducive to presenting a rigorous academic style and be more acceptable to readers. However, when establishing an equal communication relationship with readers, international journal authors are more prone to express their emotional attitudes to resonate with readers, promote readers' identification with the opinions, and guide the promotion of academic voices and achievements.

To differentiate the self-evaluator and other-evaluator in concrete contexts, the following are examples extracted from IJAC and MTC.

(13) It's *reasonable* to believe that motivation is the psychological basis for students' WTC. (Self-evaluator: Judgment marker)

[MTC17]

(14) It is *clear* that constructs like CAF cannot be observed on the basis of a single measure. (Self-evaluator: Appreciation marker)

[IJAC-MLJ01]

(15) *Surprisingly*, given the recent promotion by theorists of an interactive approach over instruction that focuses on strategies, no research has compared the two methods. (Other-evaluator: Affective marker)

[IJAC- TESOL06]

The adjective "*reasonable*" in (13) is deemed as constructing a self-evaluator, by which the writer appraises the function of motivation in his study without referring to others' research. The adjective "*clear*" in (14), an appreciation marker, could report the research result explicitly, and further arouse readers' attention to the research. This word evaluates the author's research results, therefore, it constructs the identity of the self-evaluator. The adverb "*surprisingly*" in (15) denotes the writer's surprise at the situation, explaining the disagreement between other researchers' previous approaches and the writer's present method to the readers. By referring to others' research, the writer makes an evaluation of this situation, so this kind of affective marker constructs the other-evaluator identity.

### (c). Researcher Identity Constructed by Interactional Metadiscourse

As displayed in Table 5, similarities and differences are found in the researcher identity constructed by Chinese masters and international journal authors. Regarding the main category, the researcher identity constructed by Chinese masters is significantly less than that by international journal authors (Loglikelihood = 165.8,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). Statistics also demonstrate that the number of the researcher identity constructed by journal authors is significantly high (2297 times, 718.3 per 100,000 words), followed by Chinese masters (1488 times, 470.3 per 100,000 words). This

testifies that journal authors are more adept at utilizing hedges and boosters to construct a researcher's identity than Chinese masters. With this identity, the author seems to cautiously propose his or her own propositions, provide readers with space for dialogue, or affirmatively express propositions and persuade readers to accept their propositions. This result is congruous with that of Rahimivand and Kuhi (2014), who found that hedges in applied linguistics journal papers were the most preferred stance markers, which provided a guarantee for the author's identity security; while boosters were the third most popular metadiscourse, which could strengthen the construction of the author identity.

TABLE 5  
COMPARISON OF RESEARCHER IDENTITY BETWEEN IJAC AND MTC

Researcher	IJAC		MTC		Loglikelihood	P-value
	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency	Raw frequency	Normalized frequency		
Cautious originator	1225	383.1	687	217.1	147.8	0.000***
Careful advisor	174	54.4	171	54.0	0.0	0.950
Confident researcher	898	280.8	630	199.1	44.5	0.000***
Total	2297	718.3	1488	470.3	165.8	0.000***

(Note: \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ;  $p > 0.05$  shows no difference)

Specifically, the author finds that cautious originator constructed by hedges is significantly different in the two corpora (Loglikelihood = 147.8,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ), but the careful advisor identity constructed in the two corpora is similar in frequencies and has no significant difference (Loglikelihood = 0.000,  $p = 0.950 > 0.05$ ). The reason is that to emphasize the rigor and rationality of the research results, journal authors seem to pay more attention to explaining the results carefully, while Chinese masters are not sufficient in the awareness of utilizing hedges. Hedges, the most vital type of interactional metadiscourse, play a decisive part in the construction of identity. Authors need to strike a difficult balance between claiming their propositions and respecting the dialogue with readers (Rahimivand & Kuhi, 2014). Therefore, Chinese masters and journal authors are both prone to construct the cautious originator identity. Moreover, it is found that the identity of confident researcher constructed by boosters also has a significant difference in the two corpora (Loglikelihood = 44.5,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). This is in accord with the results discussed above that journal authors utilize more boosters than Chinese masters. It manifests that boosters are conducive to strengthening the construction of authorial identity under the influence of arguments and evaluation of the author's academic ability by academic community members (Rahimivand & Kuhi, 2014). It is important to note that cautious originator constructed by hedges in masters' theses is more obvious than careful advisor (Loglikelihood = 332.4,  $p = 0.000 < 0.001$ ). This suggests that Chinese masters exploit hedges to mainly construct the identity of the cautious originator, and further expounds that hedges could express the author's commitment or uncertainty to the propositions (Hyland, 2005), leaving some space for readers to engage the text to some degree. For instance,

(16) One *might* expect nonnative English speakers to be reluctant to provide their own nonnative model. (Cautious originator: Hedge)

[IJAC-TESOL05]

(17) Teachers *should* combine multimodal teaching method with traditional teaching method in their teaching practice. (Careful advisor: Hedge)

[MTC08]

(18) The present study *shows* that words with on-screen imagery are almost three times more likely to be picked up incidentally than words without imagery. (Confident researcher: Booster)

[IJAC-TESOL03]

In example (16), "*might*" is a modal verb for speculation. It is recognized as a hedge in this sentence, applied to put forward the writer's opinion cautiously, and anticipate the readers' potential oppositions. The hedge "*might*" in this example indicates that the writer attempts to speculate the possible objections and avoid constructing an irresponsible image, so we classify it into the cautious originator. The modal verb "*should*" in (17) is also considered as a hedge in this context, but different from the function of the hedge "*might*" in (16). The writer frequently exploits hedges like "*would*" and "*should*" to construct the careful advisor identity. The hedge in (17) usually occurs more frequently in the conclusion part aiming to prudently and tentatively provide suggestions for English teachers in future teaching. As manifested in example (18), "*show*" is an assertive expression utilized by the writer to confidently present the research results of the current study, and persuade readers to agree with his findings, so the confident researcher identity is constructed.

## V. CONCLUSION

By comparing with international journal authors, this study describes and interprets the similarities and differences in the application of interactional metadiscourse and their identity construction in English academic writing by Chinese masters. The findings are that Chinese masters' use of hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mentions in academic

writing are significantly less than international journal authors, but engagement markers employ significantly. In addition, the frequencies of identity types constructed by two author groups with interactional metadiscourse in academic papers are in the descending order of researcher, interactor and evaluator. In terms of the identity subcategories, significant differences are tested between Chinese masters and journal authors in terms of the identities of self-initiated interactors, other-initiated interactors, self-evaluator, other-evaluator, cautious originator and confident researcher, however, no significant difference is found in the cautious adviser identity. These differences seem to be related to the writing guidance that Chinese students receive or to the writing patterns inherent in Chinese academia. The research results could be of great significance for enhancing students' English academic writing awareness and guiding teachers' English academic writing teaching.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Chen, X. R. (2013). Pragmatic identity: Dynamic choice and discursive construction. *Foreign Language Research*, (4): 27-32.
- [2] Guo, Y. & Ma, L. (2016). A study on interactional metadiscourse of abstracts in Chinese and Foreign sociological journals. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, 24(4): 39-43.
- [3] Harwood, N. (2005). 'Nowhere has anyone attempted ... in this article I aim to do just that': A corpus-based study of self-promotional I and we in academic writing across four disciplines. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 37(8): 1207-1231.
- [4] Hu, G. & Cao, F. (2015). Disciplinary and paradigmatic influences on interactional metadiscourse in research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 39: 12-25.
- [5] Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: Authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34(8): 1091-1112.
- [6] Hyland, K. & Tse, P. (2004). Metadiscourse in academic writing: A reappraisal. *Applied Linguistics*, 25(2): 156-177.
- [7] Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Continuum.
- [8] Hyland, K. & Jiang, F. K. (2016). "We must conclude that ...": A diachronic study of academic engagement. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 24: 29-42.
- [9] Hyland, K. & Jiang, F. K. (2017). Is academic writing becoming more informal?. *English for Specific Purposes*, 45: 40-51.
- [10] Ivanič, R. (1998). *Writing and Identity: The Discoursal Construction of Identity in Academic Writing*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [11] Jiang, F. K. (2015). Stance noun expression in Chinese and American student essays: A corpus-based contrastive study. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (5): 8-14.
- [12] Jiang, F. K. & Hyland, K. (2020). Interactional metadiscourse: Argumentation and Rhetoric in the change of Academic Contexts. *Foreign Language Education*, 41(2): 23-28.
- [13] Jiang, F. K. & Ma, X. (2018). "As we can see": Reader engagement in PhD candidature confirmation reports. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 35: 1-15.
- [14] Kuo, C. (1999). The use of personal pronouns: Role relationship in scientific journal articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2): 121-138.
- [15] Lee, J. J. & Deakin, L. (2016). Interactions in L1 and L2 undergraduate student writing interactional metadiscourse in successful and less-successful argumentative essays. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 33: 21-34.
- [16] Li, M. & Xiao, Y. (2018). The study of interactivity in English academic discourse: A case study of the first person pronouns and their identity construction. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, 26(2): 18-23.
- [17] Liu, G. B. & Yang, Y. F. (2021). A Diachronic Study of Multi-Disciplinary Metadiscourse in Research Articles. ICDEL 2021: 2021 the 6th International Conference on Distance Education and Learning, 121-132.
- [18] Lou, B. C. & Wang, L. (2020). Self-mentions and authorial identity construction in Chinese learners' English academic writing. *Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages*, 43(1): 93-99+160.
- [19] Martin, J. R. & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [20] Mu, C., Zhang, L. J., Ehrich, J. & Hong, H. (2015). The use of metadiscourse for knowledge construction in Chinese and English research articles. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 20: 135-148.
- [21] Mur-Dueñas, P. (2007). 'I/we focus on': A cross-cultural analysis of self-mentions in business management research articles. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 6(2): 143-162.
- [22] Qin, F. & Chen, J. L. (2013). The creation and maintenance of interpersonal meaning: A study of interactive problems in graduate English scientific papers. *Foreign Language Education*, 34(4): 56-60.
- [23] Qiu, X. & Ma, X. (2019). Disciplinary enculturation and authorial stance: Comparison of stance features among masters' dissertations, doctoral theses and research articles. *Ibérica*, 38: 327-348.
- [24] Rahimivand, M. & Kuhi, D. (2014). An exploration of discoursal construction of identity in academic writing. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98(9): 1492-1501.
- [25] Sun, L. (2015). Pragmatic identity construction of English abstracts of Chinese master's dissertations. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (5): 15-21.
- [26] Sun, L. (2020). The study of metadiscourse use and identity construction features in Chinese masters' academic English writing. *Journal of Xi'an International Studies University*, 28(4): 28-33.
- [27] Tang, R. & John, S. (1999). The 'I' in identity: Exploring writer identity in student academic writing through the first person pronoun. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18: S23-S39.
- [28] Tas, E. E. I. (2010). "In this paper I will discuss ...": Current trends in academic writing. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 3(1): 121-126.
- [29] Thompson, G. & Thetela, P. (1995). The sound of one hand clapping: The management of interaction in written discourse. *TEXT*, 15 (1): 103-127.
- [30] Wang, J. J. & Lv, Z. S. (2017). A study of self-mentions in academic English writing for science and engineering doctoral students. *Foreign Language World*, (2): 89-96.

- [31] Wishnoff, J. R. (2000). Hedging your bets: L2 learners' acquisition of pragmatic devices in academic writing and computed-mediated discourse. *Second Language Studies*, 19(1): 119-148.
- [32] Wu, B. & Paltridge, B. (2021). Stance expressions in academic writing: A corpus-based comparison of Chinese students' MA dissertations and PhD theses. *Lingua*, 253(2): 1-18.
- [33] Xin, Z. Y. (2010). The evaluation assigning function of metadiscourse. *Foreign Language Education*, 31(6): 1-5.
- [34] Xu, F. (2015). A study of authorial stance markers in second language academic discourse. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, (5): 1-7.
- [35] Yoon, H. J. (2021). Interactions in EFL argumentative writing: Effects of topic, L1 background, and L2 proficiency on interactional metadiscourse. *Reading and Writing*, 34(3): 1-21.

**Guobing Liu** was born in Henan, China. He received the doctoral degree in corpus linguistics and computational linguistics in 2013. In recent years, he published several books and more than sixty academic papers in the key journals both home and abroad. His academic interests include corpus linguistics and foreign language teaching.

**Junlan Zhang** was born in Henan, China. She will receive the master's degree in Foreign Languages and Literature in 2022. Now she studies at the Faculty of International Studies, Henan Normal University. She is interested in interactional metadiscourse and identity, and her master's thesis is also related to it. Her academic interest is mainly corpus linguistics.

# Demotivating Teaching Practices in EFL Classrooms in Saudi Secondary Schools

Alhanouf Alharbi

English language Institute, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Nashwa Saaty

English language Institute, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—This study explores demotivational teaching practices, such as teachers' behaviours, teaching methods, personality traits, and competencies to examine how these practices negatively affect students' motivation to learn foreign languages. The study utilised a qualitative approach in which semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 female students in a public secondary school in Almadinah, located in the western region of Saudi Arabia. The study identified five teaching practices that secondary students found demotivating: (a) teacher-centred teaching; (b) excessive use of Arabic; (c) teachers' lack of motivation; (d) lack of learning feedback; and (e) excessive strictness. Therefore, English teachers should avoid these practices and raise awareness of the detrimental effects they can have on students' motivation.

**Index Terms**—L2 demotivation, EFL teacher, teaching practices, secondary schools

## I. INTRODUCTION

Motivation significantly impacts students' achievement when learning a language (McDonough, 1983). Motivated students are more excited to learn and succeed. The term "demotivation", which describes the negative counterpart to motivation, describes "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behaviour intention or an ongoing action" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 143). Therefore, a demotivated learner is a person who was once motivated but, for some reason, has now lost interest or enthusiasm. Unmotivated students see no point in studying because they do not perceive a connection between their behaviours and outcomes. Moreover, demotivated students attend lessons and engage in activities, but only when they feel like it. Since demotivation is contextual, demotivated students may regain motivation (Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002).

Researchers have found that students' motivation to learn a language declines throughout the school period (Dörnyei, 2006; Gardner et al., 2004). Furthermore, students in the 12th grade have been found to be the most demotivated secondary school students; this finding can be interpreted to mean that students lose motivation as they progress through their academic careers (Akay, 2017). Similarly, Song and Kim (2017) found that most students recorded a decrease in enthusiasm attributed to external influences upon reaching high school. Therefore, demotivation is not just a phenomenon among EFL learners but a widespread problem that must be addressed explicitly (Trang & Baldauf, 2007). Although the Saudi Ministry of Education has attempted to resolve this issue, students' English capacity remains poor and below expectations (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). The cause of low proficiency in EFL among Saudi learners is multi-factorial, and one of these factors is L2 demotivation (Alrabai, 2016). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2009) found that demotivation has a significant impact on English learning achievement.

This explorative qualitative study aims to provide contributions to the field of EFL teaching. These findings may form part of the discussion on demotivation in English learning and provide valuable pedagogical implications for EFL classroom practices. Furthermore, the findings could provide suggestions for teachers' professional development. The role of teachers is essential in education. Teachers' competencies, behaviours, teaching styles, and personalities significantly influence students' motivation in language learning. Since teachers often determine students' motivation or demotivation, their awareness of this problem is a key component of the solution (Trang & Baldauf, 2007). Therefore, this study assumes that if teachers become more aware of the negative effects of certain teaching practices, they can more accurately understand their students' feelings and resulting demotivation. This understanding can help teachers seek effective solutions for their students.

### Research questions

This study answers the following two research questions:

1. What teaching practices lead to demotivation among EFL students from their point of view?
2. To what extent do these practices lead to demotivation among students?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW



A number of studies conducted in the field of second language acquisition have found that teacher behaviours and attitudes in the classroom are significant components of demotivation for ESL and EFL learners (Chambers, 1993; Dörnyei, 1998; Oxford, 1998; Ushioda, 1998). Unlike the previous studies that have dealt with a general cross-section of students, both motivated and unmotivated, Dörnyei (1998), as cited in (2011), selected only those who had lost their interest in learning English. This choice was based on the assumption that this cohort would be ideal in identifying the causes of this issue. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 50 Hungarian secondary school students, and the results indicate that teacher-related factors are the largest source of students' demotivation.

The grammar-translation method has also emerged as a salient source of students' demotivation in several studies (Falout et al., 2009; Kikuchi, 2009; Kim et al., 2018; Normazidah & Hazita, 2012; Song & Kim, 2017). For example, two studies by Kikuchi (2009) and Falout et al. (2009) found that the most demotivating factor among Japanese university students was the use of grammar-translation methods focusing mainly on reading and writing skills. This issue was also found by Song and Kim (2017), who state that most Korean students become demotivated in high school because of the use of the grammar-translation teaching method. Furthermore, Quadir (2017) qualitatively examined the sources of high school students' demotivation and how they negatively affect student performance in university. By analysing 36 interviews, he found that teachers were the largest source of demotivation, specifically their instructional styles.

In addition, students are not as eager to learn English if classrooms lack opportunities for speaking and practising the target language (Normazidah & Hazita, 2012). Moreover, high school students consider memorising grammar rules and vocabulary to be impractical means of acquiring a foreign language and expect teachers to focus on communicative methods (Kim et al., 2018). It can be inferred from these results that EFL high school teachers fail to engage students in the learning process, and there appears to be a mismatch between the common teaching methods and students' preferences for learning. Whereas students prefer a communicative approach, EFL teachers tend to adopt traditional teaching methods (Trang & Baldauf, 2007).

Teachers' lack of motivation and interest in teaching has also been highlighted as having a negative impact on students' motivation (Bonta, 2019; Ghonsooly et al., 2017; Frenzel et al., 2009; Tambunan et al., 2018). If EFL teachers lack enthusiasm and passion for their jobs, it affects their students by making language learning appear unappealing. Consequently, English classes become uninteresting for students under these circumstances, causing them to lose interest in learning (Bonta, 2019; Ghonsooly et al., 2017). Toraby and Modarresi (2018) found that teachers are vital influencers, and their emotions affect how students perceive them. According to their study, when teachers show positive feelings about their jobs and demonstrate enthusiasm in their classes, they encourage students to work actively and appreciate their teachers' success at school.

Despite the widespread acknowledgement among researchers of the need to use L1 in L2 classes, there is a risk of L1 overuse and L2 underuse in English classes (Almohaimeed & Almurshed, 2018; Burdujan, 2020). The excessive use of L1 is thought to have a negative effect on students' motivation and learning (Burdujan, 2020; Kalanzadeh et al., 2013; Nazary, 2008). In an empirical study conducted through interviews and classroom observations by Kalanzadeh et al. (2013) to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of using L1 in EFL classrooms, they found that the overuse of L1 may be demotivating to students. Similarly, Nazary (2008) concludes that most students do not believe in the effectiveness of L1 usage and are hesitant to use their native language in English language contexts, strongly preferring to gain more exposure to L2.

Furthermore, a lack of corrective feedback from teachers can be a demotivating factor for EFL students (Trang & Baldauf, 2007; Krishnan & Pathan, 2013). Trang and Baldauf (2007) qualitatively investigated the reasons behind Vietnamese university students' demotivation by analysing 100 stimulated recall essays. The findings show that, among teacher-related factors, grading and assessment in general have an impact as demotivating sources, particularly the lack of corrective feedback. This finding is in line with those of Krishnan and Pathan (2013), who quantitatively and qualitatively explored the causes of demotivation among university students. In their qualitative results, the lack of teacher feedback emerged as a source of demotivation. On the other hand, Vollmeyer and Rheinberg (2005) conclude that, although feedback improves learning strategies and students' final performance, it has no impact on their motivation.

Regarding teachers' personality traits, the most demotivating factors are unkindness and excessive strictness (Chen, 2012; Song & Kim, 2017; Tsang, 2017). Students perceive unkind teachers who do not build a rapport with students as unpleasant (Tsang, 2017), causing students to lose interest in learning English (Song & Kim, 2017). Moreover, it has been found that students experience a high level of anxiety when learning from strict EFL teachers (Chen, 2012). Han et al. (2019) identified the dominant EFL demotivators among Turkish EFL university students and found that approximately 23% of respondents mentioned teachers' behaviour as the main source of demotivation. More specifically, when teachers respond negatively toward students' mistakes, students become afraid of negative feedback and develop anxiety when speaking.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. *Setting and Participants*

The setting for this study was a public secondary school located in the western region of Saudi Arabia. Twenty female students studying at this school were interviewed. The participants' native language was Arabic, and they had started studying English as a foreign language in the fourth grade. All participants had received their education in public schools, and their ages ranged between 16 and 19. This study employed non-probability purposive sampling.

### B. Instrument

Semi-structured interviews were adopted as the main method to facilitate in-depth conversations with the participants. According to Kakilla (2021), the interactive and generative nature of semi-structured interviews allows for free responses, helps in exploring a variety of issues using numerous themes, and increases the possibility of inspiring new ideas to be implemented. A pilot study was conducted with three participants who were excluded from the main study because their interviews did not provide significant data. The interviews were audio-recorded to observe and identify mistakes. After analysing the data, some questions were modified to be more straightforward and precise.

### C. Procedure and Data Collection

As a teacher in a government school with an official account on the Madrasati Platform, I have access to students' online classes. I gained permission from English teachers to attend their virtual classes for 10 minutes to introduce myself and explain my research topic. I then asked students if they had stories from their learning experiences and asked for volunteers. The interviews were conducted online via Zoom because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted in Arabic to ensure that participants were not intimidated by using English, allowing them to express their experiences freely without L2 restrictions.

### D. Analysis of Methods

After transcription, interviews were imported into NVivo (Version 12) in Arabic without translation into English to preserve the original meaning. However, the codes created and the quotes presented in this article were translated into English. Data were analysed using applied thematic analysis. This approach analyses qualitative data by exploring the data to identify recurring patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2012), including interpretation in selecting codes and creating themes (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). According to Braun and Clarke (2012), thematic analysis is an effective, efficient approach that can be used to comprehend a series of experiences, perceptions, emotions, or actions through a data set. After analysing the data, member checking was conducted, in which the main findings were presented to participants to obtain their feedback. Participants' comments were an essential instrument in enhancing the credibility and validity of the study results.

## IV. FINDINGS

### A. Teaching-Related Factors

#### (a). Teacher-Centred Teaching

The analyses of interview data suggest that teacher-centred teaching is a salient demotivating factor among high school students. Two features of teacher-centred teaching were mentioned in the interviews. Firstly, a teacher's dominance in English classes tends to make students passive learners whose role is to receive information. Secondly, teachers who emphasise memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary rather than practising the use of the target language are also demotivating to students. Students feel bored when the teacher spends too much time explaining without stopping to discuss the lesson or ask questions to evaluate student understanding. According to one participant, Abeer, "I feel bored when my teacher speaks all the time, not giving us opportunities to discuss or interact with her." When the teacher does not encourage students to participate actively throughout the lessons, it demotivates students. This teaching style also negatively affects student comprehension, as reflected in the following response from Kholoud: "Even in grammar lessons, she gave examples and did the exercises. I didn't understand because I was not using effort or doing the activities by myself."

In addition, participants reported feeling demotivated when they failed to accomplish the primary purpose of studying English, which is using the language in everyday life. Some participants expressed frustration because of their lack of English-speaking ability, as shown in the following response by Nouf:

*The problem is that some teachers focus on teaching grammar at the expense of speaking. We don't get enough opportunities to practise speaking. I am good at grammar and usually get full marks in written exams. But when it comes to speaking tasks, I feel lost and can't communicate well. Sometimes, I know what my teacher means by her questions, but I can't respond. I don't know how to compose a simple sentence. This frustrates me a lot.*

Participants also expressed being reluctant to speak in everyday situations because they do not frequently practice the language for communication. These findings suggest a relationship between teacher-centred teaching and students' difficulties communicating in English.

#### (b). The Excessive Use of the L1

The participants in this study perceived the overuse of L1 (Arabic) in English classes as a demotivating factor. Due to this overuse, students reported a lack of sufficient input to enable them to learn more effectively and communicate in L2. The overuse of Arabic creates L1 dependency, making students unwilling to express their ideas and thoughts in English, as explained by Amani: *"It will create a bad habit, and we will become dependent on Arabic."* The overuse of Arabic also causes students to forget what they have learned due to a lack of adequate L2 exposure and practice.

Students reported difficulty respecting teachers who depend mostly on L1. For example, according to Fatimah, the most effective way to learn English is through English:

*To increase students' interaction, my teacher allows students to speak Arabic. For example, a student asks the teacher: "Can I explain it in Arabic?" The teacher replies: "yes". I was shocked because it's an English class. Everything should be in English. It frustrates me because I feel as if I am in an Arabic class. When this kind of situation happens repeatedly, the aim of the class will be lost, and we will never learn.*

Interestingly, even participants who evaluated themselves as low achieving in English proficiency perceived the heavy use of L1 in classroom practice as a hindrance to English learning and a cause of communicative incompetency. As Kholoud stated, *"One of my past teachers allowed students to answer in Arabic because they didn't participate in the class. By doing so, the students wouldn't acquire speaking skills."*

## B. Behaviour-Related Factors

### (a). Teachers' Lack of Motivation

The interview data suggest that teachers' motivation has a direct and decisive influence on students' motivation. For instance, some interviewees reported that the enthusiasm is mirrored by the class when they see their teacher enthusiastically and actively presenting the lesson. Therefore, teachers' positive or negative feelings transmit to their students. Waad stated the following: *"When the teacher shows enjoyment during teaching, I enjoy it as well."* Teachers can express this enjoyment through physical displays of enthusiasm, such as facial expressions and tone of voice. In contrast, teachers who are not passionate about teaching make students feel uninterested in learning. This feeling was described in the following response by Abeer:

*One of my previous teachers seemed like she didn't have the desire to teach. She came to class with no enthusiasm, as if she had been forced to teach. She presented the lessons without any energy. Her style was so boring and monotonous that we felt that the class was too long. When her class started, we couldn't wait for it to be over.*

It can be argued that unmotivated teachers usually have low job commitment and do not enjoy teaching. As a result, students develop negative attitudes toward them. In her interview, Amani said the following: *"These teachers don't like their jobs; therefore, even if they give assignments, they don't check or correct students' answers."* Although this lack of verification means that students who do not care about their learning are happy, it frustrates other students and negatively affects their education. As Sara said, *"In that year, I made no efforts and did not improve my language."*

The interviews highlighted several such issues that students in Saudi secondary schools consider to be demotivating factors resulting from teachers' lack of motivation. One of the most frequently mentioned factors was pervasive teacher absenteeism. When a teacher is repeatedly absent from school, learning is interrupted, negatively impacting students' achievement. Not being prepared for the class is another demotivating factor that makes teachers heavily dependent on readings from the textbook. This teaching style causes students to feel bored and demotivated, as suggested in the following quote from Lamia:

*I get bored when my teacher reads from the interactive book, gives us the same sentences in the textbook, but does not give us external examples or make us create our own sentences. She sticks to what is in the book. This teaching method never holds my attention.*

### (b). The Lack of Learning Feedback

Student interviews also showed that a lack of effective feedback, advice, and especially appreciation is considered a salient demotivating factor. Hard-working students usually expect to hear encouragement or praise from their teachers and view it as a sign of the teacher caring about their learning. Thus, when students' efforts are not appreciated, they lose their motivation. As Ghadeer stated, *"When my teacher doesn't appreciate my hard work, I won't be motivated to do my best next time."* This theme is also exemplified in the following excerpt from Reema:

*Since I love English, I usually like to make an extra effort. I still remember last year when I had a speaking task, and I stayed up all night making sure that I did outstanding work, thinking of creative ideas, and designing attractive PowerPoint slides for my presentation. However, I was disappointed with my teacher's reaction. She just said "good" as if I didn't do anything. Her response made me blame myself. Why did I do all that hard work on a speaking task when I am so busy with other subjects?! Why did I waste my time preparing for such a speaking task while there is no appreciation from my teacher? I then decided not to work hard on any other assignments.*

The interview data suggest that students are eager for the teacher's acknowledgement of their hard work, and they do not exert effort on tasks if they know they will not receive feedback from their teachers. Students consider these tasks a

waste of time and therefore tend to copy and paste from online sources. As Maram stated, *“When I see that the teacher doesn’t check what I have written, I use Google Translate for writing tasks.”*

Additionally, from the students’ perspective, achieving a perfect mark without comments or praise for their hard work is insufficient to motivate them. Teachers’ praise is essential in making students feel accomplished and positive about themselves. For example, Bushra discussed her feelings when the teacher gave her a perfect mark without comments:

*I know that she gave me the full mark on that project, but I cared about her comments and appreciation. I was disappointed since I expected her to praise my project or at least tell me what she did or didn’t like. For me, the teacher’s comments are as important as grades.*

### C. Personality-Related Factors

#### Excessive strictness

The majority of the participants agreed that strict teachers made them feel stressed and nervous, caused them to dislike the class, and made them afraid to ask teachers for help or further explanation. For example, Amani stated, *“I was so afraid of my teacher that I would forget what I was saying.”* Bayan also stated, *“I do not mean the class should be fun all the time, but too much strictness makes students feel overwhelmed and dislike the subject.”* Unfriendly teachers who do not smile at students intimidate and discourage them from communicating, as Amani explains in the following response: *“I do not like classes where the teacher never smiles. Being serious does not mean being unable to laugh with students.”*

Moreover, the participants considered English classes as having unique characteristics that require a friendly atmosphere to encourage students to participate and communicate freely with the teacher. This perception is reflected in the following response from Kholoud:

*The English teacher, in particular, needs to be flexible when students make mistakes and accept that we are not perfect. My teacher was very strict, insisting on using only English in the class. She was a thorough teacher and did not accept mistakes. According to her, we had to match the level that we are in, so we were supposed to speak English correctly. This made me tense in the class. I hated her class.*

It should be noted that, although a teacher’s strictness can motivate students to work hard, it can also make students less interested in learning. This situation is exemplified in the following response by Jana:

*I did not like the fear that I felt before the class with my strict teacher started. I was so scared of her. Although her strictness made us study hard, it was a bad practice since we did it because of fear, not because we loved the subject.*

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Teaching-Related Factors

This study found that secondary school students considered teacher-centred teaching the strongest demotivating factor when learning English. This finding aligns with previous findings from the literature (Falout et al., 2009; Kikuchi, 2009; Kim et al., 2018; Normazidah & Hazita, 2012; Song & Kim, 2017). The finding suggests that students in the Saudi context prefer an interactive classroom environment that encourages them to be active learners.

An essential finding in the present study is that, despite years spent studying English and achieving high marks in EFL written exams, most participants were hesitant and lacked the confidence to speak English freely in everyday situations. This finding verifies Quadir’s (2017) viewpoint that students’ lack of confidence results from a lack of English practice. In addition, the inability to communicate properly makes students feel frustrated. Based on this study’s findings, students’ lack of English-speaking ability is largely attributable to teaching methods that focus on teaching grammar and reading at the expense of speaking and listening skills. In these cases, students do not receive adequate opportunities to practice using the English language in a classroom environment. Therefore, EFL teachers should concentrate on communicative activities that encourage students to speak and use English in the classroom to promote their confidence in using English.

In addition, the participants in this study stated that the excessive use of L1 (Arabic) in English classes has a demotivating effect. This response is in line with studies conducted to investigate the effects of using L1 in EFL classrooms (Nazary, 2008; Kalanzadeh et al., 2013; Burdujan, 2020). Most of the participants – particularly learners with lower levels of English proficiency – acknowledged the importance of the balanced use of L1 for scaffolding, such as explaining abstract ideas or when there is a communication gap between the students and the teacher. Nevertheless, the students confirmed that overuse of their native language decreased their interest in learning English. This view is consistent with the findings of Almohaimeed and Almurshed (2018) and Burdujan (2020), who suggest that L1 should be used judiciously to serve specific functions: explaining abstract terms, maintaining discipline, giving instructions, discussing errors, and teaching grammar.

The participants believed that the frequent use of their native language made them more dependent on L1, resulting in a lack of competence in L2 communication. This practice prevents students from thinking in the target language, making them hesitant to speak the target language. Thus, when students want to speak English, they feel embarrassed and reluctant because they have not had adequate exposure and practice in the classroom environment. Notably, even

low-achieving students in this study were dissatisfied with the excessive use of L1 because it hindered their English learning. This finding supports the assertion of Kalanzadeh et al. (2013) that both high- and low-achieving students reject the overuse of L1 in EFL English classes.

The findings from the interviews and my experience teaching at secondary schools show that EFL teachers use L1 to encourage student-teacher interactions and include all students, particularly low achievers, in English classrooms. However, teachers should remain aware of the frequency and purpose of using L1 and limit its use to develop students' fluency in English. To maximise the use of English while maintaining student comprehension, EFL teachers can employ visual aids and body language cues, such as variation of voice tone and body movements, to convey the meaning of unknown words. In addition, teachers can use simple language that students can easily understand.

### *B. Behaviour-Related Factors*

This study aligns with a body of research showing that teachers' lack of motivation and interest in teaching has a detrimental impact on students' motivation (Inayatullah & Jehangir, 2012; Bonta, 2019; Ghonsooly et al., 2017; Frenzel et al., 2009; Tambunan et al., 2018). EFL teachers lacking in motivation and passion for their jobs will hinder students' progress because unmotivated teachers make language learning uninteresting. As a result, students will find English lessons uninteresting under these conditions, and they will lose interest in studying.

Moreover, the findings of this study suggest that teachers' positive or negative feelings transmit to their students. When teachers do not enjoy teaching, it negatively affects students' motivation. These findings confirm the assertion of Frenzel et al. (2009) that there is a strong link between teacher enjoyment and student enjoyment in the classroom. In light of these findings, EFL teachers should express enthusiasm and enjoyment during teaching, which, in turn, will positively affect students' reactions to the material.

The results of this study also show that teacher absenteeism is one of the most common issues that students in Saudi secondary schools report as a demotivating factor. Frequent absenteeism results from a lack of teacher motivation. When a teacher is absent from school regularly, learning is disrupted. These conditions have a detrimental effect on student achievement, negatively affecting teachers' performance and the quality of education. This result aligns with other studies conducted in different EFL settings on the impact of teacher absenteeism. Existing studies have found that, although student absenteeism does not affect academic achievement of other students, teacher absenteeism significantly impacts student performance (Ameeq et al., 2018; Porres, 2016). Moreover, the results of this study show that unmotivated teachers are usually unprepared for lessons and, consequently, are more likely to rely heavily on readings from the textbook. This teaching strategy causes students to feel bored and demotivated.

Furthermore, the interview results suggest that secondary school students consider the lack of effective feedback – teacher comments showing appreciation in particular – as a salient demotivating factor. Students expressed an eagerness for their teachers' praise and acknowledgement of their hard work. This result is consistent with previous studies conducted by Krishnan and Pathan (2013) and Trang and Baldauf (2007), who found that lack of feedback can lead to L2 demotivation. However, the findings contradict Vollmeyer and Rheinberg's (2005) findings that, although feedback is important for enhancing students' learning strategies and final performance, it has no positive effect on motivation.

Nevertheless, this study's results confirm that students are concerned with their teachers' comments and see them as encouragement and validation of their work first and as guidance second. Therefore, when students do not receive feedback, they report feeling disappointed that the teacher did not review their work. In this situation, students then cease to exert effort in their following assignments. Thus, students become demotivated when teachers do not verify their learning outcomes. This finding is consistent with Vollmeyer and Rheinberg's (2005) experimental study, which found that feedback enhances learning strategies because students work carefully when they know that their teachers are monitoring their academic performance.

These results suggest that teachers should genuinely deliver praise because students can quickly determine whether praise is superficial. Examples of meaningless praise include not showing enthusiasm or using single words such as "good" or "excellent." This finding confirms Yingwen and Jian's (2016) assertion that appreciation should be expressed at a clause level because words or phrases alone do not consistently achieve the desired results. Thus, insincere praise is meaningless, particularly when students have exerted significant effort.

### *C. Personality-Related Factors*

This study is also consistent with the literature identifying teacher strictness as a demotivating factor among EFL learners (Chen, 2012; Song & Kim, 2017; Tsang, 2017). The findings show that strictness is a double-edged sword; although a certain level of strictness is needed to manage the class and motivate students to work, excessive strictness makes students lose interest in learning English.

The findings indicate that strict teachers who do not accept students' mistakes create a threatening atmosphere, making students reluctant to communicate with teachers. This finding is in line with Chen (2012), who found a strong relationship between students' foreign language anxiety and teacher strictness. Considering that English classes have unique characteristics, EFL teachers should be flexible with students to encourage them to participate in class activities, particularly during speaking lessons. Conversely, when teachers react negatively to students' mistakes, it makes students fearful of negative evaluation and causes them to be reluctant to speak up (Han et al., 2019).

## VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

EFL teachers must understand that students' lack of communicative ability plays a crucial role in L2 demotivation, causing them to lose confidence when speaking English. Therefore, teachers can help students by adopting more communicative activities that enable students to receive adequate L2 practice within the classroom environment. Teachers should also strive to be less authoritarian in EFL classrooms – playing the role of facilitators instead – to engage students in meaningful classroom interactions, including group work derived from real-life situations.

Although some L1 use may help facilitate learning, EFL teachers limit the circumstances and frequency of L1 use in the classroom. The L1 should be used judiciously to serve specific purposes, such as creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere or explaining abstract ideas. Teachers should otherwise use English as much as possible and encourage students to do the same. Visual aids and body language cues can also be employed to assist students' comprehension and maximise English use. Furthermore, EFL teachers should increase their awareness of the crucial role that their motivation and enthusiasm play in determining their students' performance. In doing so, teachers must consider how their feelings are interconnected with those of their students. Teachers should strive to show enthusiasm for the subject by preparing well, varying their techniques, and employing warm-up activities that break up the monotony in the classroom.

Moreover, to increase student motivation, EFL teachers should provide effective feedback and appreciation for students' hard work on each assigned task. Corrective feedback can include in-person feedback delivered with instruction and recommendations on how to improve. In terms of encouragement, teachers should express appreciation and praise in front of the class. Based on the characteristics of adolescent growth, such encouragement can help students to build their confidence, inspire their interest, and discover their strengths. Teachers should also show genuine enthusiasm when praising students' work orally. When expressing praise in written form, teachers should write at the clause level instead of using single words.

When students like their teachers, they tend to engage at a higher level with the subject matter being taught. Therefore, building a strong relationship with students will produce a greater chance of influencing students' motivation to learn a foreign language. Because of the unique features of EFL classrooms, teachers should pay particular attention to creating a safe, friendly atmosphere where students can practise English without fear of making mistakes. To achieve this atmosphere, teachers should be kind, friendly, mindful of students' feelings, and flexible with accepting students' mistakes.

## VII. CONCLUSION

This study explored demotivational teaching practices in EFL instruction – namely teachers' behaviours, teaching methods, personality traits, and competencies – to examine how these factors negatively affect students' motivation to learn a foreign language. The findings of this study highlight demotivating teaching practices comprising five themes: (a) teacher-centred teaching; (b) excessive use of Arabic; (c) teachers' lack of motivation; (d) a lack of feedback for students; and (e) excessive strictness. However, this study had a number of limitations. The first of these limitations is that the sample included only 20 female students in secondary school. Therefore, the results cannot be generalised to all students due to how small and undiversified this sample was. However, the emergent themes of this study may be tested to gain more generalisable findings on L2 demotivation. Further studies should be conducted to investigate EFL teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards current teaching practices. Such studies can help policymakers organise appropriate training programmes capable of raising teachers' awareness of psychological issues that can emerge among EFL students. In addition, this study only examined L2 demotivation among Saudi female students in secondary school. Therefore, exploring male students' responses to demotivating teaching practices and comparing the findings with those of this study could be useful.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Akay, C. (2017). Turkish High School Students' English Demotivation and Their Seeking for Remotivation: A Mixed Method Research. *English Language Teaching*, 10(8), 107-122. <http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n8p107>
- [2] Almohaimeed, M. S., & Almurshed, H. M. (2018). Foreign Language Learners' Attitudes and Perceptions of L1 Use in L2 Classroom. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(4), 433-446.
- [3] Alrabai, F. (2016). Factors underlying low achievement of Saudi EFL learners. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6(3), 21-37.
- [4] 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. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n5p33>
- [5] Ameerq, M., Hassan, M. M., Jabeen, M., & Fatima, L. (2018). Impact of Teacher Absenteeism on Student Achievement: A Case of South Punjab District Muzaffargarh, Pakistan. *Education*, 9(16), 19-16
- [6] Bonta, E. (2019). Demotivation-triggering factors in learning and using a foreign language—An Empirical Study. *Journal of Innovation in Psychology, Education and Didactics*, 23(2), 177-198.
- [7] Burdujan, R. (2020). Judiciousness of mother tongue use in EFL classroom. *Psychology and Education Journal*, 57(9), 6984-6988.

- [8] Chen, J. (2012). Favorable and unfavorable characteristics of EFL teachers perceived by university students of Thailand. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 2(1), 213- 219. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v2n1p213>
- [9] Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge: CUP
- [10] Dörnyei, Z. (2006). Individual differences in second language acquisition. *AILA Review*, 19(1), 42-68. <https://doi.org/10.1075/aila.19.05dor>
- [11] Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Great Britain: MPG Books Group. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847691293>
- [12] Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation*. Harlow, England: Longman/Pearson.
- [13] Falout, J., Elwood, J., & Hood, M. (2009). Demotivation: Affective states and learning outcomes. *System*, 37(3), 403-417. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.03.004>
- [14] Gardner, R. C., Masgoret, A.-M., Tennant, J., & Mihic, L. (2004). Integrative motivation: Changes during a year-long intermediate-level language course. *Language Learning*, 54, 1-34
- [15] Ghonsooly, B., Hassanzadeh, T., Samavarchi, L., & Hamed, S. M. (2017). A mixed-methods approach to demotivating factors among Iranian EFL learners. *Issues in Educational Research*, 27(3), 417- 434.
- [16] Han, T., Takkaç-Tulgar, A., & Aybirdi, N. (2019). Factors causing demotivation in EFL learning process and the strategies used by Turkish EFL learners to overcome their demotivation. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 10(2), 56-65.
- [17] Kalanzadeh, G. A., Hemati, F., Shahivand, Z., & Bakhtiarvand, M. (2013). The use of EFL students' L1 in English classes. *The International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 2(2), 30-39.
- [18] Kikuchi, K. (2009). Listening to our learners' voices: what demotivates Japanese high school students?. *Language Teaching Research*, 13(4), 453-471.
- [19] Kim, T. Y., Kim, Y., & Kim, J. Y. (2018). A qualitative inquiry on EFL learning demotivation and resilience: A study of primary and secondary EFL students in South Korea. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 27(1), 55-64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40299-017-0365-y>
- [20] Krishnan, K. S. D., & Pathan, Z. H. (2013). Investigating demotivation in learning English: An extension to Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) framework. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 4(2), 124-131.
- [21] McDonough, S. (1983). *Psychology in foreign language teaching*. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- [22] Nazary, M. (2008). The role of L1 in L2 acquisition: Attitudes of Iranian university students. *Novitas-Royal*, 2(2), 138-153.
- [23] Normazidah, C. M., Koo, Y. L., & Hazita, A. (2012). Exploring English language learning and teaching in Malaysia. *GEMA Online™ Journal of Language Studies*, 12(1), 35-55.
- [24] Porres, A. (2016). *The impact of teacher absenteeism on student achievement: A study on US public schools, using results of the 2011-2012 civil rights data collection*. Georgetown University. 1-19
- [25] Quadir, M. (2017). Let us listen to our students: An analysis of demotivation to study English in Bangladesh. *The English Teacher*, (3), 128-141.
- [26] Song, B., & Kim, T. Y. (2017). The dynamics of demotivation and remotivation among Korean high school EFL students. *System*, 65, 90-103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.12.010>
- [27] Tambunan, A. R. S., Hamied, F. A., & Sundayana, W. (2018). EFL teachers' motivation and competence in an Indonesian context as assessed within the framework of Maslow's and Herberg's theories. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 68-78. <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/IJAL/article/view/11481>
- [28] Toraby, E., & Modarresi, G. (2018). *EFL Teachers' Emotions and Learners' Views of Teachers' Pedagogical Success*. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(2), 513-526. <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11235a>
- [29] Trang, T. & Baldauf, R. (2007). Demotivation: Understanding resistance to English language learning- The case of Vietnamese students. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 4(1), 79-105.
- [30] Trang, T. T. T., & Baldauf Jr, R. B. (2007). Demotivation: Understanding resistance to English language learning-the case of Vietnamese students. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 4(1), 79-105.
- [31] Tsang, A. (2017). EFL/ESL teachers' general language proficiency and learners' engagement. *RELC Journal*, 48(1), 99-113. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0033688217690060>
- [32] Vallerand, R. J., & Ratelle, C. F. (2002). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: A hierarchical model. In E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of self-determination research* (37-63). University of Rochester Press.
- [33] Vollmeyer, R., & Rheinberg, F. (2005). A surprising effect of feedback on learning. *Learning and Instruction*, 15(6), 589-602.
- [34] Yingwen, S., & Jian, S. (2016). A study of appreciation resources in teacher feedback in the Chinese college EFL context. In *Learning in and Beyond the Classroom: Ubiquity in Foreign Language Education*, The Seventh CLS International Conference (443-459).

**Alhanouf Alharbi** holds a Bachelor's in English literature from Taibah University, and an English teacher in the second secondary school at Al-Madinah, KSA. She is currently an MA student in TESOL at King Abdel-Aziz University in Jeddah.

**Nashwa Saaty** is an Assistant Professor at the English Language Institute, KAU. She is a board member of Saudi TESOL. She is currently the Head of the Graduate Studies and Academic Research Unit at the ELI overseeing the Graduate Studies programs such as the MA TESOL program and the Professional Masters in English Language Teaching Practices. Her research interests include L2 motivation, curriculum development, and learner identity.

# Deculturalization of Culturally Bound Meaning: Indonesian-English Translation Evidence

Ni Wayan Sukarini

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Ida Bagus Putra Yadnya

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Ida Ayu Made Puspani

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

Ni Luh Ketut Mas Indrawati

Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia

**Abstract**—The study is aimed at examining the phenomenon of deculturalization in the strategy of translating cultural terms in Indonesian literary texts into English, and its implications for the form and meaning of the target text. It is a descriptive translation study focusing on the objective aspect of translation, its form, and its meaning. The results show that the representation of the culturally bound meaning of cultural terms appears as words, phrases, terms, or expressions under the categories of (1) material culture, (2) social culture, (3) organization, customs, activities, and concepts, and (4) gesture and habits. In the process of translation, pure and blended deculturalization strategies were applied resulting in three equivalent typologies including (1) equivalent in meaning but the form is not correspondent, (2) equivalent but the meaning does not correspond due to different scope of meaning, and (3) zero or nil equivalent.

**Index Terms**—culture, deculturalization, meaning, strategy, terms

## I. INTRODUCTION

Translating involves linguistic transfer. Semantically, translation is the transfer of meaning from the source language into the target language. Since language is part of the culture, translation can not only be understood as a transfer of form and meaning but also as a transfer of culture. It brings the consequence that translating may face language and cultural barriers and the study of translation cannot be separated from linguistic and cultural approaches.

Theoretically, equivalence can be achieved to a certain extent due to the universal nature of language and cultural convergence. However, the fact shows that the way to express the same meaning is often very different from culture to culture. Therefore it is difficult to find a fully synonymous equivalence.

To deal with the problem of linguistic and cultural mismatch adjustments need to be made (Larson, 1998; Nida, 1984). As a process, translation cases provide various possible perspectives and aspects of the study. An alternative aspect of the study that can be done is the extent to which a translator can successfully recreate the situation in a source language into another target language. In addition, the perspective developed by the translator is also very interesting as the focus of the study.

The perspective of language and culture dialectics is the most important matter in the study of translation to perceive the extent to which the situation in a language has been successfully re-expressed in another language. This study explores two points: (1) how and to what extent lexical items that have culturally bound meaning in Indonesian fictional literary source texts (with backgrounds and themes of Balinese culture) can be re-expressed in the English target texts; (2) to analyze what translation strategies and methods are applied and discuss possible implications for the intrinsic structure of the target text.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The definition of the term 'translation' has been put forward by various experts but the most frequently cited is the definition proposed by (Catford, 1965; Larson, 1984; Nida & Taber, 1974). By emphasizing more on the medium or form (Catford, 1965, p. 20) considers translation as a language transfer and defines translation as "*an operation performed on language: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another*". Nida and Taber (1974) emphasize more on meaning or message and state that translation is an attempt to re-express messages contained in the source language into the target language using the same and closest equivalent. In line with the notion, Larson (1984) views translation as transferring messages from source languages to target languages using grammatical structures and



lexicons that are appropriate in the target language and cultural context. Therefore, the basic nature of translation can be concluded by referring to translation as not merely a matter of language transfer, or the transfer of meaning but also cultural transfer.

Translation is a decision taken by the translator based on available alternatives to re-express a particular message with various structures. Decisions made by translators are determined by the level of universality and convergence between the source language and culture with the target language and culture. Theoretically, even though equivalence can be achieved due to the universal nature of language and cultural convergence, two speakers of different languages have a culture that is often very different from one another. To deal with the problem of language and cultural mismatch, necessary adjustments must be made including (1) obligatory or mandatory decisions that the translator must take to adjust the source language system with the target language system, and (2) optional decisions based on the alternatives available for matching source text into the target text according to the translator's abilities, text characteristics, translation objectives and translation targets (target audience), and translator style.

Newmark (1988, p. 94) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression." The cultural concept contains the keywords "way of life", "peculiar community", and "particular language" as the core of culture and at the same time distinguishing features from other cultures. The definition shows that culture is the whole context in which humans live, think, and interact with each other and at the same time become a unifier of a community. As part of language culture, it is also a means of building and expressing culture so that cultural differences mean language differences. Newmark (1988, p. 94) distinguishes language characteristics specifically into three categories, namely (1) language is universal, (2) cultural, and (3) personal. Basic words like **sleep, eat, die, star** and even words in the form of artifacts such as **table** or **mirror** are universal. Consequently, when these basic words are associated with translation, they will not cause problems because all cultures can encode those concepts. However, Balinese words such as *ngaben*, *pura*, *banjar*, and *dokar* have cultural nuances (only owned by Balinese Hindu culture) so the translation into other languages will cause quite a complication due to the gap in understanding these concepts. The idea that language is personal refers to the way a person expresses idea in a language or idiolect. Zaky (2000) claims, language can be seen as an attitude or behavior, the behavior of speakers of a language also shows their language style such as interference by foreign speakers in forcing the use of the grammar of their native language.

Furthermore, Newmark (1988, p. 95) classifies the cultural context as (1) ecology including flora, fauna, wind, valley, and mountain, (2) material culture or art such as food, clothing, housing and cities, transportation, (3) social culture including work and leisure, (4) organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts that are political and administrative, religious and artistic, and (5) gesture and habits. James (1980) says that people understand cultural meaning by drawing conclusions. There are three types of information that can be used as a basis to draw these conclusions, namely cultural behavior, cultural objects, and what people say (speech messages). Information about cultural behavior and objects can be obtained through observation while information on what people say can be obtained through interviews.

Translation involves the selection of equivalents in the form of the source language units closest to the target language. Based on the level of the language unit to be translated, Hatim & Mason (1990) classifies approaches to translation into (1) word-for-word translation, (2) translation at the sentence level, and (3) conceptual translation. There are some possibilities of equivalence in translation, namely (1) equivalent at the same time having the corresponding form, (2) equivalent but the form does not correspond, and (3) is equivalent but the meaning does not correspond because of the different scope of meaning.

### III. METHOD

This descriptive translation study departs from a paradigm that views translation as a product or the result of the process of transferring messages contained in the source language into the target language. Translation text is seen as evidence and transaction, namely a means to retrace the steps taken by the translator in the decision-making procedure. The final product of the source text must be treated as evidence of the intentions of the author (intended meaning) rather than as an embodiment of the meaning. Hatim and Mason (1990) view a text as a result of a choice driven by a motivated choice, that is, the writer of the text has his communicative purpose, choosing his own lexical and grammatical items to meet the demands of that goal.

The form of the data is a representation of meaning as a unit of translation in various lingual forms contained in the source text and its translation in the target text. The definition of "translation unit" is the smallest segment of a source language text that can be translated separately from other segments or as stated by Haas, in (Newmark, 1988), as short as is possible, as long as is necessary. These units range from words, through collocation, to clauses (Bell, 1991; Newmark, 1988). The data corpus in this translation study is in the form of parallel bilingual corpora consisting of original texts and translated versions. The object of this research is the translation of two Indonesian fictional literary texts (short stories) as source texts and translated texts in English as target texts by two different translators. The source texts and the translated texts are (1) "*Mati Salah Pati*" written by Gde Aryantha Soethama (1994); translated into English (a) "*Death By Misfortune*" by Vern Cork (1994) and (b) "*The Wrong Kind of Death*" by Jennifer Lindsay (2000); (2) "*Mandi Api*" written by Gde Aryantha Soethama (2006), translated into English "*Ordeal by Fire*" by Vern

Cork (2008). The data analysis was carried out by qualitative descriptive method based on plural and eclectic theoretical frameworks (text-based theory on one side, and on the other side form-based translation and meaning-based translation).

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The transfer of meaning in translation is determined by the extent to which the cultural concepts in the source text are known or shared in the target language. To deal with this language and cultural mismatches, adjustments need to be made. One of these adjustments is through a translation strategy, which is very much determined by the competence of the translator, the method of translation, and the target of translation which ultimately makes translation dynamic. When literal or linear matching is not possible the translator is faced with the reality of having to make decisions from the various alternatives available to achieve the closest level of equivalence. Even though written in Indonesian, several semantic representations in the source text (set in Balinese culture) form tangible units (words or phrases) that have a local socio-cultural context. In the process of translating fiction, there is an attempt to translate the cultural context with the strategy of deculturalization, by shifting the meaning of contextual language culture through neutralizing or generalizing these words or using culture-free words and sometimes with new specific expressions.

There are two models of deculturalization found in the corpus, they are pure deculturalization and blended deculturalization. Pure deculturalization is perceived in literal translation as the occurrence of formal correspondence and meaning. Blended deculturalization, in contrast, can be seen from the translation which uses more than one strategy to maintain the closeness of meaning even though there is no formal correspondence.

##### A. Pure Deculturalization

The strategy of pure deculturalization shows the transfer of cultural meaning from the source language through neutralizing or generalizing the translation unit by using cultural content-free words or expressions. The reason for choosing the deculturalization strategy lies in the orientation of the translator to maintain the integrity of the message on the one hand and readability for the target audience on the other. In the available data, translation units appear in various fields of culture. The following are several Indonesian-language source text data that have Balinese cultural meanings relating to religious (Hindu) and traditional or customary rituals that are translated into English by applying the deculturalization strategy; the lexical items that contain a culturally related concept in the source text are in bold-type italics and their equivalents in the target text are only bold-typed.

Source Text (ST)	Target Text (TT)
1. " <b><i>Hyang Widhi</i></b> melarang kita bicara perkawinan hari ini, detik ini. Sebaiknya kita diam saja!" ... (AS)	" <b>God</b> forbid us to discuss the wedding today at this moment. It would be best for us to remain silent!" ... (VC)
2. " <i>Sekarang Sukra Kliwon Watugunung, hari Jumat bulan Agustus, sasih Karo, saat baik buat ngaben, hari baik membakar jenazah, upacara untuk orang mati,</i> " ... (AS)	"Sukra Kliwon Watugunung, Sasih Karo, is an auspicious time for a <b>cremation</b> , good for burning corpse, or holding a ceremony for someone who has died," ... (VC)
3. <i>Sekaa gamelan terompong beruk itu datang dari tempat yang sangat jauh, ... (AS)</i>	The coconut orchestra <b>group</b> had come from the distant village, ... (VC)
4. <i>Terompong beruk memang khas dan terlampau sederhana...</i> (AS)	<b>The coconut orchestra</b> was very unusual and extremely simple: (VC)
5. <i>Ia adalah pemangku, pemimpin pura desa Bangle, ... (AS)</i>	He was <b>the priest</b> and leader of the village temple of Bangle (VC)
6. <i>Menjelang pujawali, ia dengan disiplin ketat memaksa anak-anak berlatih ... (AS)</i>	At the time of a <b>ceremony</b> approached he made the young people practice hard. (VC)

In the process of translating the six data above, there is an attempt to match the meaning of cultural context with the strategy of deculturalization, i.e., shifting the cultural meaning of the source language by neutralizing or generalizing these words or using words that are free of cultural content. The expression of ***Hyang Widhi*** in example 1 which is specifically the designation for God for Balinese in the source language is translated into **God** which has a general meaning free from the cultural notion. This is also the case with example 2, the word ***ngaben*** which indicates that the meaning is not just the meaning contained in the word **cremation** in English because the meaning of the ceremony and at the same time the subsequent ceremonies after ***ngaben*** are not reflected in the meaning of cremation which only means burning a corpse. ***Ngaben*** in Balinese culture does not only mean burning dead bodies. In line with example 1, the data in example 3, is translated into **groups** and in example 5, the word ***pemangku*** is translated into **priests**, and in example 6, the word ***pujawali*** is translated into **ceremony** also showing the phenomenon of deculturalization by shifting the cultural meaning of the source language through neutralizing or using words that are free of cultural nuance.

Equivalence in translation is very much determined by how the translation unit in the source language is understood or perceived by the translator so that a translation unit translated by more than one translator can produce different equivalents. For example, in the data from religious ritual groups, there are lexicons used for referring to the life cycle ceremony system, namely ***manusa yadnya***, there is the term ***ngaben***, as seen in the following examples:

ST	TT
(7) <i>Upacara ngaben perlu biaya jutaan rupiah. Dari mana ia memperoleh uang sebanyak itu? Memang, ngaben akan menjadi tanggung jawab keluarga yang ditinggalkan, akan diurus oleh anak-anak. (AS)</i>	a. Millions of rupiah are needed for a <b>cremation ceremony</b> . Where would he get money like that? Of course, the responsibility for <b>it</b> would lie with the family left behind, and the cremation would be organized by the children (JL)
	b. A <b>cremation ceremony</b> required millions of rupiahs. Of course, cremation was the responsibility of the family who was left behind and must be organized by the children. (VC)

The lexical item *ngaben* which refers to the ceremonial field related to the life cycle has its equivalent variations in the corpus above, **cremation ceremony**, **cremation**, and **it**. In this case, there was a process of deculturalization. Some notes can be given in the case of re-expressing *ngaben* into the target language (English). First, the level of equivalence of the concept of *ngaben* in the source text with cremation in the target text is only at the level of lexical meaning, i.e., the same meaning component of 'burning the dead' is shared by both cultures (both source and target cultures). What is not included in the cremation (the equivalent of the word *ngaben*) is a cultural meaning involving values (*tatwa*, morality, and ritual) contained in the concept of *ngaben* as a manifestation of the social culture of Hindu (Bali) society. *Ngaben* ceremony in Bali is a series of ceremonial purification of ancestral spirits. Philosophically the ceremony of purification of the *atma* (soul) of the ancestors aims to unite the ancestor's *atma* or restore the *atma* with *paratman* (the Creator). This ritual purification is intended hence the ancestral *atma* can be worshiped in the sense that their respective descendants can respect and honor them.

Even though there is a formal shift from words (nouns) to phrases (noun phrases), the closest equivalent of the word *ngaben* is **cremation ceremony** because the concept of *ngaben* in the source language is not only synonymous (lexically) with cremation but is ritualized in the burning process preceded, together accompanied, and will be followed (later after the process of burning dead bodies) by a series of ceremonies involving the community outside the family. The class shift occurs in the equivalent of *ngaben* into *it* (i.e., from noun to pronoun)

The data which includes religious ritual groups and social institutions are also found in source texts with equivalent variations in English as exemplified below:

ST	TT
(8) <i>Sore-sore ia suka menyendiri di sudut balai banjar. (AS)</i>	a. In the late afternoon he liked to be alone in the corner of <b>the community pavilion</b> . (JL) b. In the late afternoons he would often go off alone to a corner of <b>the community hall</b> . (VC)

Even if the equivalence of *balai banjar* concept is linear there are still interesting notes to attend to. First, the equivalence of *balai banjar* with **community halls** and **community pavilions** indicates that the equivalent is more general. Functionally, the two equivalent meanings in the target language indicate **a building that functions as a place for meetings or activities of the general public**, even if they are not domiciled around a particular building or social group. The two equivalents do not have a distinct component, namely the local socio-cultural meaning. Meanwhile, the *banjar* hall is more inclusive in the sense of a building that functions as a meeting place or social activity for certain groups of people (region, environment, or certain social groups in Bali only). Second, the exclusive meaning is expressed in the surface structure through modification in the form of a description of the function as a meeting place for the neighboring community or environment only. The translation of the *balai banjar* as the closest equivalent to **the neighborhood meeting hall**, the meaning of the term in the source language can be covered in the target language.

The lexicon that implies social culture is categorized as daily activities in the use of leisure time (leisure) is performed in the following examples:

ST	TT
(9) <i>Ia sangat girang kalau ada arisan, dan selalu membuat kegiatan-kegiatan baru bersama kawan kawannya sehingga ada alasan untuk ke luar rumah. (AS)</i>	a. She was mad about <b>social gatherings like savings clubs</b> and always dreaming up new activities so that she and her friends could get out of the house. (JL) b. She loved going to <b>women's arisans</b> too, and was forever organizing new activities with friends so that she had a reason to get out of the house. (VC)

The example about social culture above shows a lexicon that implies day-to-day activities in the use of leisure time is an *arisan* with variations in translations of 'social gatherings like savings clubs' and 'women's arisans'.

The case of translating the word *arisan* in example (9) above shows a variety of translation strategies due to different translators. Translating *arisan* into **social gatherings like savings clubs** which is carried out by JL (in the target text, a) shows the process of deculturalization, which is neutralizing the cultural meaning contained in the word inheritance into a culture-free word accompanied by an explanation of form. In the equivalent of *arisans* carried out by VC (in text b), it shows that there has been a modified borrowing process in which the word *arisan* is maintained by giving the word 'woman' as a modifier in front of the word *arisan*.

### B. Blended Deculturalization

In the process of deculturalization translators generally provide free, cultural content with synonyms. It is often the case that translation is done by explaining its meaning, specifically explaining the concepts or meanings possessed by words or expressions of source languages due to differences in traditions and habits as seen in the following data:

ST	TT
(10) <i>Tapi, itu mati salah pati (AS)</i>	This would be counted as a <b>Death by Misfortune</b> . (VC)

To clarify the meaning and convince the target audience to capture the message or the meaning of the context of the culture, the borrowing strategy is often applied along with modifications such as the data (9) above:

ST	TT
<i>Ia sangat girang kalau ada arisan, dan selalu membuat kegiatan-kegiatan baru bersama kawan-kawannya sehingga ada alasan untuk ke luar rumah. (AS)</i>	She loved going to <b>women's arisans</b> too, and was forever organizing new activities with friends so that she had a reason to get out of the house. (VC)

In addition to including modifiers, some data also show borrowing followed by a description or explanation of the concept of cultural significance in the source language as can be seen in the following example:

ST	TT
(11) <i>Dulu, mati ditabrak di jalan raya memang aib besar. Peristiwa semacam itu disebut mati salah pati. (AS)</i>	In earlier times, to be killed on the roads was a terrible misfortune. There was even a special term for it: <b>Mati Salah Pati - Death by Misfortune</b> . (VC)

Culture is not only built on extrinsic factors which appear as explicit cultures but also by intrinsic factors such as beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, values, and norms that are understood theoretically as implicit cultures (See Liliweri, 2001). This field appears as a concept and system of knowledge. The following examples illustrate the implicit cultural field found in the source text along with its equivalent variations in English. The identified lexical items are concepts of life and death. The data on the concepts of life and death presented here are all recorded from the source text of the story **Mati Salah Pati** because the story highlighted the shifting of the meaning of *mati salah pati* in the development of Balinese society living in cities. The concept of *mati salah pati* in the source language has an equivalent variety of "wrong kind of death, or *salah pati*, as the Balinese say," **Mati Salah Pati - Death by Misfortune** and *salah pati* " as seen in the following data.

ST	TT
(12) <i>Dulu, mati ditabrak di jalan raya memang aib-besar. Peristiwa semacam itu disebut mati salah pati. (AS)</i>	a. It used to be that getting killed on the road was considered shameful and was <b>called a wrong kind of death, or salah pati, as the Balinese say</b> . (JL) b. In earlier times, to be killed on the roads was a terrible misfortune. There was even a special term for it: <b>Mati Salah Pati - Death by Misfortune</b> . (VC)
(13) <i>Orang yang ditabrak dibawa ke unit gawat darurat, lalu dokter diminta membuat pernyataan, bahwa korban tewas setelah tiba di rumah sakit. Maka terhindarlah korban dari kutukan mati salah-pati. Sekarang tak lagi ada yang mempersoalkan mati salah pati. (AS)</i>	People killed on the road were taken to the emergency unit, and the doctor was asked to make a statement that the victim had died after arrival at the hospital. In this way, the victim was freed of the curse of <i>salah pati</i> . Nowadays no one made a fuss any more about <i>salah pati</i> . (JL)
(14) <i>Tapi, itu mati salah pati "Persetan dengan salah pati" teriak hatinya sengit. (AS)</i>	a. It will surely be a <b>salah pati death</b> . "To hell with <i>salah pati</i> ," he shouts silently. (JL) b. This would be counted as a <b>Death by Misfortune</b> . But - "To hell with <b>the misfortune</b> " he told himself recklessly. (VC)

Of all the false *mati salah pati* terms that appear in the source text (except the equivalent *b* of text no (14) above), everything is translated through the process of borrowing. This indicates that the concept of *mati salah pati* is cultural and is not possessed by the translator's culture. In Hindu (Balinese) culture this concept relates to *ngaben* because the status or type of death determines whether the *ngaben* ceremony can be done directly or not.

When viewed on a case-by-case basis, the example (12a) above shows a triplet translation strategy, that is through more than one strategy for the same case (Newmark, 1988). In this example, *mati salah pati* is translated through deculturalization, borrowing, and accompanied by an explanation. The term is translated with descriptive phrases that are free of cultural content into 'a wrong kind of death followed by *salah pati* which is a lexical item borrowed from the source language and then accompanied by an explanation of the social context being **a wrong kind of death, or salah pati**, as the Balinese say. The equivalent in (12b) applies the couplet strategy through borrowing along with an explanation namely **Mati Salah Pati-Death by Misfortune**. Example (13) is only through borrowing. Example (14b) is purely through deculturalization so that its equivalent in the target language is free of cultural meaning and in the form of an explanation of the lexical meaning of the term *mati salah pati* into 'a Death by Misfortune'

The same analysis can also be applied to the following data which both show the phenomenon of blended deculturalization:

ST	TT
(15a) <i>Inilah yang oleh warga Bangle disebut <b>terompong beruk</b>. (AS,2006:35)</i>	This instrument was what the people of Bangle called a <b>Terompong Beruk- Coconut Xylophone</b> (VC, 2008: 19)
(15b) <i>Jika ada warga kami yang meninggal, <b>kulkul</b> di balai desa pasti dipukul. (AS)</i>	It is a tradition in our village that whenever a villager dies, <b>the kulkul death knell</b> in the village hall is sounded. (VC)

In addition to words that are classified as social or religious, there are also lexicons related to the knowledge system, for example, the term width **are** commonly used in the land sector both among farmers and communities in Bali. The translation of width concept in the following data with **are** and zero shows clearly that the term is only found in Indonesia and is especially common in Bali (because in other places in Indonesia the unit of measure of square meter area is more commonly used).

ST	TT
(16) <i>Sepuluh <b>are</b> tanah tegal yang terakhir sudah terjual tiga tahun silam. Anaknya ketiga, yang bungsu, menggunakannya untuk modal mendirikan toko kesenian di Ubud (AS)</i>	<p>a. His last <b>small plot</b> of land was sold three years ago when his third and youngest son had sold the fields for capital to build an art shop in Ubud. (JL)</p> <p>b. His last ten <b>are</b> of land had been sold three years before and his third and youngest son had used the proceeds for setting up an art shop in Ubud. (VC)</p>

The translation of the term **are**, in example (16b), invites questions. On the one hand, translating **are** with a **small plot** can indicate the lack of understanding of the translator with the width concept. On the other hand, the translation of **are** into **small pot** can be intentional and thus creates obscurity, considering that it is not important because the term width does not directly interfere with the readability of the text or cohesion and coherence of the overall text.

Meanwhile, example (16b) is a general tendency among translators when the concept of the source language is not owned or known in the target language, it will be in the form of borrowing.

Self-names are always cultural, therefore the tendency to match lexical items of self leads to borrowing and pronominalizing. However, the kinship term in Balinese society found in the source text is called **pekak**, as can be perceived in the following data.

ST	TT
(17) <i>Mereka tak mau memanggilnya "<b>Pekak</b>". Apa?, <b>Pekak</b>? Kolot amat sih! jangan minta dipanggil <b>pekak</b> dong! Kakek, gitu!" ujar cucunya yang sulung, sudah semester tiga di fakultas ekonomi. (AS)</i>	<p>a. They refused to call him '<b>Pekak</b>', the respected term for <b>grandfather</b>. "What? <b>Grandfather</b>? C'mon, get real! Don't expect us to say '<b>grandfather</b>' - 'Pa' will do!" said his oldest grandchild, who was in the third semester of study in the economics faculty. (JL)</p> <p>b. They wouldn't even call him <b>Grandpapa</b>. "What? <b>Grandpapa</b>? That's too old-fashioned! Don't expect us to call you <b>that!</b> <b>Gramps</b>"!l do," said the eldest, who was already in the third semester in the Faculty of Economics. (VC)</p>

In the data (17) above there are variations in the translation of each term. The call for **pekak** is compatible with **Pekak**, the respected terms for **grandfather**, **Grandfather**, **grandpapa**, **gramps**, and **that**. In example (17) cultural adaptation occurs. The kinship term **pekak** in Balinese culture fits ideally with the **grandfather** of text **a** and **grandpapa** in text **b** in English. The reason for that is that the equivalent is functional in the sense that both **grandfather** and **grandpapa** have the same impact on the target audience as the impact of the word **pekak** in Balinese culture. Even though **pekak** and its equivalents formally correspond and isomorphic (same as nouns) and have the same meaning (grandfather), there has been a shift in the meaning of a specific concept into a more generic concept if examined more closely. This is because in Balinese language and culture the term **grandfather** is distinguished by social status (**wangsa**) while in English language and culture it is not differentiated. The kinship term **pekak** is usually used among **non-triwangsa** (Balinese with the lowest social status) while in **the triwangsa** (Balinese included in three different social statuses) the term **kakiang** is used. In addition to cultural adaptation, the example in (17a) also shows a case of borrowing in which the word **pekak** in the source language is left in the target language accompanied by explanations: **Pekak**, the respected term for **grandfather**.

The kinship term in Balinese society is not only used to greet or mention family members or relatives but is also used to greet the second person (participant) or refer to another person (third) who is discussed according to his age and social status and personal closeness. Thus, **Pekak Landuh** does not mean that the speaker is always a grandson of his relatives, but it can mean a greeting for **non-triwangsa** parents who already have grandchildren. This case can be illustrated by the following data citation.

ST	TT
(18) <i>Dalam sisa hidupnya hanya ada satu keinginan <b>Pekak Landuh</b>: mati. (AS)</i>	a. <b>Old Landuh</b> wanted only one thing in what was left of his life: to die. (JL) b. In his later years, <b>Grandpa Landuh</b> had one obsession: how to die. (VC)
(19) <i><b>Pekak Landuh</b> selalu menggigil membayangkan dirinya mampus karena pikun, buta, dan kolot. (AS)</i>	a. <b>Old Landuh</b> shuddered to imagine himself dying senile, blind, bad-tempered (JL) b. <b>He</b> also hated the thought of dying demented, unable to see or speak. (VC)
(20) <i>Kalau <b>Pekak Landuh</b> nanti mati, biaya semestinya ditanggung tiga anaknya, lelaki semua. Namun <b>Pekak</b> ingin diaben dengan uangnya sendiri. (AS)</i>	Now, when <b>Old Landuh</b> was to die the cremation costs should rightly be borne by his three sons. However, <b>Old Landuh</b> wanted to be cremated using his own money. (JL)
(21) <i><b>Pekak Landuh</b> juga kurang suka pada cucu dari anaknya yang pertama ini. (AS)</i>	a. <b>Old Landuh</b> was also not particularly fond of the kids - his grandchildren either. (JL) b. <b>Grandpa Landuh</b> didn't care very much for this son's children. (VC)
(22) <i>Tatkala sedan itu hanya beberapa meter di sebelah kanannya, <b>Pekak</b> meloncat ke depan. (AS)</i>	a. When the car is just a few meters to his right, <b>he</b> leaps forward, (JL) b. When the car was just a few meters away to his right, <b>he</b> leapt forward and the car crashed into him (VC)

From the data above, it can be identified that there are three equivalence variations of *pekak (Landuh)*, namely **Old Landuh** as seen in examples (18a), (19a), (20), (21a), **Grandpa Landuh** in examples (18b) and (21b), and **he** in examples (19b), (22a), and (22b). Even though the translation of the word *old* in **Old Landuh** formally corresponds to (both in the form of phrases) in terms of the meaning of *Old Landuh* is ambiguous (the meaning of *pekak* in the source language is not fully correspond to the meaning of *old*. It is because *pekak* does not only refer to 'old' in age but also 'old' in terms of the status). The modifier 'old' can refer to age (old) while the word *pekak* does not have an explicit connotation of old age. The equivalence of **Pekak Landuh** shows the structural calque phenomenon, namely the retention of source language structures in the target language to formally facilitate the source text structure and target text are fully isomorphic. The third equivalent variation of **Pekak (Landuh)** shows the process of pronominalization (being the subject pronoun of *he*).

### C. Implications of Translation Strategies

The tension between preserving the meaning and translation form of meaning in cultural context shows three typologies namely (1) equivalent in meaning but the meaning itself is not in correspondence with the form, (2) equivalent translations but the meaning does not correspond due to different scope of meaning, and (3) zero or nil equivalent. Although a certain level of comparability can be achieved in the translation of source text into the target language, many findings indicate a formal shift thus the equivalent form does not correspond as in the following example:

ST	TT
(23) <i>Dulu, mati ditabrak di jalan raya memang aib besar. Peristiwa semacam itu disebut <b>mati salah pati</b>. (AS)</i>	It used to be that getting killed on the road was considered shameful and was called <b>a wrong kind of death, or salah pati, as the Balinese say.</b> (JL)

Example (23) above shows that even though there is a formal correspondence in the translation of noun phrase *mati salah pati* into the phrase **a wrong kind of death, or salah pati**, as the Balinese say, if studied more accurately there has been a shift in the internal structure of filler phrases. *Mati* in the phrase *mati salah pati* is a nucleus element in the phrase becoming non-nucleus (margin) in target phrase **a wrong kind of death**.

In the process of translating Indonesian into English, absolute equivalents are rarely achieved. Therefore, although the structure corresponds and the meaning is textually equivalent, when considered more closely, it is not uncommon to shift the meaning towards a broader or otherwise narrower field and different points of view as exemplified by the following data:

ST	TT
(24) <i><b>Pekak Landuh</b> selalu menggigil membayangkan dirinya mampus karena pikun, buta, dan kolot. (AS)</i>	<b>Old Landuh</b> shuddered to imagine himself dying senile, blind, bad-tempered. (JL)

Example (24) shows an equivalent that does not correspond from the angle of lexical meaning. In the case of the translation of **Pekak Landuh** into **Old Landuh**, there has been a narrowing of meaning, *pekak* (which only refers to men who already have grandchildren and does not have to be associated with old or young age) is equivalent to the word *old* which only refers to old age features.

In addition to having implications for the occurrence of equivalent translations, the form does not correspond, and the translation is commensurate, but the meaning does not correspond due to the different scope of meaning. The application of the translation strategy also results in zero or nil equivalent. The implications of the matching strategy that produces a zero or nil equivalent are seen in the following data.

ST	TT
(25) Dalam keadaan <i>cuntaka</i> yang berlangsung sampai jenazah di kubur, desa pantang melangsungkan upacara adat dan agama (AS)	During the period which last until the corpse is buried, the village is prohibited from carrying out any traditional or religious ceremonies (VC)

In the example (25) above the equivalent of the word *cuntaka* (the condition of Balinese Hindu in condolence), in the source text, does not appear in the target text. This is possible because the meaning of *cuntaka* has been exemplified in the target text included in the prohibited meaning.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the overall explanation above, it can be concluded that the source text contains quite a lot of representations of the meaning of the Balinese cultural context. The representation of meaning appears in the surface structure as words, phrases, terms, and expressions that are thick with the content of Balinese culture. These cultural words, phrases, terms, and expressions vary and appear in various universal cultural categories, explicitly (1) material culture, (2) social culture, (3) organization, customs, activities, and concepts, and (4) gesture and habits.

The process of translating the meaning of the cultural context applies a deculturalization strategy in two forms, namely pure deculturalization and blended deculturalization. Pure deculturalization is seen in literal translation which shows the occurrence of formal correspondence and meaning. Meanwhile, blended deculturalization can be perceived from the translation which uses more than one strategy and is still able to maintain the closeness of meaning even though there is no formal correspondence.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bell, R. T. (1991). *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. London: Longman.
- [2] Catford, J. G. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics*. London: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Cork, V. (1994). *Death by Misfortune*. Denpasar: Buku Arti.
- [4] Cork, V. (2008). *Ordeal by Fire*. Denpasar: Arti Foundation.
- [5] Hatim, B. & Mason, I. (1990). *Discourse and the Translator*. London: Longman.
- [6] James, S. P. (1980). *Participant Observation*. Florida: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
- [7] Larson, M. L. (1984). *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- [8] Larson, M. L. (1998). *Meaning-Based Translation: A Guide to Cross-Language Equivalence*. Maryland: University Press of America.
- [9] Liliweri, A. (2001). *Gatra-Gatra Komunikasi Antar Budaya*. Penerbit: Pustaka Pelajar Yogyakarta. [Aspects of Communication in Cultures: Publisher: Pustaka Pelajar Yogyakarta]
- [10] Lindsay, J. (2000). *The Wrong Kind of Death*. Jakarta: The Lontar Foundation.
- [11] Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice-Hall.
- [12] Nida, E. (1964) "Principles of Correspondence" in *The Translation Studies Reader*, edited by L. Venuti. New York: Routledge.
- [13] Nida, E. & Taber, C. (1974). *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- [14] Soethama, A. G. (1994). *Mati Salah Pati*. [Death by Misfortune. Denpasar: Buku Arti; The Wrong Kind of Death. Jakarta: The Lontar Foundation]
- [15] Soethama, A. G. (2006). *Mandi Api*. [Ordeal by Fire. Denpasar: Arti Foundation]



**Ni Wayan Sukarini** is a lecturer at the Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University. Her areas of interest include writing, translation, text analysis, and semiotics. Some of the publications are: Harmonization in Multicultural Community Life in International Journal of Current Science Research and Review ISSN: 2581-8341 Volume 05 Issue 01 January 2022; 2021. Figure of Speech: Its Role in Literary Works. Membership in TEFLIN (The Association for the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia) and MLI



**Ida Bagus Putra Yadnya** is a Professor in Linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University. His research interests are Linguistic and Translation. Some of his recent articles published in Scopus and international journals are Language and Social Identity: Language Choice and Language Attitude, Performative Speech Acts in the translation of Indonesian Legal Texts into English and The Translatability Indonesian Modality into English.



**Ida Ayu Made Puspani** was born in Marga Tabanan Bali Indonesia on September 16th 1962. She received her Dr. degree in linguistics from Udayana University in 2010. She is currently a lecturer at the English Department Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University. Her research interest includes translation, interpreting, and morphology. Some scientific articles are published in accredited journals namely: Balinese Suffixes *-an* and *-in* and Their Morphological Process, Court Interpreting at Denpasar Court, and Identifying Meaning Components in Translation of Medical Terms from English into Indonesian: A Semantics Approach. Dr. Ida Ayu Made Puspani is a member of HPI (Indonesian Translator Association and TEFLIN (Teacher of English Language in Indonesia)



**Ni Luh Ketut Mas Indrawati** was born at Tabanan, Bali, Indonesia, on October 10th 1959. She obtained her M.A degree from Sydney University in 1995, and her Dr. degree from Udayana University in 2012. She has been a lecturer at the English Department Faculty of Humanities, Udayana University since 1985. Her research interest includes syntax, translation, morphology, and TEFL. Some of her scientific articles are published in International and accredited journals entitled: Typological Perspective of the Balinese Serial Verb Constructions, Aspectual Verbs in Balinese, Manner Adjunct in English and the Implication in the Teaching EFL, and The Balinese SVCs and Their Equivalences in English.



# A Multimodal Ecological Discourse Analysis of Presentation PowerPoint Slides in Business English Class

Wenjin Qi

Yuncheng University, Yuncheng, China

Yutao Hu

Yuncheng University, Yuncheng, China

**Abstract**—This study applies the visual grammar theory to the multimodal ecological discourse analysis of the students' presentation PPT slides in business English class. It investigates the process of meaning construction through a quantitative analysis of 160 images and a thorough qualitative analysis of 2 specific images. The results reveal that students' ecological values embedded in PPT design are delivered via intersemiotic play of multimodal semiotic resources. And it is found that students' ecological values are in accordance with the ecosophy of "Diversity and Harmony, Interaction and Co-existence", which highlights the harmonious coexistence between man, society and nature.

**Index Terms**—multimodal ecological discourse analysis, visual grammar, ecosophy, business English

## I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the uncontrolled exploitation and employment of natural resources for rapid economic growth have caused various ecological problems such as environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources, endangerment of species and so on. From an ecological point of view, the conflict between humans and nature is increasingly intensifying, which threatens not only the ecology of nature but also the survival of humans themselves. In fact, ecological issues have become a main focus for all concerned parties. As ecological problems are becoming increasingly serious, and the key to ecological problems lies in the harmonious relationship between humans and others, humans and nature, and humans and other species. Consequently, in order to further address ecological problems, ecological linguistics researchers have shifted to focus on ecological studies, in which ecological discourse analysis has become a mainstream research lately. Therefore, ecolinguistics is an emerging field of study that has appeared in recent decades. Ecological discourse analysis highlights the impact of language in the ecosystem and ecological issues, aiming to demonstrate how discourse constructs the relationship between humans and the ecosystem and revealing the ecological values behind the discourse through discourse (Miao & Lei, 2019).

With the rapid advancement of technology, the invention and widespread use of computers, multimedia, and other Internet technologies, a tendency toward multimodality in human social communication activities has emerged. We live in a multimodal society, and with the advancement and widespread employment of modern science and technology, particularly multimedia, and other Internet technologies, there is also a multimodal trend in human social communication activities. Furthermore, images, colors, sounds, and other nonverbal resources could be seen in advertisements, posters, and news reports. In light of this, a growing number of linguists are beginning to pay attention to the impact of language on ecological and environmental issues. There are two recognized research models in ecolinguistics: the Haugen model and the Halliday model. On the one hand, the Halliday model emphasizes the function and influence of language to environmental conservation and the degradation of environmental problems. On the other hand, the Haugen model is concerned with the impact of environmental conditions on language ontology, particularly the endangerment of language and language variants (He & Liu, 2020).

Although the trend of multimodality has emerged long ago, little has been done in such areas as to combine multimodality with ecological discourse analysis. The majority of current studies are concerning on posters, news stories, and so on. However, there are few studies on multimodal ecological discourse analysis of PPT slide designed by students. Since PPT slides employ multimodal resources to construct meaning, they exhibit obvious multimodal characters. Therefore, it would shed some light on the relevant study from a new perspective in ecological discourse study. Since this research is concerned with the interaction between language and the environment, it applies the Halliday model as a theoretical framework for its investigation.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

As it is known to all that language plays a significant role in ecological protection and movement. Language exerts

influence on the environmental ecosystem by guiding people's awareness, attitudes, and behavior. In ecolinguistics, the two widely acknowledged research models are Haugen model and Halliday model. They both agreed on the relationship between language and society, while differ on the role of the agent in the process.

In view of the diversity of research subjects and the scope of research topics in ecolinguistics, scholars have begun to investigate ecolinguistics from many perspectives and with various research purposes, resulting in the emergence of several branches, such as positive discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis is a new branch of contemporary linguistic research. It was first proposed by British linguists Fowler et al. (1979) in their book *Language and Control*. It investigates the reflection of social inequalities in discourse through discourse analysis and seeks to gain insight into rights and ideologies through textual analysis, based on the theory of systemic functional linguistics. To address the drawbacks of critical discourse analysis, professor Martin (2006) proposed a positive discourse analysis. With the rise of positive and critical discourse analysis models, and the rapid expansion of the Internet and science and technology, discourse has been becoming multimodal, and naturally, some researchers have begun to investigate discourse analysis from a multimodal perspective.

Multimodal discourse analysis is a branch in ecological linguistics. It has been in full swing since the 1990s, and Barthes (1977) was the first researcher to examine the relationship between images and language in terms of expressive meaning. Halliday (1994) published the theory of systemic functional linguistics, which has had a significant impact on ecological discourse analysis. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) explored the relationship between modality and media, focusing on the phenomenon of meaning expressed by multimodal phenomena, including the role of visual images and various media. They also proposed the theory of Visual Grammar, which extends from the functional ideas of systemic functional linguistics to visual patterns and creates a grammatical framework for analyzing visual images. The grammatical framework includes three aspects, that is, representational meaning, interactive meaning, and compositional meaning. Lemke (1998) investigates the link between images and texts in scientific writings. O' Halloran (2019) not only studied the theoretical construct of multimodality, but also investigated the phenomenon of multimodality in mathematical discourse. Royce (1998) investigated the relationship between images and texts in advertising. Norris (2004) created her own multimodal analysis framework based on Scollon's (1999) MDT theory and applies it to examine building process of identity of two German women. Baldry and Thibault (2006) provided specific introduction to multimodal discourse transcription and analysis, including linguistic description, mapping, and how multimodal discourse analysis can be employed to aid teaching and learning in an electronic-learning environment.

With the increasing attention to the study of multimodal discourse in ecological perspective, China has also witnessed growing interest in multimodal research in recent years. Li (2003) introduces visual grammar theory and applies it to the analysis of multimodal discourse in Chinese contexts. Hu (2007) studied multimodal construction of meaning from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Gu (2007) proposed a framework of multimodal discourse analysis from the perspectives of media and communication to analyze the celebration rituals of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beijing. What's more, quite a few researchers have put multimodal discourse analysis theory into educational practices. For instances, Zhang (2009) suggests a comprehensive theoretical framework for foreign language teaching and Wei (2009) studied multimodal discourse from the perspective of image, mood, composition, color, and print layout. Besides, many scholars start to conduct multimodal discourse analysis on film posters. For example, Cheng (2008) investigated multimodal discourse analysis of film posters. Li (2007) investigated the multimodal meaning of static and moving pictures through an interactive multi-perspective examination of film thematic categories, characters, views, titles, and posters. In ecological aspect, several researchers have begun to combine multimodal discourse analysis with ecological discourses lately, covering government environment report and corporate social responsibility report.

However, there is still much room for them to develop theories suitable to Chinese contexts. It is discovered that few research has been conducted on the ecological practices in higher education institutes in the perspective of multimodal discourse analysis. Therefore, this study finds it highly necessary and significant to fill in the gap by exploring the ecological values embedded in the use of multimodal semiotic resources in PPT slides designed by business-English-major students. This study aims to touch the following two research questions:

- (1) What are the ecological values conveyed through students' Power Point slides?
- (2) What are the ways in which multimodal semiotic resources function in the process of meaning-making?

By analyzing the PowerPoint slides designed by sophomore business English majors in the one-year ecological education program, it explores the ways in which students make use of multimodal semiotic resources to convey their ecological values and ecosophy from the perspective of multimodal ecological discourse analysis.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Subjects

Guided by the ecosophy of "Diversity and Harmony, Interaction and Co-existence", this research applies the visual grammar theory to the multimodal ecological discourse analysis of the PPT slides designed by business English students of class 2005 and 2006. It investigates the process of meaning construction of 160 selected images through a quantitative analysis of their representational meaning and a detailed qualitative analysis of 2 specific images.

### B. Instrument

Multimodal discourse analysis is based on Halliday's systemic functional theory of language, which identifies three fundamental meta-functions of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions (Halliday, 1994). The ideational function is defined as the function of expressing the speaker's personal experience and inner activity; the interpersonal function is defined as the function of expressing the speaker's identity, status, attitude, motivation, and his inferences, judgments, and evaluations of things; and the textual function is defined as the function of forming sentences, organizing, and conveying information. The textual function relates to the role of language in the construction of sentences, the organization of information, and the transmission of information (Hu et al., 2005). In the 1990s, multimodal discourse analysis theory emerged in the West. Additionally, Kress & van Leeuwen, two prominent representatives of this theory, maintained that images and language have certain commonalities, that is to say, they are both symbolic systems expressing social meanings. Derived from the systemic functional theory, they developed Visual Grammar theory to analyze the process of meaning making in images in three aspects: representational meaning, interactive meaning, and compositional meaning (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

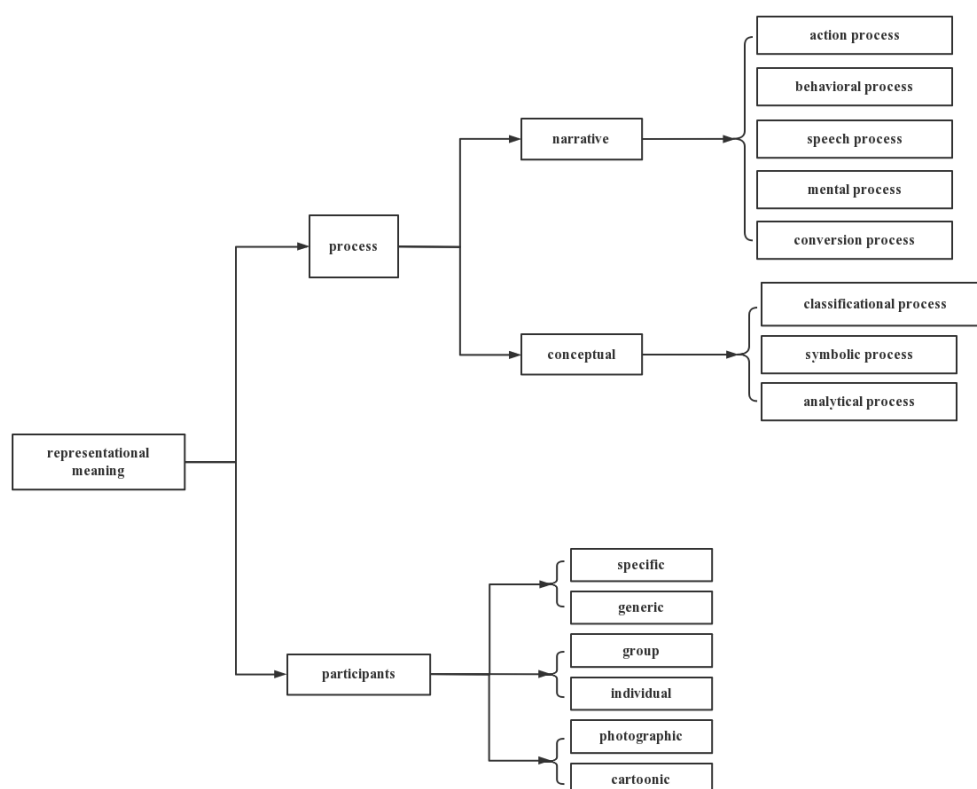


Figure 1. Analytical Framework

Based on Guo and Feng's (2015) framework, the study adopted a modified framework (Figure 1) to further categorize narrative and conceptual processes.

Firstly, the representational meaning corresponds to the ideational function in systemic functional grammar (Halliday, 1994). The representational meaning refers to the ability of any symbolic modality to reproduce an objective thing and its relationship to the outside world. The representational meaning can be divided into two categories: narrative representation and conceptual representation. Narrative representation reflects the relationship between participants through their interactions, which include action process, reactional process, speech process, mental process and conversion process. Conceptual representation, on the other hand, shows the relationships between participants through attributes, categories, and characteristics. Furthermore, it can be classified as classificational process, analytical process, or symbolic process. In a narrative image, elements in the image producing diagonal lines are thus defined as vectors (Li, 2003).

Secondly, in addition to recreating the interactions between people and objects, images can also establish a special relationship between the viewer and the image, thus the interactive meaning. It relates to the interpersonal function of the three meta-functions in systemic functional theory. Interactive meaning refers to the relationship between the picture maker, the viewer and the numerous modalities in the image that interact with each other. It could be divided into four dimensions: contact, social distance, perspective, and modality.

Thirdly, social distance refers to the closeness and distance of the image framing shot and typically symbolizes the

social proximity between the image and the audience. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) mainly distinguish three types of social distance: close-up, medium shot and long shot. And Li (2003) divides distances into six categories: intimate distance (shows only the face and head); personal close distance (which shows the head and shoulders); personal distance (which shows the part above the waist); social close distance (which shows the whole person); social distance (which shows the whole person and the surrounding space); and public distance (which shows the whole body of more than four people).

Fourthly, the term perspective is commonly employed in images to express the viewer's attitude toward the image's participants. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) divide perspective into two categories: horizontal and vertical. Horizontal perspectives are divided into frontal and oblique perspectives. On the one hand, the former is warm to the observer. Instead, the latter is cold to the observer, implying that the viewer is distant from the image and warned that the viewer does not belong in the image world. The vertical viewpoint emphasizes the equality of rights and status between the image's participant and viewer (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006). Modality, which is widely employed in images, refers to the degree of honesty of the statements people make about the world they are interested in. What's more, like functional linguistics, modality has been classified into three levels: high, medium, and low.

Finally, compositional meaning represents the entire form of multimodal discourse, which correlates to Halliday's meta-function's textual function. Compositional meaning indicates that the viewer of the image focuses on the space structure of the dynamic model, it establishes the overall tone and aids the evaluation of the global compositional mind (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Compositional representation can be divided into three basic components: information value, salience, and framing.

This study investigates selected images from PPT slides through a multimodal discourse analysis. It analyzes multiple modes salient in the images for the embedded meanings in the ecological context.

### C. Procedure

As discourse analysis can be conducted in quantitative or qualitative analysis (Huang, 2018), this study conducts mixed methods to investigate the ecological values embedded in the discourse in a more comprehensive and profound way. In other words, this study applies the Visual Grammar framework to conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis of the selected images. First, by statistically classifying the representational meanings of the images, it reveals the implicit ecological values salient in the visual images. Then, by a complete visual analysis of the two selected representative images, it discloses the interplay of multimodal affordances of the images and interprets the embedded ecological values.

Given that this research involves the classificational of ecosystems, the ecosystem network proposed by He & Liu (2020) was simplified to an ecosystem network suitable for this study. It divides the primary ecosystem into four categories: terrestrial ecosystems, water ecosystems, physical ecosystems, and conceptual ecosystems. Images on deforestation, soil erosion, and dust storms are classified as terrestrial ecosystems; images of marine ecosystems, up-welling ecosystems, and lake ecosystems are classified as water ecosystems. Furthermore, images of industrial ecosystems, inhabitant ecosystems, and transport ecosystems, (such as images of white pollution, business trips, industrial pollution, paperless workplaces, etc.) belong to physical ecosystems. Finally, ethical ecosystem images belong to the conceptual ecosystems. What's more, conceptual ecosystem also covers images of the environmental impact of corporation expanding site.

By categorizing the images, 160 images were ultimately selected as the research sample. In the process of defining representational meanings, two types of processes are mentioned: narrative process and conceptual process. Moreover, narrative process could further be divided into four types: action process, reactional process, speech process, and mental process, whereas conceptual process consists of three types: classificational process, analytical process, and symbolic process.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A number of images of various ecosystem kinds and their percentages across the four primary ecosystems can be employed to highlight the ecological issues presented throughout the Power Point slide. Simultaneously, from quantitative perspective, representational meaning of the visual images contributes to and reinforces the ecological issues presented by the four major ecosystems in the PPT slides.

### A. Quantitative Analysis

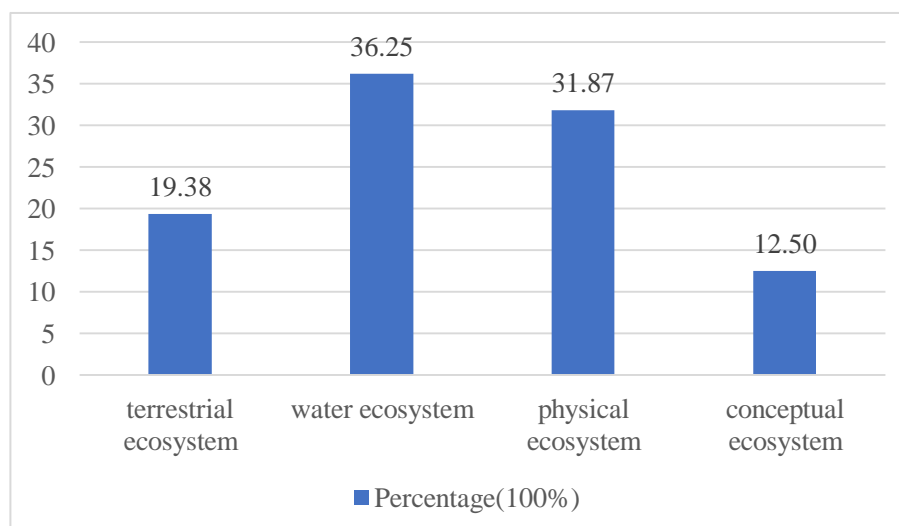


Figure 2. Image Distribution Across Four Types Of Ecosystems

The number of images belonging to four types of major ecosystems is calculated respectively, and the percentage for each type of ecosystem is distributed as shown in Figure 2.

The images of terrestrial ecosystems, ranging from land desertification to deforestation, account for only 19.38%. Water ecosystems account for 36.25 % of all ecosystems, approximately doubling the total number of terrestrial ecosystems. It is also the largest and most important component among the all ecosystems, including images of marine pollution, lake pollution, acid rain, and the ozone layer hole. The physical ecosystem is the second largest of the four ecosystems with 51 images, accounting for 31.87%, just below the water ecosystem and very close to the amount of images of water ecosystem. It covers images of white pollution, industrial pollution, and ecological business travels. The conceptual ecosystem has the smallest percentage within the four ecosystems (12.5%), and it incorporates images of corporate expansion and eco-marketing.

The study found that the sample focus more on images of water ecosystems, highlighting the severity of pollution in the ocean, and calling on humans to care for the ocean, protect marine life and reduce emissions of air pollution gases. In addition, it found that there are only 58 images of water ecosystems, while images of upwelling ecosystems are 34, such as images of acid rain and the ozone layer hole, nearly half of the total number of water ecosystems. In addition, as can be seen from the graph above, images of industrial ecosystems and transport ecosystems play an important role in the construction of the ecological theme of the PPT, such as images of business travel and industrial pollution. What's more, it can be evidenced by the second largest proportion of physical ecosystems in the graph above. The images of the four ecosystems consist of the most important part of the PPT. The water ecosystem represents largest proportion among four ecosystems, highlighting the seriousness of the pollution of water ecosystems in real life, where water is the life resource and water ecosystems are closely related to human life.

In Visual Grammar, images are categorized according to their representational meanings. Table 1 illustrates the findings of the examination of the representational meanings of all images and the categorization of those images according to narrative processes, conceptual processes, and participants.

TABLE 1  
PROCESS AND PARTICIPANT TYPES ACROSS ECOSYSTEMS

representational processes	process types	terrestrial ecosystem (N=31) (%)	water ecosystem (N=58) (%)	physical ecosystem (N=51) (%)	conceptual ecosystem (N=20) (%)
narrative process	action process	29.03	12.07	43.14	60.00
	reactional process	3.23	0.00	0.00	0.00
	speech process	3.23	0.00	0.00	5.00
conceptual process	classificational process	0.00	1.72	1.96	5.00
	analytical process	61.29	58.62	49.02	30.00
	symbolic process	3.23	5.17	5.88	0.00
	generic	22.58	6.90	25.49	20.00
	specific	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.00
participants	individual	9.68	1.72	17.65	20.00
	group	9.68	5.17	11.76	5.00
	cartoonic	25.81	39.66	11.76	50.00
	photographic	19.35	6.90	29.41	25

Firstly, terrestrial ecosystems take up a limited number of pictures, of which conceptual processes occupy more than

half (64.52%) and narrative processes for slightly more than half of conceptual processes (35.49%). Within the conceptual process, images of analytical process take up the largest proportion of 61.29%, followed by those of the symbolic process (3.23%).

Compared to other types of ecosystems, the proportion of images of action processes is smaller in terrestrial ecosystems (29.03%). On the one hand, this is undoubtedly for the simple reason that this type of image is more descriptive or informative to demonstrate terrestrial ecosystems. On the other hand, unlike water and physical ecosystems, water is essential for human survival and cars are a means of transport, they are closely linked to human life and therefore there is more destruction due to human activity. Meanwhile, environmental degradation in a way affects human living and activities, hence there tend to be more images about water and physical ecosystems than of terrestrial ecosystems.

Analytical processes account for 61.29% of all images, including land desertification and soil erosion. Among these, the analytical process, which mostly presents images without participants, aims to give the viewer a powerful visual impact and to stimulate awareness of the rational use and conservation of the land. In summary, it seeks to remind humanity to strengthen ecological civilization in the midst of rapid modern economic progress, highlighting the idea of the General Secretary's thought that lucid water and lush mountains are invaluable assets.

Pictures of the symbolic process are the second most under the category of the conceptual process (3.23%). It consists primarily of the image of the Earth sweating, which people will associate with the hole in the ozone layer caused by excessive greenhouse gas emissions and the eventual rise in Earth's temperature. This image has a clear symbolic meaning, so it is classified as a symbolic process within the category of conceptual processes.

Secondly, water ecosystems comprise of a larger portion (58.62%) of the analytical process, including images of harmful gases such as sulphur dioxide emissions from chimneys and air pollution from car emissions, acid rain corroding sculptures and trees, lake pollution by industrial effluents, and marine pollution. Moreover, the majority of these images are presented without participants. However, cartoon characters occupy a larger proportion (39.66%) of the images with participants, while only 6.9 percent of the participants are photographic figures. Due to destructive impact on water ecosystems and lack of environmental awareness, this type of image is devoted to the image of cartoon characters to arouse the public awareness.

Thirdly, physical ecosystems account for a significant percentage of the action process (43.14%), it covers images of paperless offices and green travel with participants. It attempts to describe individuals as ecological agents who contribute to the environmental development. The analytical process takes up a large share (49.02%) compared with the action process, including images of white pollution, paperless workplace and green travel. It shows that humans pay attention to develop a green ecological environment. The majority participants in the images are real-life people (29.41%), reflecting the high level of participation in greening protection and highlighting human's efforts to achieve green changes through low-carbon travel and paperless offices, demonstrating their sense of social responsibility and ecological conservation.

Finally, under the narrative representational processes, pictures of action process of the conceptual ecosystem occupy more than half (60%), among which the number of eco-marketing images is very large, such as those images of eco-farms and protecting the planet. These images show human's efforts in order to build a green earth. Of the participants, 50% participants appeared as cartoon characters, while 25 % were people in real life, reflecting the fact that the idea of eco-marketing has not yet penetrated people's minds in a wide sense. In addition, only 5% of the participants were in groups, while more participants appeared as individuals (20%). It reveals that people are not yet aware of the enormous energy generated by promoting eco-marketing in a collective way, but instead emphasizing on the power of the individual.

### *B. Qualitative Analysis*

Two images are analyzed in details from the perspective of visual discourse analysis. Figures 3 and 4 are from images of green travel and urban ecological civilization in conceptual habitats. They represent major ecosystems: conceptual ecosystems, terrestrial conceptual systems, and water ecosystems. Hence, the selected images represent key features of the entire data.



Figure 3. Business Travel Image

Figure 3 is a narrative representation of the conceptual ecosystem. The image has a blue-greenish background, and the hand on the right is holding a modern city, with green trees, tall buildings, green sports car, and sunflowers blossoming towards the sun, all depicting a relationship of harmony and co-existence between human and nature.

In terms of interactive meaning, the absence of eye contact could be interpreted in the way that the designer intends to provide the viewer a more comprehensive and objective perspective into the ecological relationship between man and nature. Hence, it is concerned with transmitting information to the viewer, thus it is an offer image (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). These single elements compose a modern landscape in which man and nature coexist in harmony. The palm of the hand, the hot air balloon, and the rising skyscrapers are in the foreground, while the blue sky, white clouds, and green grass are in the background. Furthermore, the former belongs to the social ecosystem and the latter belongs to the natural ecosystem. It indicates that natural ecosystem is the foundation of the social ecosystem and the social ecosystem is the development of the natural ecosystem. Despite their distinctions, the two ecosystems are closely related and complementary to each other (He & Liu, 2020). The image as a whole conveys the notion that in a modern city, man and nature coexist in peace, and that man should respect and protect nature.



Figure 4. Eco-Marketing Image

The image is chosen from a conceptual ecosystem and analyzed in terms of representational meaning, with the visual features in the image reflecting the process of behavior in narrative representation. The image depicts people in a circle, with the giant Earth in the center, numerous individuals playing with a roller on top of the large Earth, and a small Earth above the large Earth, held by four people with their hands.

The human beings protecting the Earth in the image are shown in cartoonish characters, implying that the participants have equal rights regardless of their races and nationalities. All act together to protect the Earth. It reinforces the idea that ecological protection has no borders and all human being share a common life. It also depicts a future of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, where every individual is under duty and responsibility as promoter and practitioner in ecological protection.

In the perspective of information value and salience, the slogan "Protect our Earth" is designed in an obvious way to attract the viewer. In other words, this high degree of salience can quickly draw the viewer's attention to the theme of the image. A green heart is place as the background in the image, and the actions and behaviors are place as the foreground, highlighting the harmonious co-existence between man and man, man and nature, and man and society (He &



Wei, 2018).

### C. Findings and Discussion

Stibbe (2015) grouped ecological discourses into three categories: beneficial discourses, ambivalent discourses, and destructive discourses. By analyzing the representational meanings of the images, it is discovered that these images show multiple processes in the representational meanings.

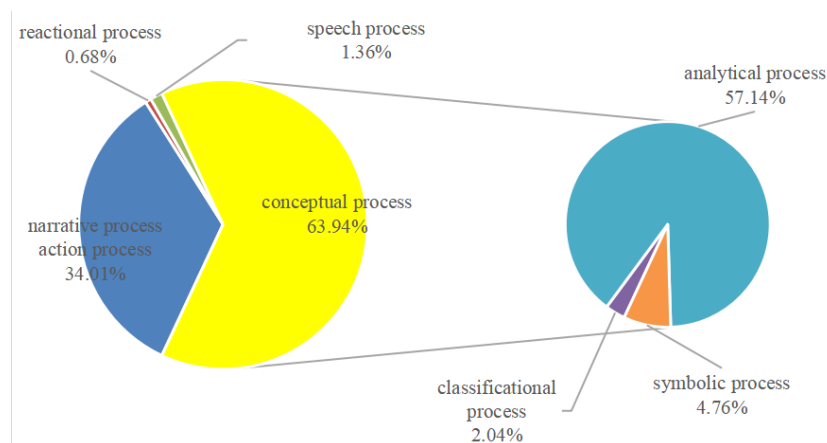


Figure 5. Process Types of Images

As shown in the figure, all images are classified into two categories of processes: narrative processes and conceptual processes. Images of conceptual processes take up for the majority (63.94%), while images of narrative processes account for a substantially lower proportion (36.05%). There are some images representing conceptual process, such as white pollution, marine pollution, air pollution, land desertification, corporate expansion, and eco-marketing. These images are used to depict ecological problems in the conceptual process. However, narrative processes depict people as doing and happening (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). This kind of process depicts the acts of the participants in order to influence the observer and raise awareness of the importance of environmental conservation. This is due to the fact that beneficial discourse influences and guides people consciously and unconsciously. Another essential point is made through action process of tree-planting that positive ecological values towards are recommended in narrative representation.

In the narrative process, images of action processes account for a larger proportion (34.01%), including images of deforestation, plantation and conservation of resources, while images of verbal processes account for only 1.36 % and reaction processes take up for an even smaller proportion (0.68%). It reflects the fact that images convey information less through words and eye contact and more through action processes, primarily because actual actions are far more powerful and resonant than words and eye contact.

Furthermore, images of conceptual processes primarily include those non-participant types, such as white pollution, land desertification, corporate social responsibility, sand city storms, paperless offices, and business travel. Images of analytical process dominate proportionally (57.14%) over those of classificational process (2.04%) and even those of symbolic process (4.76%). This is due to the fact that the ecological problems depicted in the analytical process images, such as white pollution, ocean pollution, and dust storms, are extremely serious and are caused by the human's uncontrolled consumption of natural resources in daily lives, and thus the majority of the images use analytical process images. Therefore, it constitutes destructive discourse from an ecological viewpoint.

And in conceptual process, those images of the hole in the ozone layer are attributed to the classificational process. It reflects that people do not pay sufficient attention to air protection and their lack of green awareness leads to car exhaust and industrial waste gases directly into the air, eventually causing the hole in ozone layer. From an ecological standpoint, this is an ecologically destructive discourse. Images classified as symbolic process carry such ecological values as saving and protecting water with their hands. It calls on people to cherish natural resources, and engage in ecological conservation practices. Inevitably, these images belong to ecologically beneficial discourses.

The two images discussed above have been analyzed in the theory of visual grammar, with each meaning covering distinct modality. The representational meaning highlights the meaning of the whole image through the action process of narrative process, the interactive meaning conveys the meaning of the image in terms of contact, social distance and perspective, while the compositional meaning presents the meaning of the image in terms of both information value and salience. Each image covers different aspects of the three major meanings and is a comprehensive representation of the process of generating the three major meaning processes. They interplay with one another and complement each other to make meanings visually.

Figure 3 depicts a modern society of harmonious co-existence between people, society and nature through the use of representational, interactive, and compositional meaning processes. It aims to construct an ecological civilization where human beings are responsible ecological agents. Figure 4 shows representational and compositional meaning through



the actions of the participants and the operation of the visual elements. It confirms that fact that collective power of a large group is enormous, calling on all mankind to join hands to build a community of life on Earth and a green Earth. They tell visual stories so as to rebuild a better environment after the destruction of the natural ecosystem, and meanwhile profoundly highlight that mankind is an indispensable and key participant in the process of constructing an ecological civilization. Ecological problems can only be resolved when all human races around the world act together.

## V. CONCLUSION

Visual Grammar is utilized as a theoretical framework in this research to quantitatively analyze the three primary meaning processes in the context of ecological education. The quantity of images and the proportional distribution of process types of these images in the quantitative analysis assist to reveal ecological issues and convey ecological values of environmental protection. The qualitative analysis of two images demonstrates the ecosophy of “Diversity and Harmony, and Interaction and Co-existence” among human, nature, and society. Besides, they emphasize the significant role of human beings in the restructuring of nature and the importance of building an ecological civilization in modern cities.

To begin with, analysis of the images about ecology reveals that students primarily occupies action processes, analytical processes, and cartoon characters to convey positive ecological values about protecting oceans and forests, cherishing fresh water resources, traveling green, and working to solve global ecological problems. What’s more, the research found that fewer students employ speech processes, reactional processes, and symbolic processes. A large number of analytical processes in the images demonstrate the severity of environmental pollution, such as soil erosion, deforestation, white pollution, and air pollution. It is aiming to call for people to work together to protect the environment and contribute to the development of an ecological civilization. Furthermore, many of the actions shown in the images demonstrate that individuals and the Earth are a global community of life. People from all over the world should work together to build a community with shared future for all life on Earth regardless of race or national boundaries. In fact, it can be seen that participants within images include cartoon participants, showcasing that it is a general and broad sense for human to participate in the movement of environmental protection before everyone grows to be “an ecological man”.

In addition, the analysis implies that there exists a smaller proportion of speech processes, classificational processes, and symbolic process. The speech process is less effective than the action process, and physical action is more convincing than verbal persuasion. The classificational and symbolic processes do not show a distinct symbolic or classificational character in most of the images, as a consequence, there are fewer images of the classificational and symbolic processes.

However, this study still displays certain limitations, which could also be the research directions for future study. First, due to time and energy constraints, this study narrowed the sample size down to 160 images in total, while a larger sample size would produce a more comprehensive and substantial understanding of the mechanism of meaning-making processes. Second, the research covers merely the visual resources in static images, while neglecting the audio resources (music, sound) and animations in moving images (video). Hence, it is highly suggested that future research could expand relevant study by including dynamic modes such as video and audio as well as static modes such as images and text contained in the sample PPT slide for a multi-dimensional, more comprehensive, and insightful analysis. Moreover, interdisciplinary research would enrich multimodal study with innovative perspectives other than linguistics. And this study would serve as an example for cross-disciplinary studies in various contexts.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Hu Yutao who has made fundamental contributions to the research. This research would have been impossible to carry out without her full devotion. Also this work is supported by grants from Shanxi Federation of Social Sciences (SXSXL2021SX0070); Shanxi Province Philosophy and Social Science Planning Project (2021YY055); and the Teaching Reform and Innovation Project in Yuncheng University (JG202115).

## REFERENCES

- [1] Baldry, A. & P. J. (2006). *Multimodal transcription and text analysis*. London: Equinox.
- [2] Barthes, R. (1977). *Image-music-text*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- [3] Cheng, C. S. (2008). Multimodal discourse analysis of movie posters. *Movie Literature Studies* 15.2, 34-39.
- [4] Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G. & T. Trew. (1979). *Language and control*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Gu, Y. G. (2007). Multimedia, multimodal learning. *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education* 23.2, 3-12.
- [6] Halliday, M. A. (1994). *Language as social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning*. Baltimore: University Park Press.
- [7] He, W. & Liu, J. H. (2020). Ecosophy construction and development. *Shandong Foreign Language Education* 41.1, 12-24.
- [8] He, W. & Wei, R. (2018). Ecosophy in international ecological discourse. *Foreign Language Research* 24.6, 28-35.
- [9] Hu, Z. L. (2007). Multimodality in social semiotic studies. *Language Teaching and Research* 26.1, 1-10.
- [10] Huang, G. W. (2018). From ecological critical discourse analysis to harmonious discourse analysis. *Foreign Languages in China* 22.4, 39-46.

- [11] Kress, G. & T. van Leeuwen. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. London: Routledge.
- [12] Lemke, J. Multiplying meaning: Visual and verbal semiotics in scientific text. In J.R. Martin & R. Veel (eds.), *Reading science: Critical and functional perspectives on discourses of science*. London/New York: Routledge.
- [13] Li, M. Q. (2007). Multimodal discourse analysis of movie posters. *Movie Literature* 12. 15, 98-100.
- [14] Li, Z. Z. (2003). Social semiotic analysis of multimodal discourse. *Foreign Language Studies* 81.5, 1-8.
- [15] Martin, J. R. (2006). Positive discourse analysis: Solidarity and change. *The Journal of English Studies* 25.1, 65–81.
- [16] Miao, X. W. & Lei, L. (2019). Ecological discourse analysis in SFL. *Shandong Foreign Language Education* 22. 5, 28-33.
- [17] O' Halloran. (2019). Interdependence, interaction and metaphor in multi-semiotic texts. *Social Semiotics* 44.3, 261–275.
- [18] Scollon, R. (1999). *Mediated discourse as social interaction*. London: Longman.
- [19] Wei, Q. H. (2009). *Multimodality and multimodal discourse analysis*. Beijing: Science Press.
- [20] Zhang, D. L. (2009). Multimodal theory applied to multimedia foreign language education. *Foreign Language Studies* 30.4, 15-20.

**Wenjin Qi** is currently a lecturer at Yuncheng University (China). Her research interests include English language learning and teaching, and discourse analysis.

**Yutao Hu** is an undergraduate student from Foreign Languages Department in Yuncheng University (China). Her research interest lies in discourse analysis.

# Enhancing EFL Learners' Verbal Communication Engagement Through WhatsApp Chat Group's Voice Messages Using Referential and Display Questions

Amir Abdalla Minalla

Department of Languages and Translation, Faculty of Education and Arts, University College of Tayma, University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—Despite significant attempts to raise verbal communicative skills in the Arab world, the verbal production of English-language EFL learners still falls short of expectations. By employing display and referential questions to start a conversation in WhatsApp chat groups, this study aims to expand verbal communication outside of academic settings. The participants in two WhatsApp chat groups (Groups "A" and "B") using voice messages were exposed to the same learning material as part of an integrated activity for the traditional classroom. On the basis of the various question types used by each group, the performance of the two groups was then statistically assessed. Comparing the verbal responses of group (A) using display questions to group (B) using referential questions, the data revealed a considerable improvement. It is clear that EFL beginners interact more naturally with question types about which they already have information or experience. In contrast to asking referential questions, the display question format verbally encouraged EFL beginners to participate. Because the traditional EFL classroom is no longer appropriate for providing enough opportunities for EFL learners' verbal interaction, using display questions on WhatsApp chat groups through voice messages can be advised as an effective technique to improve EFL beginners' verbal interactions outside of classroom contexts.

**Index Terms**—verbal interaction, referential, display, chat group, voice messages

## I. INTRODUCTION

By speaking up in class, participating in conversations, and asking and answering questions, students are interacting verbally with one another. It has been noticed that the standards of EFL learners' verbal competence were obviously declining in the 21st century in spite of the updated reforms, facilities, and the availability of multi-channels of learning. Whereas, the need for developing verbal communicative competence in the English language has increasingly become a universal demand particularly in the Arab world. In fact, enormous efforts have been exerted to establish integration between national experiences with better international ones to improve unsatisfactory situations, however, EFL learners' verbal performance is still inadequate. EFL Classrooms are still exploring appropriate techniques to stimulate EFL learners to involve in the verbal classroom interaction although these classrooms follow the communicative learning program system. Additionally, EFL learners are demotivated and not interested in taking part in the verbal interactions. The questions are one of the most important techniques for developing classroom interaction. However, many factors impede verbal interactions within classroom contexts and limit their opportunities. For example, these reasons can be summarized as follows: Lack of participation opportunities due to the high number of students in a language classroom, uncontrollable nervousness while speaking in front of peers, time limits, lack of EFL learners' desire in participating in verbal acts. The most difficult thing for EFL teachers to do is establish verbal engagement outside of the setting of the classroom, notwithstanding the difficulties with it inside. Establishing a platform to improve EFL learners' verbal engagement outside of the classroom becomes required due to the lack of time provided for language activities inside the classroom and for the other reasons indicated above. Consequently, it is crucial to close the gaps in verbal language usage. Thus, among young EFL users recently, notably university students, communication via mobile messaging services like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp has grown in popularity. With WhatsApp's popularity rising, more options for engagement and teamwork between teachers and students are emerging, notably in language learning due to a good WhatsApp's chat group properties. The chat group feature can be modified to achieve extensive interactive collaborative learning outside of the confines of the classroom. Making chat groups on WhatsApp, a new mobile platform for verbal communication, can help EFL students use WhatsApp to its fullest extent outside of the classroom because it is accessible to nearly everyone and smart phones are becoming more and more prevalent. In addition, the WhatsApp app provides a chatroom for each group (each with a number of members) with tools that facilitate verbal communication. For example, group members can hold a discussion in the chatroom by recording voice or video for one another. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of display or referential

questions in boosting verbal communication via voice messages in WhatsApp's chat group. The major objective of this study is to identify a suitable verbal communication platform for extending EFL learners' participation outside of the classroom using referential and display questions in WhatsApp's chat group. More precisely, it intends to increase verbal engagement outside of the classroom by analyzing the effects of referential and display questions that were previously voiced in WhatsApp chat group messages. Thus, the study intends to answer what is the most effective question type (referential or display question) for enhancing verbal interaction through voice messages on WhatsApp's chat group?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Verbal Classroom Interaction

Verbal classroom interaction is considered one of the core principles of contemporary approaches to instructed language learning (Ellis, 2014, cited in Tuan & Nhu, 2010). The fact that students are allowed to do the majority of the talking is the most crucial component of any good language learning environment. Creating interactive learning in an EFL classroom constitutes one of the most important keys for using English for communicative purposes. A classroom in a foreign language setting is the only place that is intentionally designed for EFL learners to use language communicatively. Unfortunately, most EFL students remain silent in class and are reluctant to engage in conversation (Zohrabi et al., 2014). In this respect, the teacher plays a vital role in stimulating students to participate actively (Arifin, 2012).

### B. Classroom Interaction Questions

Teachers' questions constitute a primary means of engaging learners' attention, promoting verbal responses, and evaluating learners' progress. Farahian and Rezaee (2012) state that the reason for the learners' silence or reluctance to participate might have been due to the ineffective questioning technique. Questioning is, by far, the most common communication strategy used in teaching. Questioning is the major factor leading to teaching-learning situations in both content classes devoted to teaching science, math, etc., and language classes (Gall, 1986; Nunan, 1991). According to Long and Porter (1984), questioning helps to activate the teacher-learner interaction and ensure that all students participate in their learning. Long and Sato (1983) suggested two questioning techniques for the teacher in EFL classrooms: "referential" and "display" questions that are identified in the following section.

### C. Display and Referential Questions

A display question is one in which the person asking the question (the teacher) already knows the answer and calls on students to demonstrate their understanding, according to Nunan (1989) and Long and Sato (1983). This kind of question is asked for comprehension checks, confirmation checks, or clarification requests. Examples of display questions, such as: what is the opposite of "cheap"?, what does this paragraph say? , and what's the meaning of "fan"?. Consequently, display questions are employed as a tool to assess the knowledge of an addressee regarding a specific linguistic issue (Ellis, 1992). Because display questions produce different linguistic elements from regular discourse, they are not advised to enhance classroom involvement.

Referential inquiries are those whose answers the asker (teacher) is unaware of, according to Brock (1986) and Long and Sato (1983). This means that it could lead to social dialogue. It is utilized when the teacher wants to improve students' speaking skills and create a social-like environment in the classroom, rather than assessing the students' knowledge. In order to ensure that learners have legitimate communicative goals, they are obliged to provide interpretations and judgments in response to these inquiries.

Open and closed referential questions are the two varieties of referential inquiries. Examples of open referential questions include: what are your interests?, how did you meet your close friend, and what do you think of their new instructor. Examples of closed-referential questions are: are you teacher?, what's your name?, and what's your job?.

### D. Related Studies

It is important to note that the evaluated research studies that follow are case studies that frequently try to analyze the role of instructor question types on classroom interaction in English classroom learning. According to studies, display questions are typically employed in EFL courses for students with low thinking levels, whereas referential questions require distinct information from the students and elicit a different response from them. The following succinct summary is taken from the review of these studies:

- The main objective of Menyani and Merabti's study, according to their statement in (2020), is to explore and analyze teachers' perceptions on how question-asking affects interaction in EFL classrooms. It demonstrates how teachers' appreciation of the benefits of both display and referential questions supports students' learning. However, concentrating on referential queries promotes in-class participation from students. It improves student participation, critical thinking, and comprehension, which contributes to the success of the teaching and learning process.

- According to Aprina and Andriyanti (2020), the purpose of the current study was to examine how instructor question styles affected student engagement in English classes.

The findings indicate that both display and referential questions were utilized by the teachers, with display questions being used more frequently overall. Both, however, are crucial for EFL students. Based on display questions and referential questions about the levels of the students, the goal of the class, and the students' learning strategies, the use of both question kinds can be modified.

-According to Omari's (2018) study, which sought to examine the kinds of questions Jordanian English language teachers ask in the classroom.

According to the findings, 86% of the teachers' questions were display questions, 77% of them were closed-ended, and 80% were on low thinking levels.

The findings also showed that at the upper basic stage and secondary stage, teachers employed more open-ended questions, more referential questions, and higher-order thinking questions. At each grade level, it was advised that EFL instructors in Jordan ask several questions.

-The study conducted by Wright (2016) that looks at display and referential questions in an EFL communicative classroom context. The findings of this study indicate that the use of referential questions in a communicative task may push students to engage more in negotiation and give lengthier and more complex responses than display questions.

-Bozorgian and Fallah (2017) made an effort to investigate the impact of asking referential questions on the quantity of words produced by lower intermediate EFL learners and the time spent discussing various themes. The findings show that: (i) asking referential questions boosted the learners' talk time and word production, which improved their speaking ability; and (ii) the experimental group's students talked longer and used more words than the control group's students. The amount of speaking time and student participation thus rose significantly, and teachers may now utilize more referential questions to enhance the learners' conversational skills and foster their motivation in learning the English language, particularly in speaking. It implies that using more referential questions in the classroom improves students' speaking fluency.

- Ghabani (2010), the study suggested, rather obliquely, that readers' level of processing rises as they progress from display questions to referential and inferential ones. Both the control and experimental groups fared remarkably well when answering display questions compared to how they did on the other two types of questions, as seen by the descriptive statistics for both groups.

The following research' shared findings supported the need to use both display and referential questions for classroom interaction. The findings indicate that different levels of use depend on one type more than another depending on a variety of significant factors, including the academic levels of the students, the learning objectives, the teaching methods used by the teachers, etc. In a communicative activity, referential questions are used to lengthen talk time and increase the quantity of words learners create, so enhancing their speaking skill. While showcase questions are frequently used, especially with students who have low thinking skills, to assess students' mastery of a particular subject, they are not advised to enhance classroom interaction because they produce different linguistic elements from everyday speech. As a result, rather of being defined by the question type's inherent characteristics, the effectiveness of the question type is determined by the goal meant to be served in the learning contexts.

### III. THE STUDY

#### A. Background

This study was conducted based on the results shown in the study conducted by Minalla (2018), which was mainly aimed at enhancing verbal interaction outside classroom contexts through utilizing WhatsApp chat groups via voice messages. The result that the current study depends on is that using voice messages on WhatsApp is an effective technique to enhance verbal interaction outside classroom contexts.

#### B. Participants

The participants of this study are Saudi Arab first-year university students who are almost the same age as well as having the same background knowledge of English as beginners. In particular, they are students at the University of Tabuk, Tayma branch in the first semester of the academic year 2017/2018. Their age ranges between 17 and 18 years old. Twenty participants are systematically and purposively selected based on the homogeneity in verbal ability of English language speaking that was obtained in the placement tests' results. The statistical result showed that there was no significant difference in the mean of scores between groups 'A' (mean: 2.13) and group 'B' (mean: 2.13) in the placement test that they had because the significance (P) was greater than 0.05. The participants were divided into two groups, group "A" to deal with display questions and group "B" to deal with referential questions.

The participants of both groups had been studying general English (Headway Plus-Elementary) as a university requirement course. Thus, both groups have the same content utilizing the traditional method, and for the purpose of this study, the traditional method was integrated with two WhatsApp chat groups to enrich classroom learning through extending its discussion outside classroom contexts. It is worth mentioning that the participants of both groups are exposed to the language for 25 hours a week, 10 hours inside classroom contexts and 15 hours outside classroom contexts on WhatsApp chat groups. As mentioned above, group 'A' is specified to utilize display questions and group 'B' is to deal with referential questions. Voice messages are the primary form of communication in both WhatsApp groups.

In this regard, it is important to note that the course's instructor served as both the researcher and the group leader for the two WhatsApp chats in order to encourage and spark participants' interest.

### C. Data Collection's Procedures

The data was gathered using an interview guide and verbal dialogues that were observed in WhatsApp chat groups. Out of the twelve sessions for each group, only the concluding four consecutive sessions for both groups were observed. The themes covered in the discussion's display and referential questions are drawn from those that participants have already encountered in the textbook they have used, *Headway Plus – Elementary*. Referential questions that are tailored to the members of group "B" are derived from display questions. To maintain the communicative setting as authentic and natural as possible, it was important that the supervisor (researcher) did not disclose the specific purpose of the observation and the evaluated sessions to the observed participants in either group. The supervisor first listens in on the talk during the active sessions and then double-checks it using the voice recordings that are placed in the chat group. Four hours per day are spent in touch with each group, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM with group "A" and from 8:00 PM to 11:00 AM with group "B." The supervisor first listens in on the talk during the active sessions and then double-checks it using the voice recordings that are placed in the chat group. Four hours per day are spent in touch with each group, from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM with group "A" and from 8:00 PM to 11:00 AM with group "B." The interview questions center on how they responded to each question and how they felt it might have affected their willingness to participate in the session and the growth of their language. They also investigate the reasons why some queries received no responses from participants. Their suggestions were promptly taken into account for the next session. To prevent any misinterpretation of the questions that were asked of the participants, the interviewer utilizes their native language (Arabic).

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

This section will summarize, evaluate, and elaborate on the data that was gathered from the observed WhatsApp chat group sessions, which had a total of 20 Saudi participants—10 in each group. Both groups (groups "A" and "B") were intended to communicate solely through voice messages. Group "A" plans to handle display questions in this regard, whether they are open or closed, whereas group "B" plans to handle referential questions, whether they are open or closed. In four executive sessions, a total of 210 questions were raised. It is clear that display questions—both open and closed—represented the bulk of the questions, while referential questions—especially open ones—were seldom. Closed referential inquiries are excellent at encouraging people to speak. Overall analysis reveals that group "A" performed significantly better than group "B," which is attributable to the display question type's suitability for EFL students' beginners' practice of verbal language for what they had frequently taught using WhatsApp chat groups' voice messages as a means of communication. 210 questions in all, spread over three four sessions as follows: 30 closed display questions, 75 open display questions, 30 closed referential questions, and 75 open referential questions. These questions were to be asked of both groups.

The following provides a detailed summary of the study's findings:

TABLE 1

Question type	Session 1	Session 2	Session	Total
<b>Group A: Open-display:</b>	20 (26.6%)	22 (29%)	24 (32%)	66 (out of 75) (88%)
	8 (26.6%)	8 (26.6%)	9 (30%)	25 (out of 30) 83%
	9 (12%)	9 (12%)	11 (14.5%)	28 (out of 75) 37%
<b>Group B: Open-referential:</b>	8 (26.6%)	9 (30%)	10 (33.3%)	27 (out of 30) 90
<b>Closed-display:</b>				
<b>Closed-referential:</b>				

Referring to the outcome displayed in Table 1, 145 (69%) of the 210 (100%) questions asked had a response. The number of questions posed and the number of questions returned were recorded for each session. It is clear that the display was the question that the students were asked to respond to rather than the referential one. The findings show a preference for display questions over referential ones, with a ratio of 82% for display questions and 50% for referential. In the three sessions, the use of display questions of both categories has grown, while the use of referential questions has not changed significantly. The outcomes support display questions once more. Consequently, it is evident that the display of questions at the beginning level is preferred. However, the comparison of closed-display questions (83) and closed-referential questions (90) shows that closed-referential questions are superior (90%). Questions with an open display received a better score (88%) than questions with an open reference (37%). However, it was discovered that closed-display questions scored lower percentages (83%) than closed-referential questions (90%), therefore the outcome is in favor of closed-referential questions (90%), when comparing the results of closed-referential questions and closed-display questions.

TABLE 2

Question type	No. of words in Sessions 1, 2, 3	Time of speaking (in minutes)	Length Average
Group A: <i>Display</i>	457	17 minutes	4.4
Group B: <i>Referential</i>	274	9 minutes	2.6

Table 2 statistical results are consistent with table 1 due to the superiority of the display question type over the referential one. The statistical outcome shows that the length of students' responses to the questions posed, which is a measure of the participants' language production, was calculated by counting the number of words in each type of question, including open-ended and closed-ended of both question types namely referential and display questions.

Tables 1 and 2 of the three sessions indicate the total number of questions posed, the total number of answer response, and the total number of words in each response.

The number of participants and responses under each category were totalled up to determine the frequency of student involvement and responses for both types of questions because some of the questions had more than one possible response.

To assess which form of question elicited the most responses, the mean length (in words) of student responses to both display and referential questions was computed in addition to the number of participants and responses. With reference to table 2, the students' responses to display questions in four sessions totaled 457 words, but 274 words for questions that served as referential questions. By counting the words in each response, the average word length from students was determined (calculated by dividing the sum of the words from the sum of the words in each type of instructor question). It was discovered that the display questions performed better on average (4.4) and required much more speaking time (17 minutes) than the referential ones with average ( 2.6) of (9 minutes). In other words, display questions are more appropriate question types to prompt EFL beginners to answer and interact verbally well via WhatsApp chat groups that use voice messages. Thus, obviously display questions with an average of 4.4 outperform referential questions with an average of 2.6. This result is consistent with some research' findings, which showed that display questions are often employed, especially with low-level students (Omari, 2018; Ghabanchi, 2010; Aprina & Andriyanti, 2020).

The interview findings can be summed up by saying that display questions prompt participants to respond, maximizing EFL beginner language verbal production because its participants already have background knowledge from their time spent in traditional courses. Participants of the display question type were thus intriguingly asked to respond to them and were able to quickly retrieve the answer from this prior information. In contrast, due to a lack of prior practice, expertise, and understanding for answering these types of questions, participants in referential questions made no more of an attempt to respond. Therefore, the referential question does not encourage EFL beginners to communicate verbally via voice messages on the WhatsApp chat group. Additionally, a lot of participants are worried of making mistakes, thus they hold off on responding to referential questions because they are unsure of their ability to provide the correct response.

## V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that display questions maximize EFL beginner language verbal production more than referential questions do. Involving EFL beginners in verbal situations needs to be primarily equipped with some prompt that helps them respond positively. The participants react favorably to the question since they have already encountered it. In order to feel confident in their responses, the participants become motivated to respond to the questions. It suggests that display question types should be used instead of referential ones to start with, in order to encourage EFL newcomers to interact verbally.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aprina, N. and Andriyanti, E. (2020). Teachers' Questions in Elementary School English Learning: Types and Functions, *Indonesian Journal of EFL and Linguistics*, Vol. 5 No. 2, 2020, eISSN: 2503-4197, pISSN: 2527-5070.
- [2] Arifin, T. (2012). Analyzing English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom interaction. *APPLE3L JOURNAL*, 1(1), 1-20.
- [3] Bozorgian, H. and Fallah, S. (2017), EFL Learners' Speaking Development: Asking Referential Questions, *Jurnal Pendidikan Malaysia* 42(2) (2017): In Press (Pratatapan).
- [4] Brock, C. A. (1986). The effects of referential questions on ESL classroom discourse. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(1), 47-59.
- [5] Ellis, R. (1992). *Second language acquisition and language pedagogy*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matthes. Ltd.
- [6] Farahian, M. and Rezaee, M. (2012). A case study of an EFL teacher's type of questions: an investigation into classroom interaction, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 47 (2012) 161 – 167, Retrieved June 29, 2022, from [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com).
- [7] Gall, M. D. (1986). Synthesis of research on teachers' questioning. *Educational Leadership*, 42, 40-47.
- [8] Ghabanchi, Z. (2010), The Effect Of Summarization On Intermediate EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension And Their Performance On Display, Referential And Inferential Questions, *Journal of College Teaching & Learning*, Volume 7, Number 9m 2010.



- [9] Long, M. H. & Sato, C. (1983). Classroom Foreign Talk Discourse: Forms and Functions of Teacher's Questions, in H. W. Seliger & M. H. (Eds.). *Classroom Oriented Research in Language Learning* (pp. 268-285). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- [10] Long, M. H. & Porter, P. A. (1984). Group work, interlanguage talk, and second language acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19 (2), 207-226.
- [11] Menyani, N. and Merabti, M. (2020), Teachers' Perceptions of the Effect of Question-Asking Behaviour on EFL Classroom Interaction, *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies Volume 2*, Issue 1, 2020 Homepage: <http://ijlls.org/index.php/ijlls>, <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v2i1.199>.
- [12] Minalla, A. (2018). The Effect of WhatsApp Chat Group in Enhancing EFL Learners' Verbal Interaction outside Classroom Contexts, *English Language Teaching; Vol. 11*, No. 3; 2018, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education, doi: 10.5539/elt.v11n3p1, URL: <http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n3p1>.
- [13] Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing tasks for the communicative classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Nunan, D. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall.
- [15] Omari, H. (2018). Analysis of the Types of Classroom Questions Which Jordanian English Language Teachers Ask, *Modern Applied Science; Vol. 12*, No. 4; 2018, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education, doi:10.5539/mas.v12n4p1.
- [16] Tuan, L and Nhu, N. (2010), *Theoretical Review on Oral Interaction in EFL Classrooms*, Retrieved May 11, 2022, from < [www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/viewFile/1415/1434](http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/viewFile/1415/1434)>.
- [17] Wright, B. (2016). "Display and referential questions: Effects on student responses." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 15(4):160-189.
- [18] Zohrabi, M. Yaghoubi-Notash, M., and Khiabani, S. (2014). Teachers' Use of Display vs. Referential Questions across Different Proficiency Levels, *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, doi:10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.3n.2p.96, URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.3n.2p.96>.



**Amir A. Minalla** obtained his PhD in English Language Teaching from Sudan University of Science and Technology in 2016. He earned his Master's degree (M.A.) in English Language Teaching in 2013 and his Bachelor's degree (B.A.) in English and literature in 2005.

He is currently associate professor and head of the Department of Languages and Translation at University College of Tayma, Faculty of Education and Arts, University of Tabuk, Saudi Arabia. He has several publications in Indexed Magazines. His main areas of interest are applied linguistics, teaching and learning, and problem-based learning.



# E-Learning and Social Media for ELT — Teachers' Perspective

Gayathri Paliath

Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Tamil Nadu, Chennai, India

Marie Evangeline

Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Tamil Nadu, Chennai, India

**Abstract**—English as a foreign language poses many difficulties to teach and to learn; the problem gets further intense when English has to be used as a medium of instruction to teach other subjects. There is a definite need to support foreign language learners by extending the learning and instruction outside the classroom. There is a growing realization of the role of social media in learning / teaching, especially of English language. Handheld devices like mobiles and tablets, laptops and desktops are all possible means to access social media apps. Such social media apps, along with search engines and conferencing apps form an essential toolkit for learning and instruction outside the physical classrooms. Mobiles and internet have become popular for e-learning due to their features such as ubiquity, interactivity and portability. A lot of research has been done globally on the students' perspective for the use of extended English language learning outside the classroom through social media apps and audio/video conferencing. A study on the experiences and observations of the teachers on teaching through such means revealed that teachers perceive social media and e-learning very useful and effective for English learning and instruction. Teachers find such means definitely useful for the preparation and conduct of the classes. While social media and e-learning for teaching English is not without some drawbacks, the positives of such means for ELT far outweigh the negatives. This paper describes the use of social media in English classroom and proposes a practical way to make the best use of it.

**Index Terms**—E-learning, ELT, social media for language learning, mobile assisted language learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is universally accepted that English as a foreign language has many advantages as well as disadvantages. Learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is difficult for any student and there have been a number of studies from around the world. Sidhu et al. (2016) observed this in the Malaysian context, Hashemi (2011) explained the problems among the English language learners in Iran, Aldarasi (2020) described a similar situation among Libyan students, Luo (2013) portrayed concerns in the Chinese context and Songbatumis (2017) elaborated the challenges faced by students and teachers in Indonesia. There has been a detailed study in Vietnam (Tran & Moni, 2015) – which involved investigation of EFL students' and teachers' perspectives and experiences of managing foreign language anxiety (FLA); Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) described the difficulties for students in Japan to study English as a foreign language and categorised different strategies that such students use to cope with the anxiety in the learning of English.

While foreign language anxiety is a globally accepted problem for learners, the anxiety is especially more for English as a foreign language, as learning English is considered very important in most parts of the world from their career as well as social status points of view. Difficulties in learning English as a foreign language and the associated anxiety of the students having to study the same are universal in nature and any technique to make such learning / teaching easier and less stressful is indeed a welcome development for the students as well as for the teachers of English.

While learning English itself is an unnerving task for many, the challenge of moving to an English medium classroom and learning new subjects in an unfamiliar language is even more daunting. Learning new subjects in a foreign language, and not being able to raise any queries for fear of making mistakes in English, make the students withdraw into themselves and perform poorly in their academics. Students fear the rebukes and reprimands from their teachers and the possible shaming by the classmates. As Huang (2012) observed, the reduction of FLA necessitates the involvement of both the student and the teacher. Students play an active role by acknowledging their anxiety and the teacher has to be supportive, focusing on positive reinforcement and normalizing mistakes rather than focusing on the negative errors.

Classroom teaching may not be the only solution for effective teaching of English as a foreign language. It is important to find innovative ways to support foreign language learners by extending language learning and instruction outside the classroom and providing opportunities for more exposure to the foreign language. E-learning and social media can definitely help in this regard.

### A. Social Media, Conferencing Apps and Mobile Usage for English Learning

Internet revolution has virtually changed communication styles across the world. The boom in mobile usage (especially smart phones) and social media users have been a concomitant phenomenon. India is among the top countries in terms of internet penetration. The penetration in India has been unprecedented (Statista, Feb 2019). Bulk of the internet users have become social network users, whose numbers are estimated to reach nearly 450 million by 2023 from a level of 351 million in 2019; it was only 142 million in 2015. Thus, in just 8 years, the growth in the number of social network users is more than three-fold, or a cumulative average growth rate (CAGR) of 15.4 per cent. As such, the scope for mobile apps and social media for English language learning in India is huge and still growing.

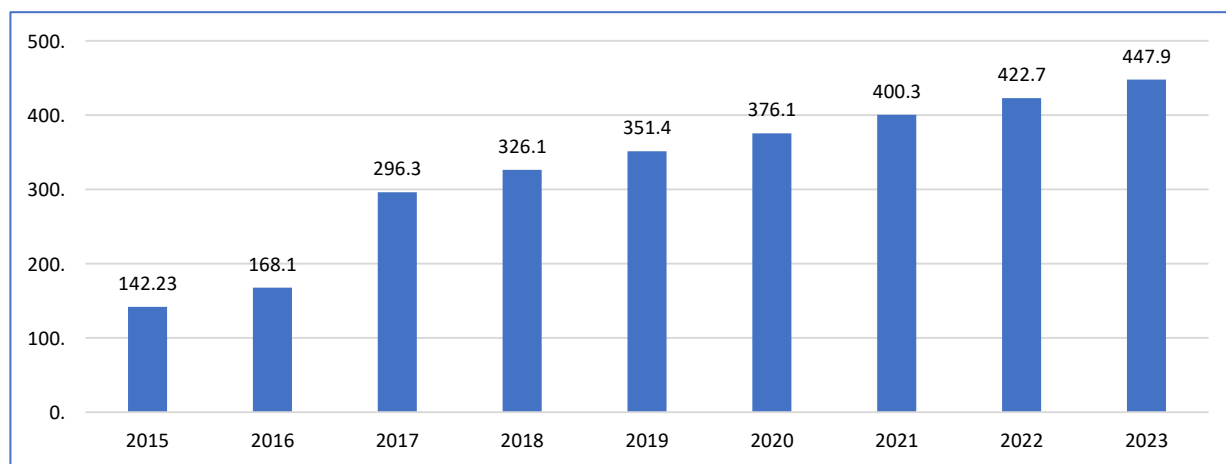


Figure 1: Number of Social Network Users India 2015-2023 (in Mn)  
Statista Digital Market Outlook February 2019.

The goal of language teaching today is to teach communicative competence, which is a learners' ability to be able to produce the language for different settings, for maintaining the communication (Pratiwi, 2020). Unlike the past, the aim is not so much on mastery of classic literature, grammatical perfection or use of bombastic vocabulary. Now the focus is on the practical communication skills for different kinds of situations.

There is immense potential to use technology to make English teaching more effective. Yadav (2012) describes the vital role that social media plays in getting English Language skills because of the immense opportunities that it provides to adult learners to improve their listening, speaking, reading, writing skills. She explains that the ease and affordability of smart phones and other electronic smart-gadgets installed with the latest Apps have enabled social media to reach almost every nook and corner of the world. It provides a wide range of authentic materials for teaching, helps in getting clarifications from a wide range of global resources at the tip of one's fingers, at any time, and from any location. Teaching can be made exciting through the use of audio, video and documentary materials, presented in innovative and exciting ways. Teachers need to be willing to learn the developments in technology sufficiently and to adapt their teaching style to be effective. Effective use of technology for teaching requires a mindset to constantly update teaching methodologies and social media developments.

There is a growing realization of the role of social media in learning / teaching, especially of English language. The concept of social media has been attracting the attention of academicians, politicians, business executives and consultants for decades. In the business context, social media is seen as a powerful means for advertisement, marketing and sales promotion; LinkedIn is found to be a useful tool for attracting human resources and for building an image of an organisation. In politics, it is widely used for building opinions. However, the focus of this research is in the academic context, where social media as a tool for English language teaching.

However, despite the high interest, the term social media has not been fully understood by many. Social media allows "creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2015. p.197). Tools of social media such as websites, web links, and networking applications (Apps) for social networking and microblogging are all forms of electronic communications "that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content" (Kaplan & Heinlein, 2010. p.61).

Handheld devices like mobiles and tablets, laptops and desktops are all possible means to access social media apps. Globally the top 5 apps in 2020 were Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Instagram as shown in the next page (Table 1). Other popular social media apps including TikTok, Snapchat, Reddit, Pinterest and Twitter also have global revenues in excess of USD 200 million.

Such social media apps, along with search engines like Google and Bing, and conferencing apps like Zoom, Google Meet and Microsoft Teams form an essential toolkit for the modern generation to learn outside the physical classrooms. There are also specific apps for English language focusing on dictionary, thesaurus, quotations, word games, and so on. Let us look at a few examples: English as a Foreign Language University (EFLU) in India launched in 2020 an exclusive app "EnglishPro" for English language learners in India. This is a free Mobile App for learning English pronunciation. Grammarly is a freeware app to help users write grammatically correct sentences with proper

punctuation. The app teaches English pronunciation and “helps the organic transitioning of beginner level English users from their mother tongue to English”.

TABLE 1  
TOP GLOBAL SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES, JANUARY 2021

Rank	Network Name	No. of Users (in Mn.)
I.	Facebook	2,740
II.	YouTube	2,291
III.	WhatsApp	2,000
IV.	Facebook Messenger	1,300
V.	Instagram	1,221

Source: Statista.com/statistics

The British Council has been in the field of promoting English language learning for almost 80 years. BBC Learning English app is very useful to study grammar, improve pronunciation, or learn the latest phrases to use. HelloTalk is a free app which is useful to practice English language speaking; it also has the option for text and voice recording, alongside tools for translation and pronunciation.

The above is only a sample of useful apps in this field and is by no means exhaustive. Many such apps are available from around the world for a teacher who is interested in self-learning and innovative teaching, as well as for a student of English as a foreign language.

### *B. Mobile Assisted Language Learning*

One of the ways to extend English language learning and instruction outside the classroom is via mobile-assisted language learning (Mindog, 2016). Mobile technologies and mobile apps are becoming an indispensable part of learning, including foreign language learning (Gangaiamaran, 2017). Learning languages with the assistance of mobiles is referred to as m-learning or Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). MALL can be considered as a part of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Mobiles and internet have become highly popular and the key features such extensive availability, interactivity and portability make such learning highly popular and effective. Teaching vocabulary through MALL breaks the traditional model of teaching and does not limit teaching to the classroom alone (Sherine, 2020). The features such as personalized learning, independent of time and place, and collaboration with peers and teachers in both formal and informal settings, make m-learning efficient (Klimova, 2019). M-learning helps to enlarge the scope of e-learning “by promoting independent and active learning” (p.837) by the students and by making schools and colleges into any-time, no-barrier educational centres (Kuimova et al., 2018).

Sharples (2010) described mobile learning as the next generation of e-learning. According to Miangah and Nezarat (2012), “mobile learning is characterized by its potential for learning to be spontaneous, informal, personalized and ubiquitous” (p.309). The learner is in charge of his or her learning process and the development is based on his or her cognitive state.

The two main characteristics of mobile devices, according to Huang and Sun (2010), are portability and connectivity. The characteristic which enables learners and teachers to move their mobile devices and get their learning materials anywhere is referred to as portability. Klopfer et al. (2012) describe the properties of mobile devices such as portability, social interactivity - exchanging data and collaboration with other learners, context sensitivity, connectivity, and individuality - activities platform can be customized for an individual learner.

M-Learning has some definite advantages; however, it also has its own set of constraints: for example, reading is difficult on such a small screen, data storage is limited and so on. Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler (2005) advise that teachers should choose or adapt resources compatible to such tools that the learners have.

The classroom need not set a boundary for the students to study a second language. Technology enables teaching or learning English from any location, at any convenient time. MALL refers to the use of mobile tools and technology in language learning. Application of mobile-based language learning includes vocabulary, listening, grammar, phonetics, reading comprehension, writing, etc.

As per Yannick (2007), mobile learning for speaking is “as significant as textual aspect, as it enables learners to comfortably speak with a system recording and replay their voice. Then, they can compare their voice with an ideal pronunciation and make an improvement in this skill” (p.314). Yamaguchi (2005) compares a computer with a mobile phone for educational purposes; while the former is better for use of different types of data such as video, audio, and documentary information, the latter is portable and hence more convenient.

A lot of research has been done on the students’ perspective for the use of extended English language learning outside the classroom through social media apps and audio/video conferencing. The recent Covid 19 pandemic made classroom teaching impossible and forced many schools and colleges to resort to e-learning in a major way. Despite initial reservations, both teachers and students started using this technique, slowly gaining comfort and reasonable mastery for meaningful education. The experiences and observations of a sample of teachers studied by the authors on teaching through such means are described in brief below.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The research was conducted with three key research questions. These were as follows:

Q1: Whether teachers perceive social media and M-learning as useful and effective tools for English language learning?

Q2: What are the specific areas of English Language Teaching where teachers find social media and M-learning useful?

Q3: What are the positive impacts of social media and M-learning as perceived by the English language teachers? What are the negative impacts?

## III. METHODOLOGY

Primary data research involved collection of specific feedback from a number of English language teachers. A total of 108 responses were collected from various teachers of English. Structured questionnaire was chosen as the main tool for primary data collection. Some of the questions were deliberately kept open-ended rather than multiple-choice to get individual insights, which could be grouped together later for analysis. Questionnaires were administered, mostly through the use of social media and Google forms. The respondents' preferences and usage of different types of social media and their feedback on the influence of social media on English language teaching were collected. The specific areas where a teacher finds use for social media in teaching, and the effective ways to use different social media were collected. In addition, the advantages as well as disadvantages from their perspective were also collected.

In addition, focused discussions were held with a couple of English teachers to validate the findings and also get insights not possible to collect effectively from a structured questionnaire. Given the restrictions during the Covid pandemic, physical meeting with the teachers for administration of the questionnaires was virtually impossible. However, telephonic contact was resorted to in addition to mails and Whatsapp. The perceptions of the respondents and the impact of the various factors were analysed in detail to arrive at meaningful conclusions.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The feedback of the teachers selected for this sample study on the effectiveness for learning by the students, and the usefulness to the teachers for teaching English was analysed. At the time of this research and writing of this article, the Covid 19 curfew had necessitated the use of social media and conferencing apps by the students and the teachers for a significant length of time. Given this background, the feedback of the teachers carries more credence.

Research Q1: Whether teachers perceive social media and m-learning to be sufficiently useful and effective for English learning?

Result 1: Teachers were obviously of the opinion that social media is useful for the students for English comprehension as well as communication skills in the students.

The teachers were clearly of the opinion that the communication skills of the students improved with the use of social media for learning. Only 5 per cent perceived a worsening of such skills (Figure 2)

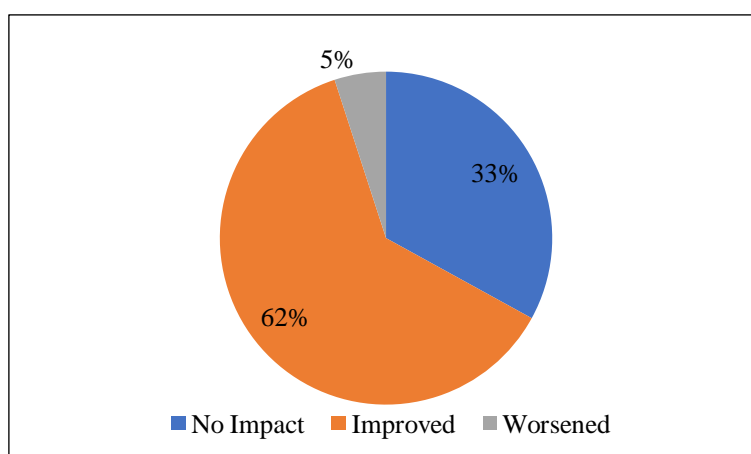


Figure 2 Effect of Social Media on Communication Skills of Students

A similar response was received regarding the effect of social media on the improvement in the comprehension skills of the students (Figure 3). Hardly 2 per cent felt that the use of SM has worsened the comprehension skills of the students, whereas 66 per cent felt a definite improvement; roughly 32 per cent did not notice any distinctive improvement. In other words, the use of social media was perceived to be definitely useful for improvement of English language comprehension skills.

Research Q2: What are the specific areas of English Language Teaching where teachers find social media and M-learning useful?

Result 2: Teachers found social media quite easy to use for ELT, especially for preparation as well of conduct of the classes.

The second part of the responses collected was with regard to the usefulness of social media for the teaching of English, as well as the ease of usage for preparation or teaching of English (Figure 3).

An overwhelming majority (85 per cent) of the teachers found social media useful for English language teaching. Almost half the respondents (46 per cent) found it very useful.

To remove any possible biases, it was decided to study the profile mix of the faculty sample and analyse whether any of their profile classifications had any correlation to the findings in terms of their views on social media and English language teaching. In terms of age profile, 37 per cent were in the age group of 30-40, 42 per cent were in the age group of 40-50, and the rest were above 50. This is quite understandable as they were all post graduates or doctorates to qualify for their occupation.

In terms of their basic schooling, 55 per cent of the faculty sample had a village background, 31 per cent were from towns and only 14 per cent from city schools. Only 21 per cent were not from English medium schools.

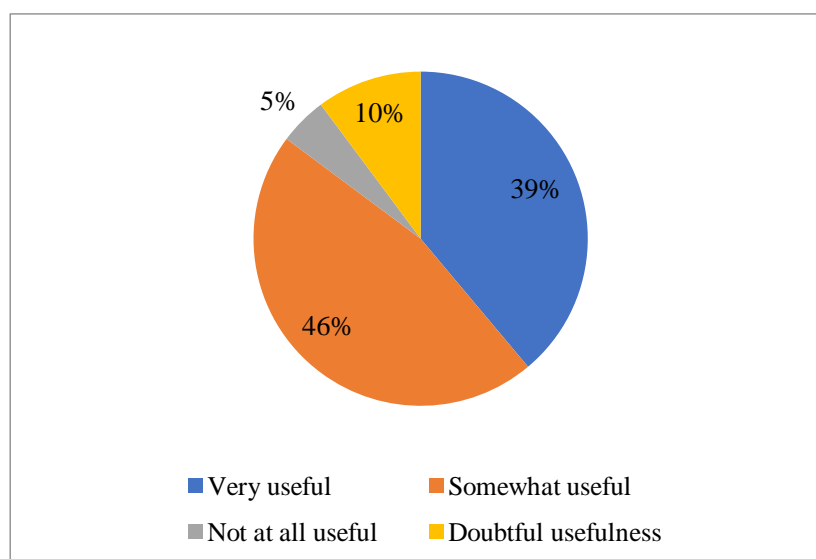


Figure 3 Usefulness of Social Media for English Language Teaching

A correlation analysis of the teachers' personal background (gender, whether studied in regional language or English medium at school level, and whether from urban or rural background) revealed negligible correlation of these factors with their observations on social media and English language teaching (Table 2).

TABLE 2  
CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN TEACHERS' BACKGROUND AND VIEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Factor	Impact of Social Media on English Language on		Use of SM for ELT
	Comprehension Skills	Communication Skills	
Age	-0.08	0.03	0.12
Schooling Location	0.15	0.11	-0.20
Medium of schooling	0.05	0.06	-0.09

Not only did they find it extremely valuable, they found it useful for the preparation as well as teaching of English (Figure 4). Three-fourth (75 per cent) of the respondents found it easy to use, of which 43 per cent found it very easy to use. Only 12 per cent found it very difficult to use.

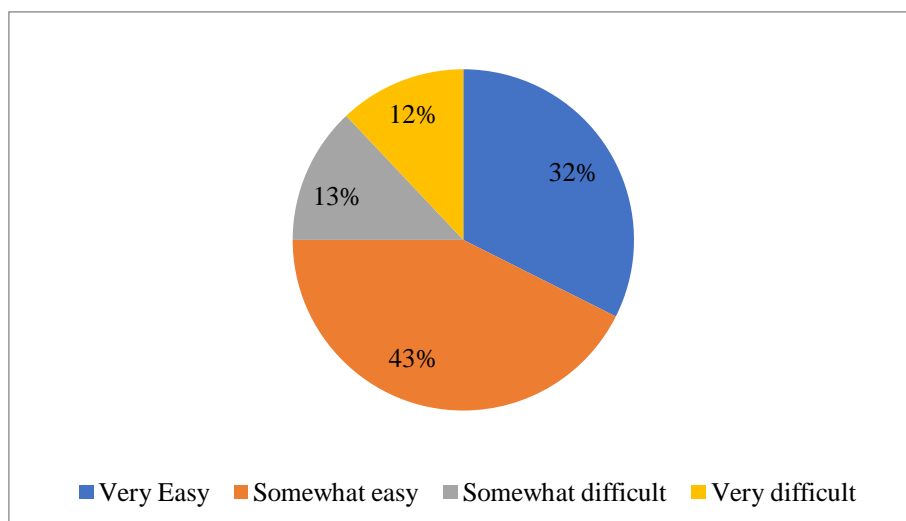


Figure 4 Ease of Usage of SM for Preparation and Teaching of English Language

Research Q3: What are the positive and negative impacts of Social media and M-learning as perceived by the English language teachers?

Result 3: The major positive impacts of social media for English language teaching as perceived by the teachers were as listed below:

- It helps to keep the teacher stay updated on various aspects of the English language, as well as on new methodologies of teaching. The easy availability of relevant topics and presentations from different parts of the world from experienced teachers and convenience for learning anytime, anywhere are perceived as welcome features.
- Learning can be made lively and interesting with audio, video, graphical and pictorial inputs as such inputs help the students in grasping the language lessons better. Many teachers who know their subject very well also fail to attract the attention of their students in the conventional chalk-and-talk method. The attractive audio-visual tools easily available help to keep the classes vibrant.
- Social media provides excellent exposure to a variety of methodologies and content to make the teaching impactful. Virtually, a vast library is available from experienced teachers across the world for a teacher willing to take the effort to search and learn.
- It provides easy access to support materials for teaching. This is especially useful for teachers who are beginning their careers, or even the seasoned teachers who are teaching a new topic for the first time. Even for experienced teachers, social media provides access from around the world to a variety of new styles of presentation, and different perspectives on the topics being taught.
- Social media enables one-on-one as well as one-to-many interactions with students. Audio, video or textual means are available for one-on-one transactions. Conferencing tools facilitate one-to-many interactions.
- Mobiles enable teaching or learning wherever they are (portability). Apart from other occasions, when physical attendance becomes impossible due to pandemics, or transport disruptions, portability becomes a great advantage.

The major negative impacts perceived are as listed below:

- Distraction to students from learning – the easy availability of games, movies, music, pornography and other distractions create problems for the students who are not self-disciplined. Even if the students are looking at relevant topics only, the huge quantities of articles and videos available in the net and obtained through social media from friends as well as strangers sometimes confuse the student and makes him waste precious time; proper judgement on reliable and unreliable sources of information is an essential requisite for youngsters, which is mostly missing in social media. As the search for information is often made by the students without the presence of a teacher or guide, the students end up wasting a lot of time, and often depend on unreliable sources of information.
- For the teachers also, it takes some experience and exposure before they learn to identify reliable sources and to avoid wasting time on irrelevant and distracting sites.
- Possible loss of privacy and misuse. Technology brings its own challenges in the form of malwares, hoaxes, phishing, and other frauds and unsuspecting youngsters can fall easy prey to such unscrupulous elements in society.
- Affordability of smart phones and laptops can be an issue for some of the students in countries like India. The price of such items is quite high for a vast number of students and also peer pressure makes them want newer and costlier gadgets which their parents can ill afford to give them.

- e) Technical issues and connectivity issues are common, especially in rural parts of India. Even where connectivity is available, typical issues of slow net speed and disruptions in connectivity make it impractical in some cases.

This research was based on a limited sample of teachers who were mainly teaching English in colleges in two cities of South India, namely, Chennai and Hyderabad. A deeper study with a larger sample with school and college level teachers and a larger geographical coverage may yield further insights.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Covid 19 pandemic made everyone realise that classroom teaching cannot be taken for granted. While the advantages as well as disadvantages of e-learning and social media were practically experienced by teachers and students alike, there is hardly any doubt that learning beyond the classrooms is here to stay. Extending the learning process beyond the classroom through e-learning is definitely possible, but it has a number of challenges. Social media and conferencing apps can assist students as well as teachers to mitigate the challenges of foreign language learning and instruction; yet, the challenges cannot be eliminated altogether. While the use of mobile applications in learning English as a foreign language is definitely effective and efficient, it needs to be tweaked in design and during implementation as per the specific needs of the students (Kacetl & Klimova, 2019).

The best strategy involves being aware of the negative impacts and limitations, constant innovation by the teachers, making use of learning support possible through social media from teachers of English around the world, and sincere efforts at self-learning by the students. Both the students and the teachers must realise that more the information and resources available through social media, more effort and care need to be taken to ensure that relevant inputs are identified and utilised. Such a strategy will definitely yield results.

There is scope for further research with a larger sample of teachers; a wider geographical coverage can throw light on the regional nuances. Research involving a study of both students and teachers will help to compare the perspectives from the students and teachers respectively. Moreover, the impressions of the teachers could have possibly been influenced by the Covid-19 induced restrictions on classroom teaching. A study after this pandemic totally subsides could yield interesting differences in perception.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aldarasi R.A. (2020). *Foreign language anxiety: Libyan students speaking in English*. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow. Retrieved April 23, 2022, from <https://theses.gla.ac.uk/80275/>
- [2] Gangaamaran, R.; Pasupathi, M. (2017). Review on use of mobile apps for language learning. *International Journal of Applied Engineering Research* 2017, 12, 11242–11251
- [3] Hashemi M. (2011). Language Stress and Anxiety Among the English Language Learners, *Procedia - Social and Behavioural Sciences*, Volume 30, 2011, Pages 1811-1816, ISSN 1877-0428. Retrieved April 11, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.10.349>.
- [4] <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/> Retrieved March 28, 2022.
- [5] Huang, Jinyan (2012). *Overcoming Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*. New York: Nova Science Publishers. pp. 11–12. ISBN 9781613247754.
- [6] Huang, C. and P. Sun. (2010) "Using mobile technologies to support mobile multimedia English listening exercises in daily life". In: *The International Conference on Computer and Network Technologies in Education (CNTE 2010)*, Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <http://cnte2010.cs.nhcue.edu.tw/>
- [7] Joy, Sherine. (2020). Promoting Vocabulary Learning Through MALL: A Comparative Study. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Engineering and Technology (IJARET) Volume 11*, Issue 2, February 2020, pp. 223-230, Article ID: IJARET\_11\_02\_022
- [8] Kacetl, J.; Klímová B. (2019). Use of Smartphone Applications in English Language Learning—A Challenge for Foreign Language Education. *Education Sciences*. 2019, 9, 179. Retrieved April 25, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9030179>
- [9] Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59–68
- [10] Kaplan, Andreas M. (2015). Social Media, the Digital Revolution, and the Business of Media. *International Journal on Media Management*, 17(4), pp 197-199. Retrieved January 14, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14241277.2015.1120014>
- [11] Klimova, B. (2019). Impact of mobile learning on students' achievement results. *Education Sciences*. 2019; 9(2):90. Retrieved March 8, 2022, from <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9020090>
- [12] Klopfer, E.; K. Squire, and H. Jenkins. (2002). "Environmental Detectives: PDAs as a window into a virtual simulated world." In: *Proceedings of IEEE International Workshop on Wireless and Mobile Technologies in Education*. Vaxjo, Sweden: IEEE Computer Society, pp. 95-98
- [13] Kondo, D. S., & Ying-Ling, Y. (2004). Strategies for coping with language anxiety: The case of students of English in Japan. *ELT Journal*, 58, 258–265. [10.1093/elt/58.3.258](https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/58.3.258) t Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3111387).
- [14] Kuimova, M.; Burleigh, D.; Uzunboyly, H.; Bazhenov, R. (2018). Positive effects of mobile learning on foreign language learning. *TEM Journal*. 2018, 7, 837–841.
- [15] Kukulska-Hulme, A. & Traxler, J. (Eds.). (2005). "Mobile learning: A handbook for educators and trainers". London: Routledge.
- [16] Luo, H. (2013). Foreign Language Anxiety: Past and Future. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*. 36. 442-464. [10.1515/cjal-2013-0030](https://doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2013-0030).



- [17] Miangah, T.M., & Nezarat, A. (2012). Mobile-Assisted Language Learning. *International Journal of Distributed and Parallel systems*, 3, 309-319.
- [18] Mindog. E. (2016). Apps and EFL: A case study on the use of smartphone apps to learn English by four Japanese university students. *jaltcalljournal* issn 1832-4215 Vol. 12, No.1 Pages 3–22 (2016).
- [19] Pratiwi, Anisa Nur; Wiedarti. (2020). Pangesti.Making the Best Use of Social Media in English Classroom, *Proceedings of the International Conference on Educational Research and Innovation*, 2020. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200204.036>
- [20] Sharples. M. (2000). “The design of personal mobile technologies for lifelong learning”. *Computers & Education*, 34(3-4), pp. 177-193.
- [21] Sidhu G.K., Lim P.C., Chan Y.F., Lee L.F., Ahmad Nadzri F., Mohd Azkah S.H.A. (2016). Anxiety in Learning English as a Second Language (ESL) Among Tertiary Students. In: Abdullah M., Yahya W., Ramli N., Mohamed S., Ahmad B. (eds) *Regional Conference on Science, Technology and Social Sciences (RCSTSS 2014)*. Springer, Singapore. Retrieved May 11, 2022, from [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-1458-1\\_52](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-1458-1_52)
- [22] Songbatumis A.M. (July 2017). Challenges in Teaching English Faced by English Teachers at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia, *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching & Learning*, Vol.2 No. 2. pp. 60-63.
- [23] Statista Digital Market Outlook February 2019. Retrieved July 14, 2021, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255146/number-of-internet-users-in-india/>
- [24] Trang Thi Thu Tran & Karen Moni | John C. K. Lee (Reviewing Editor). (2015). Management of foreign language anxiety: Insiders’ awareness and experiences, *Cogent Education*, 2:1, DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2014.992593
- [25] Yadav, Meenakshi Sharma. (2012). Role of Social Media in English Language Learning to the Adult Learners. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation (IJLLT)*. ISSN: 2617-0299 (Online); ISSN: 2708-0099 (Print). DOI: 10.32996/ijllt
- [26] Yamaguchi. T. (2005). “Vocabulary Learning with a Mobile Phone”. Retrieved February 25, 2022, from <http://lft.msu.edu/vol10num1/emerging/default.html>, accessed Jul. 2010.
- [27] Yannick. J. (2007). “M-Learning: A pedagogical and technological model for language learning on mobile phones”. In: *Blended Learning*, Joseph Fong, Fu Lee Wang (Eds), 2007, pp. 309-319.



**Gayathri Paliath**, belongs to Kerala born on 04/07/1988.

She is a research scholar at Hindustan Institute of Technology and Science, Rajiv Gandhi Salai, Padur, India. She has attended both national and international conferences and participated in workshops conducted by various colleges at Chennai. She is a member of elt@i journal, Chennai.

Ref: Gayathri Paliath and Marie Evangeline (2022) E-learning and Social Media for ELT –Teachers’ Perspective.



**Marie Evangeline**, belongs to the Union Territory of Pondicherry born on 12/12/1970. She was conferred Ph.D (Doctorate) in Bharathiyar University, Coimbatore, India, in 2019.

At present, she is working as an Assistant Professor (SG) of English, Department of Languages in Hindustan University, Padur, Chennai. She has international exposure in teaching English Language and also has interest in Tamil Literature. She is a member of elt@i journal, Chennai.

Published two Books: In 2020, when CORONA virus was spreading severely, she wrote about the virus and also about the disease in her first book “COVID-19 AN EYE-OPENER” which was in English. Since she has an abundant love of literature, in 2021, she wrote a novelette ‘Ippadikku Ival’, in Tamil, which was her first creation in Tamil Language.

Ref:

Marie Evangeline. H & Razia. M (2020). COVID-19 AN EYE-OPENER. Thamiz Pudurvai. Print. (English)

Marie Evangeline. H (2021) Ippadikku Eval. Platinum Graphics. Print. (Tamil)



# How do Chinese Antonymous Cognate Words Emerge? A Study From the Perspective of Metonymy and Metaphor<sup>\*</sup>

Weiwei Pan

University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, SH, China

**Abstract**—“Dialectics” and “contradiction theory” from philosophy are almost the only theoretical resource that can be cited to explain the reason for the formation of Chinese antonymous cognate words. However, this paradigm does not come from the law of thinking, and therefore cannot display the dynamic process of the formation of the phenomenon fundamentally. Metonymy and metaphor could be applied as thinking mechanisms to reveal the rules of the generation of Chinese antonymous cognate words. Briefly, the mechanism of metonymy activates the fission of etymology; while the metaphorical mechanism makes the basic image schemas mapping between different conceptual domains to help this particular type of cognate words to multiply in quantity. Furthermore, the reasons for the formation of metonymic and metaphorical mechanisms are explored under the theoretical framework of “Embodied- cognitive” linguistics while emphasizing the influence of “cognitive-cultural” factors in forming this unique linguistic phenomenon.

**Index Terms**—Chinese antonymous cognate words, metonymy, metaphor, “Embodied-cognitive” linguistics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese antonymous cognate words are an integral part of the Chinese lexical system, therefore, the study of the mechanism of its generation is an investigation of the formative rules of the lexical system. In previous studies, Chinese etymology has always been subordinated to the category of historical linguistics, two problems are haunting the research in this field: 1) the mechanisms of formation of Chinese antonymous cognate words are not elucidated until now, and 2) the shortage of means of research has restricted the development of discipline. The previous paradigm was mainly based on the frame of contradiction and dialectics in Chinese philosophy, for instance, Lu (1981), Zhang (1984), and Wu (1986) cited that to explain the rationality of enantiosem (反训), antisense-homology, and auto-antonyms in Chinese linguistics, however, there was hardly any specialized study on the thinking mechanism of formation of Chinese antonymous cognates.

Chinese antonymous cognate words, namely a group of cognates with a pair of opposite semantics derives from one etymology, after the fission of etymology, the pair of opposite semantics are attached to two individual monosyllabic words, and there is a relationship of regular phonetic correspondence between them in the archaic phonology. For instance, “root/end”(本/末), “start/end”(始/终), “kindness/resentment”(恩/怨), etc., based on the criterion of judgment mentioned above, all of which are Chinese antonymous cognate words.

Lakoff and Johnson (2008) regard metonymy and metaphor as the cognitive mechanism, it also plays a significant role in the generation of Chinese antonymous cognate words. The metonymic mechanism activates and promotes etymological fission, allowing the phenomenon to occur; and the metaphor mechanism enlarges the number of members through the continuous mapping of basic-level image schemas between different conceptual domains. To prove that, this study extracts enough cases from “Chinese Dictionary” (《汉语大字典》), “Chinese Antonym Dictionary” (《汉语反义词辞典》), and “Chinese Cognates Dictionary” (《汉语同源词大典》), and all cases have passed through the examination of semantics and phonetics under the criteria of the judgment of Chinese antonymous cognate words.

## II. METONYM: THE MECHANISM OF ETYMOLOGICAL FISSION

The fundamental reason for the formation of this linguistic phenomenon is that a pair of opposite semantics resides on one etymology at the same time. N. Wang (1996) proposed that any two opposite semantics that can coexist in a word must be “mutually caused” by each other, we could use another word “activation” instead.

Language is the product of human cognition, so the etymological structure is a kind of cognitive structure projection. The function of metonymy in Chinese antonymous cognate words can be mainly concluded into two aspects: 1) activates the opposite semantics, 2) produces the antonymous cognate words through construal.

---

<sup>\*</sup> This study is supported by Chinese Ministry of Education Humanities and Social Science Foundation (Project No.: 20YJC740046), Chinese National Beijing Social Science Foundation (Project No.:20BYY147).

### A. Activation of the Opposite Semantics

The function of metonymy is divided into two opinions: “substitution”, namely substituting one thing for another, which aims to highlight and let us pay more attention to the referent certain aspects of things (Lakoff & Johnson 2008); “reference point”, using the concept of one entity as a cognitive reference point to access a psychological connection with another entity (Langacker, 1993; Littlemore, 2015). Radden and Kövecses (1999) emphasized that metonymy provides mental access from one conceptual entity to another one. All of them point out that the mechanism of metonymy functions psychologically. Panther and Thornburg (2008) proposed that metonymy provides a natural inferential schema that is unconscious, and it could be regarded as a “spread of activation”, they (2012) argued that it is intuitively plausible and has been supported by experimental evidence that words spontaneously evoke their opposites, they propose that conceptual frameworks or conceptual domains can be used to explain such arousal. Barcelona (2019) replaces “mentally accessible” with “activation” and expands the conceptual entity into a conceptual whole, he regarded the activation from one subdomain to another as a basic property of metonymy (Antonio Barcelona, 2011; Antonio Barcelona, 2019). Langacker (1987) proposes that recurring events solidify and form routines, and that routine execution is activation. That is, the fission of etymology comes from the activation of opposite concepts in mental space but not in reality.

The pair of opposite semantics that reside in the same etymology is not a “substitute” with each other, but a “reference point” to the opposite. The pair of opposite semantics are contradictory or contrary, the establishment of the meaning of one relies on the other as a reference point. Vosshagen (1999) proposed that opposition could be regarded as a metonymic principle, and a conceptual entity could be used to provide mental access to its opposite, semantic opposition is not only lexical but also conceptual, and the relation between the opposite is one of close mental contiguity. The etymological fission could be described as language users taking one of the opposite semantics as a reference point to activate the other based on an equal distance evocation in the same category.

For example, in “sweet/bitter” (甘/苦), the original meaning of “甘” is “delicious”, the original meaning of “苦” is “bitter vegetable” and then is extended to taste sense. “Sweet” and “bitter” are a pair of contrary concepts of taste, only when one of which has existed, then the other can be established. Therefore, when we define one sense of taste, it is inevitable to arouse another sense of taste that is the opposite.

Cognitive linguists have a consensus that the source and target domains of metonymy are contiguous. Wu (2010) proposed that the antonymous relationship in auto-antonyms has the representation of “conceptual contiguity” and “identical category”. The etymology is similar to “auto-antonym” morphologically, and the “conceptual contiguity” comes from the contiguity of thinking, reverse association is a kind of reasoning behavior alongside contiguity. A contrariety relation is such that two terms generally stand an equal distance from a neutral reference point (Lehrer & Lehrer, 1982; Murphy & Andrew, 1993). Taking the neutral reference point as the center, the pair of opposite semantics residing on one etymology that formed through the type of “part-part” metonymy should be symmetric in parameters such as nature, degree, distance, etc.

Wang (2007) suggested that metonymy is a cognitive phenomenon that construes the “part-whole relationship” within the same ICM, that is, one part can be used to recognize another part or the whole, or the part can be recognized through the whole, and the relation of the two is contact or contiguity. This study adopts “ICM” to describe the etymological model, for the availability of interpretation of ICM in the display of the formation of antonymous cognate words, “We have ICMs of everything that is conceptualized, which includes the conceptualization of things and events, word forms and their meanings, and things and events in the real world” (Radden & Kövecses, 1999). Taking the etymological model as an idealized cognitive model can show the process of thinking through the vivid model that can help explain it better. The etymological model can be summarized as “container schema” and “link schema” (George Lakoff, 1987), by which the etymology can be imagined as a “container”, the opposite semantics which reside in the same etymology are related but independent of each other simultaneously, they refer to and activate each other to form a “container” together. The “container schema” ensures “identical category” while the “link schema” guarantees “conceptual contiguity”.

For example “audible/deaf” (聪/聋), are two extreme concepts in the auditory category. If hearing could be regarded as an ICM (hearing container), “audible” and “deaf” are two subdomains, which are linked with each other by the condition of hearing. When one of the subdomains is established, the other must be used as a reference.

Lehrer and Lehrer (1982) and Cruse (1986) divided opposite semantics of antonyms into four types: 1) complementary, which divides the conceptual domain into two mutually exclusive compartments; 2) contraries, which denote degrees of some properties; 3) reverses, which denotes the change in the opposite direction in two states; 4) converses, which denotes two opposed perspectives on a relationship or transfer. Karaman (2008) used the term “contronymy” to refer to sense-opposition at micro-level, he divided it into five types: 1) complementary with the feature of binarity, 2) antonymy with the feature of gradability, 3) conversivity with the feature of directional opposition, 4) reversivity with the feature of the beginning and end stage of events, apart from the four types above, the left could be concluded into the type of “incompatibility”.

Synthesizing the above classification, the opposite semantics residing on one etymology could be classified into 4 types as follows:

**“Complementarity”**: “eat / omit” (茹/吐), “quiet / noisy” (静/躁), “alive / dead” (生/死), “fluent / obstructed” (通/塞), “morning / evening” (旦/夕), “kindness / resentment” (恩/怨), “bright / extinguished” (明/灭), “head / hoof” (题/蹄), etc.

**“Antonymy”**: “old/young” (老/少), “full/empty” (盈/虚), “sharp/blunt” (利/钝), “sweet/bitter” (甘/苦), “audible/deaf” (聪/聋), “fine/coarse” (精/粗), “new/old” (新/陈), etc.

**“Conversivity”**: “buy/sell” (买/卖), “teach/learn” (教/学), “get/give” (取/舍), etc.

**“Reversivity”**: “exit / enter” (出/入), “advance / retreat” (进/退), “go / come” (往/还), “far / near” (远/近), “knob / unravel” (结/解), “cover / diffuse” (掩/扬), “ascend / descend” (陟/垫), etc.

### *B. The Analysis of the Formation of Chinese Antonymous Cognate Words From the Perspective of Construal Operation*

There are three main frameworks from Langacker, Talmy, and Croft for the schemes of construal operation. Langacker's (2007, 2008) construal operation could be concluded into “specificity”, “focusing”, “prominence”, “perspective”, and “dynamic”; Talmy's (2000) construal operation includes “configuration structure”, “perspective”, “distribution of attention” and “force dynamics”, the classification of construal from Croft and Cruse (2004) includes “attention/salience”, “judgment/comparison”, “perspective/situatedness”, “constitution/gestalt”. Among these, the overlapping parts include “perspective”, “salience”, “attention”, etc., and it is indicated that most metonymy can be interpreted by them.

Based on Langacker, Talmy, and Croft, Wang (2007) proposed to use the “ECM” (Event-domain Cognitive Model) to explain the phenomenon of metonymy, for the advantage of indicating the linear and hierarchy of action and being, that is, a behavior can be composed of many specific sub-behaviors or sub-actions, and the composition of a thing can include entities such as people, things, tools, etc. The following research will combine the “event domain” cognitive model with the construal operational framework.

#### *(a). Subject & Object*

“Buying” (买) and “selling” (卖) are two sides to a transaction, when the speaker is the “buyer”, the “seller” is the object in the transaction and vice versa. The speaker is present, while the absent party is presented through the type of “part-part” metonymy. When the identity of the speaker is transferred, the exchange of identity of the subject and object occur simultaneously, however, the speaker is always highlighted under this frame, and so do “teach/learn”.

#### *(b). Different Perspectives*

Verhagen (2010) proposed a highly uniform construal operation, that is, perspective, “Different lexicalizations reflect different construal of the ‘viewpoint’ recognizable by the conceptualizer”, Langacker (2008) proposed the concept of vantage point, arguing that the observation and description of the same objective situation from multiple different viewpoints can create different ways of construal and bring about differences in form.

“Exit/enter” (出/入), “advance/retreat” (进/退), and “far/near” (远/近), these three groups of cognates reflect the different orientations of observation. Here is a hidden observer, he/she is the leader of the discourse, the actions facing the observer are “进”, “入”, “近”, and those departing from this observer are “出”, “退”, “远”; the establishment of the direction depends on the reference object while the position of the observer is the origin of the direction.

### III. METAPHORS: THE MECHANISM OF THE PROLIFERATION OF ANTONYM COGNATES

Just as metonymy produces particular etymological structures, so metaphor continuously promotes the proliferation of the number of antonymous cognates. The proliferation of these relies on mapping basic image schemas across different conceptual domains. After “etymological semantemes” and “conceptual semantemes” are extracted, we find that the etymological semantemes share identical features and are structurally analogous to the image schema owing to the properties and function of the schema. For example, for “root/end” (本/末), the etymological semanteme is “up/down” and the conceptual semanteme is “plant”. For “exit/enter” (出/入), the etymological semanteme is “front/back” and the conceptual semanteme is “action state”. For “morning/evening” (旦/夕), the etymological semanteme is “up/down” and the conceptual semanteme is “time”. For “clear/turbid” (清/浊), the etymological semanteme is “sense-based scalarity”, and the conceptual semanteme is “liquid”.

Johnson (1987) argued that a schema consists of a small number of parts and relations, by which it can structure indefinitely many perceptions, images, and events. He believed that schemas are dynamic patterns rather than fixed and static images, by which people can construct or form order in the way they comprehend the world. Schemas are seen as highly abstract, well-adapted underlying structures based on general human knowledge: the considerable homogeneity of image schemas across languages arises from the universal overlaps between the general knowledge of human beings and our embodied experience. A schema could be defined as a fixed template for ordering specific information, whereas an image had been defined as a representation of specific patterns capable of being rendered schematically (Oakley, 2007). In other words, people are accustomed to using some fixed templates as modes or windows to construe the world they live in, by which they achieve to plan the order of the world. The existence of a fixed template has brought about

the highly homogenous intrinsic schematic structure between different concepts.

Hampe (2005) summarizes image schemas into six characteristics, among which, experiential attribute affirms the psychological characteristics and source of the reality of image schemas, whereas the internal structure is consistent with the invisible structure of image schema proposed by Lakoff and Johnson. Multiple image schemas can be superimposed to form a specific schema, and the underlying basic image schema could be deemed as a Cognitive Model (CM), there are such image schemas in every language that originates from the structure of the world and represent mental structures.

Notably, one of the most interesting things about image schemas is that they motivate important aspects of how we think, reason, and imagine. The same image schema can be instantiated in many different kinds of domains because the internal structure of a single schema can be metaphorically understood (Gibbs & Colston, 1995). It is universal that marks time from the perspective of space, and so does Chinese, therefore, spatial schema is taken as a mold to shape the concept of time. There is no logical inferential evidence that could prove the similarity between the spatial domain and temporal domain, what has connected the two individual domains is imagination. People who took themselves as the reference point had experienced time, to locate themselves who had merged into time, they utilized the spatial schema as a tool to mark time, by which the directionality of time had formed. This entire process was dependent on spatial schemas, which played a significant role in allowing people to imagine time. It is thus appropriate to describe metaphors as imaginative capacities based on embodied experience. In this sense, image schema is “psychologically real” (Gibbs & Colston, 1995).

Mandler and Cnovas (2014) proposed that there are three different kinds of cognitive structure: spatial primitive, image schema, and schematic integration, among which, Spatial primitives are the first conceptual building blocks and image schemas are simple spatial stories built from them. In Chinese antonymous cognate words, spatial schema has constituted most of the number of cognates, even temporal cognates are also included, undoubtedly, spatial schema is the most fundamental but important image schema type. Henblom et al. (2019) argued that Image schemas, on the other hand, are spatiotemporal relationships used in cognitive science as building blocks to conceptualize objects and events on a high level of abstraction. The spatial relationship is the cornerstone of image schema of Chinese antonymous cognate words, through metaphoric mapping, spatial schema was applied to temporal construal and thus had generated a huge number of cognates about spatiotemporal relationship, next to that is an emotional and moral category. Szvedek (2019) proposes that the fundamental property of image schema is density experienceable by touch, according to his opinion, touch is the most fundamental sense experience and density is one of the measurement units of scalarity, what he implied is a schema of scalarity based on sense. For instance, “fine/coarse” (精/粗), “pure/miscellaneous” (纯/杂), “精” and “粗” originally refer to polished rice and coarse rice, “纯” and “杂” refer to undyed and variegated silks respectively, the difference between them could be distinguished by touch, thus sense-based scalarity could be deemed as a kind of image schema in Chinese antonymous cognate words.

Here are some main image schemas in Chinese antonymous cognates.

**“Up/ Down”:** “root/end” (本/末), “morning tide/evening tide” (潮/汐), “Qian /Kun” (乾/坤),

“morning/evening” (旦/夕), “cover/diffuse” (掩/扬), “head/h hoof” (题/蹄),

“ascend/descend” (陟/坠), “head/foot” (首/足), “heaven/earth” (天/地), etc.

**“Front / Back”:** “exit/enter” (进/出), “far/near” (远/近), “go/return” (往/还),

“belly/back” (腹/背), “receive/payout” (出/纳), etc.

**“Start / Stop”:** “start/end” (始/终), “alive/dead” (生/死), “move/stop” (动/止),

“plant/reap” (种/收), etc.

**“Polarized mental state”:** “kindness/resentment” (恩/怨), “favor/humiliation” (宠/辱), etc.

**“Polarization of moral quality”:** “integrity/greed” (廉/贪), “diligence/ease” (勤/逸),

“courage/fear” (勇/惧), etc.

#### A. Primitive Image Schema Types

##### (a). The Schema of “Up / Down” Maps From Human Domain to Non-Human Domain

“Head/Foot” (首/足), the original meaning of “首” is head, and the original meaning of “足” is legs and feet. “Head/Foot” is the concept of the orientation of human body in space.

“Heaven / Earth”(天/地), the original meaning of “天” is the top of the human head, and the meaning of the word is expanded as sky; the original meaning of “地” is earth, sky and earth are located at the upper and lower ends of the human body.

“Top / Bottom”(顶/底), the original meaning of “顶” is the top of the head, which is first extended as the meaning of upper part of the head, and then expanded to the meaning of “the upper part of the object”; “底”, the original meaning is the lower part of the object.

“Head / Hoof” (题/蹄), the original meaning of “题” is “forehead”, and then the semantics is mapped from the human domain to the non-human domain through metaphor, so “题” also has the meaning of “animal’s head”; the original meaning of “蹄” refers to horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, and other animals are born on the horny end of the toes.

The concept of “up / down” is mapped from the human domain to the plant domain, and then is expanded to the beginning and the end of things respectively, from which a larger category is formed.

*(b). The Concept of “Up / Down” Is Mapped From the Concrete Domain to the Abstract Domain*

The groups of examples below map the spatial concept of “up / down” from a concrete domain to an abstract domain.

“Cover/Diffuse” (掩/扬), the original meaning of “掩” is to cover up whereas the original meaning of “扬” is to diffuse. “Ascend/Descend” (陟/垫), the original meaning of “陟” is “climbing”, and the original meaning of “垫” is “sinking”; “Repress/Raise” (抑/举), the original meaning of “抑” is “pressing”, which highlights a downward movement trend; the original meaning of “举” is that both hands hold objects with an upward movement trend, so do another two groups “inhibit / diffuse” (抑/扬), “hid / diffuse” (隐/扬).

*(c). The Concept of “Up / Down” Is Mapped From the Spatial Domain to the Temporal Domain*

“Up / down” is the primitive image schema that we construe the world—but compared with the visualization of the spatial structure, time is abstract, intangible, and infinitely cyclic. The basic function of metaphor is to project concrete concepts to abstract concepts, thereby helping to mark and define the world.

“Morning/evening” (旦/夕), the original meaning of “旦” is dawn whereas the original meaning of “夕” is evening. Time is originally cyclical, but people project image schema of “up/ down” from spatial domain to temporal domain, taking themselves as a reference point to observe the rise and fall of the sun, the concept of morning and evening is formed, and so do “morning tide/evening tide” (潮/汐). In this sense, the concept of time is constructive.

*(d). “Front / Rear” Image Schema*

“Belly / back” (腹/背), the original meaning of “腹” is “thickness”, the typical features are extracted and then mapped to the human body domain to refer to the abdomen of a person; the original meaning of “背” is the back, “belly / back” is located at the “front/back” of a person respectively. The “front/back” of space, like “up / down”, is one of the most basic image schemas in our thinking. Thus, the image schema of “front/back” is mapped onto the domain of action, and the spatial concept of “go/return” is formed from the observer’s point of reference, as facing him/herself (“return”) or departing from him/herself (“go”).

For example, “exit/enter” (出/入), and “advance/retreat” (进/退) are both the projections of the schema of “front / back” from human body domain to the action domain. The two groups of examples, “far/near” (远/近) and “go/return” (往/还) represent the concept of spatial distance, “go” entails moving away from the observer, and “return” means moving toward the observer.

*(e). “Start / Stop” Image Schema*

The “start/stop” image schema is formed on human beings’ embodied experience. Ordinary physics has demonstrated that motion cannot be perpetual but must pass through two phases: start and stop (始/终). In “prosperous/withered” (荣/枯), the original meaning of “荣” is “Tung wood”, owing to this tree species grows prosperously, the meaning is extended to “prosperous”; the original meaning of “枯” is to fade away. Thus “prosperous” and “withered” are parts of the same process from start to end. In “alive/dead” (生/死), the original meaning of “生” is “growth”, and that of “死” is “the end of life”. “Alive” and “dead” are human’s most basic but profound embodied experiences.

*B. The “Cognitive-Cultural” Mechanism in Metaphor*

Humboldt (1997) believed that the internal web of language reflected national linguistic consciousness. Language can be regarded as a repository of meanings stored in the form of linguistic signs shared by members of a culture. This lends language a historical role in stabilizing and preserving a culture (Zolt & Kövecses, 2010a). We live in a world of conceptualization, human beings fabricate the information they perceived through embodied experience into various words to name the world. As humans are meaning-making subjects, processing and output are closely related to our cognitive structures and background knowledge. The encyclopedic view of semantic production maintains that the precultural background is an important component of people’s encyclopedic knowledge, determining which meanings are produced and forming the basis of alternative construal.

Kövecses (2010b) suggested that meaning-making is a cooperative enterprise (linguistic or otherwise) that always takes place in a large set of contexts (ranging from immediate to background) and that occurs with varying degrees of success. People who can successfully participate in this kind of meaning-making can be said to belong to the same culture.

If the proliferation of Chinese antonymous cognates reflects the universality of metaphor from the perspective of basic image schema, then the role of culture in generating metaphorical variants must be considered. Kövecses (2008) suggested that the natural occurrence of metaphorical conceptualization could be attributed to two simultaneous pressures: the pressure of embodiment and the pressure of context. The latter is determined by a local culture that produces culturally specific metaphors. He (Kövecses, 2005) proposed two causes of variation in metaphor: differential experience and differential cognitive inference, the first one relate to sociocultural context, social and personal history,

and what we might call differences in social and personal concerns or interests. Variation in metaphor is produced by differences in social categories such as race, religion, style, subculture, etc., indicating the existence of a “cognitive-cultural” factor in the formation of metaphors.

For instance, within the ancient Chinese cultural system, the antonymous cognates of “husband/ wife” (夫/妇), “Qian/Kun” (乾/坤), “heaven/earth” (天/地), “clear/turbid” (清/浊), and “Yin/Yang” (阴/阳) can be divided into two categories: (1) “阳” (Yang), consisting of “夫” (husband), “乾” (Qian), “天” (heaven), “清” (clear), and “妇” (woman), and (2) “阴” (Yin), containing “坤” (Kun), “地” (earth), and “浊” (turbid). The distinction between “阴” and “阳” enacts a discourse of power in which “阳” enjoys a status superior to that of “阴”. The classification of “阴” and “阳” represents a unique material and world view of the Chinese cultural system: all matter can be categorized as “阴” or “阳”, according to its nature. Lexical concepts reflect human thinking about external things from the perspective of linguistic psychology, which is attached to language symbols to represent the attributes of its referent object (Y. Zhang, 2009).

The original meaning of “阳” is “the south of the mountain or the north of the water”, and the original meaning of “阴” is “the north of the mountain or the south of the water”, the function of “阴” and “阳” were originally positional nouns. Obviously, the etymologies of “阴” and “阳” are “moon” (月) and “sun” (日), respectively. From simple positional nouns to cultural keywords, metaphors allow meanings to proliferate and categories to expand. The differential status of “yin-yang” might come from its etymologies: “日”(sun) and “月”(moon), as physical phenomena, were endowed with psychological meaning reflected (in ancient China as well as many other early cultures) in the worship of the sun. Human embodied experience is critical to the process of metaphorical mapping from the physical to the psychological domains. Compared to the moon, the relative importance of the sun to human existence has established its greater salience and psychological status: thus, “阳” is valued more highly than “阴”, generating greater potential psychological energy. Thus, as a kernel category of the Chinese cultural system, the meanings of the prototype of “阴/阳” have been established via metaphor and continue to expand into new concepts via similar metaphorical constructions, like Kövecses (2005) said, With the help of basic experiences alone and without such conceptual metaphors it is difficult to see how abstract concepts can emerge and, in emerging, how they can acquire the detailed content and structure that they have.

But how have metaphors mapped across different conceptual domains to constitute the larger cultural category of “yin/yang”? The answer lies in the diffusion of Confucian classical books, whose authoritarian discourses shaped the cognitive models of intellectuals as key opinion leaders in society, and that is the pressure of context. For instance, Liji • Jiaotesheng (礼记•郊特牲) states: “Music is constituted by Yang while politeness is constituted by Yin, the success of everything relies on the harmonious relationship of Yin Yang.” An ancient Chinese intellectual named Sun Xidan interpreted that above in this way: “The reason why the attribute of music belongs to Yang is that it is nurtured by heaven; the reason for etiquette belongs to Yin is because that is nurtured by earth.” This demonstrates that the attributes of heaven and earth are Yang and Yin, respectively. Similarly, Yijing • the Interpretation of Gua (易•说卦) states: “Qian is derived from heaven meanwhile Kun is derived from earth.” In the ancient Chinese cultural system, the status of “husband” was exalted to heaven as “阳”, while that of “wife” was deprecated to earth as “阴”; this bestowed legitimacy and rationality on the power inequalities of marital and family relationships in ancient China.

The two opposing substances and properties that belong to “yin-yang” could be traced from the same origin. In Yi (易) it is recorded that Taiji (太极) that evolved through Yi (易) could differentiate into “yin” and “yang”, in the ancient Chinese creation myth, Pangu (盘古) created heaven and earth from chaos: the clear air rose to become sky whereas the turbid air sank to become earth. Therefore, “clear” (清) belongs to the category of “yang” and “turbid” (浊) was assigned to the category of “yin”. Owing to the dominance of Confucian ideology in ancient Chinese society, Confucian discourses were taken as incontrovertible social dogma, upholding authoritarian ideology and rule. Thus, the binary oppositional category “yin-yang” passed from generation to generation and shaped the cognitive models of the Chinese people.

The cultural system consists of conceptual and situational contexts, ideology is one of the subtypes of cultural-conceptual context, and the cultural factors that affect metaphorical conceptualization include the dominant values and characteristics of members of a group (Zoltán Kövecses, 2017). As the dominant social value, Confucian ideology is responsible for the specificity of metaphor. Whereas metaphor is a universal thinking mechanism, culture is the imaginary space in which ethnic communities are formed. Metaphor is formed both from embodied recognition of the objective world and the regulatory force exerted by the dominant ethnic culture. This kind of “cognitive-cultural” mechanism strongly influences our construal and construction of the world and makes the birth of the nationality of metaphors.

#### IV. THE FORMATION OF ANTONYMUS COGNATE WORDS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF “EMBODIMENT-COGNITIVE” LINGUISTICS

Lakoff and Johnson (2008) took human embodied experience as the empirical basis for metaphor and metonymy, for

instance, the structure of spatial concepts emerges from our constant spatial experience, and now it is already been accepted as a wide consensus by cognitive linguists. The embodied philosophy proposes that human senses and perceptual systems play an important role in shaping specific conceptual systems such as colors, basic-level concepts, spatial relationships, aspectual concepts, etc., the formation of our embodied concept relies on our sensorimotor system (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

Conceptual structures are isomorphic with our neural architecture, all our reasoning and imagination doesn't rely on human reason, but on our sensorimotor nerves. The semantic relationship of Chinese antonymous cognate words includes opposition of original meaning and extended meaning, which is brought about by mankind's embodied mechanism. For example, "uncommunicative/talkative" (寒/喧), the original meaning of "寒" is "cold". Through synaesthesia, people can highlight the characteristics of the experience obtained from the sensory domain and then map it into the psychological domain, extending the meaning to "sound desolate". The original meaning of "喧" is "exclamation", and its auditory characteristics are highlighted through metonymy and then extended to the meaning of "extremely noisy". Another example is the "mental state" type, such as "favor/humiliation" (宠/辱), "kindness/resentment" (恩/怨), "courage/fear" (勇/惧), "good/evil" (好/恶), these bipolar psychological experiences are completely given rise to from the embodiment experience, Lakoff(2016) claimed there is brain circuitry that releases hormones in certain brain regions that we experience as 'affect', either positive or negative, this neural system determines when we feel good or bad.

From the perspective of embodied cognition, the way of proliferation of words is that the body acts as the subject to experience or feel to form basic image schemas, and then through continuous cross-domain mapping, a larger conceptual category is constituted eventually. Humans transfer the simpler concept to different cognitive domains, and use conceptual structures that are proven adaptive to develop higher-level concepts can enrich the scope of information processing while expanding the breadth of thinking (Ye, 2017).

Wang (2015) summarized the production of language into two steps: "embodiment" is an interactive experience while "recognition" is the cognitive processing, and the latter admits that language is subjective and divergent to a large extent. Although people's perceptions and experiences are basically the same, people can choose different "perception channels" or "experience methods", that is construal. The theoretical core of Embodied-Cognitive Linguistics is "reality-cognition-language" with the salience of the "human nature" of language. Compared with the view of cognitive linguistics, Embodied-Cognitive Linguistics emphasizes the subjectivity of human beings in the cognitive processing. That two points reflect the overall impact of the method and thinking of "recognition" in Chinese antonymous cognate words, one is the vertical spatial perspective of Chinese temporal concept, and the other is the formation of moral categories. Wang's (2019) "The Temporality of English and the Spatiality of Chinese: A Contrastive Analysis" discussed the grammatical differences between English verbs and Chinese nouns, negative representations in English and Chinese, word structure, text structure, characteristics of Chinese run-on sentences, and the grammatical differences between English and Chinese progressive markers, etc., to prove English is a temporal language while Chinese is a spatial language. English temporal words are more horizontal, while Chinese temporal words are more vertical. Two experiments by Liu and Zhang (2009), "The influence of launch of spatial relationship on time processing" and "The Influence of vertical and horizontal spatial relationships on time processing of Chinese native speakers under different language conditions", have proved that different languages have different regulations on time when establishing the way of time expression. Therefore, people inherit the habits of expression of their predecessors and match the different dimensions of time and space according to the way specified by their own language, to think about time in corresponding methods. Gibbs (2019) also compared English and Chinese time words when discussing how conceptual metaphor shapes decision-making, he argued that about one-third of all time expressions in Mandarin use the vertical metaphor, and the results show that people's temporal judgments are influenced by their most salient conceptual metaphors. National languages are constructed based on national thinking and culture, this vertical preference of the Chinese "temporal-spatial" concept comes from our perception of vertical orientation of the world at the beginning of the establishment of language. For example, "up and down five thousand years of Chinese history", this kind of historic view presents a vertical assumption, and once this conceptual metaphor is formed, it will strengthen the cognition of people who use this language.

Lakoff (2010) argued that moral metaphors are rooted in people's experiences of physical and social interactions and that different moral types are based on different models of family, in the model of "strict father", metaphors of moral authority, moral power, and moral order are given the priority. This kind of cognition is derived from acculturation, the moral orders advocated by Confucianism, as a hidden discourse, display its powerful energy in the formation of metaphors. The three groups of antonymous cognate words, "integrity/greed" (廉/贪), "diligence/ease" (勤/逸), and "courage/fear" (勇/惧) reflects the discipline of Confucian ideology for ancient scholars.

The original meaning of "廉" is narrow, it extended the meaning of angular through metonymy and then extended the meaning of integrity by metaphor mapping, the discipline represented by "廉" is extremely strict even harsh, and the salience of absolute incorruptibility reflects the moral order made by Confucian. The original meaning of "逸" is to escape, then it was extended to the meaning of "leisure and happiness"; "勤" is a pictophonetic character, and its pictogram reflects the advocacy of "physical strength" in the farming civilization. Doing physical labor hard is the

moral requirement of the farming era, while“逸” implies ignorance about the toil of farming. “勇” is another pictophonetic character whose initial meaning is the strength, after metaphor mapping, the semantics was upgraded to the category of morality. In the Confucian classics, “勇” was interpreted as an excellent moral character and regarded as an admonition to scholar behavioral norms.

The dominant ideology in the feudal era is Confucianism that is centered on patriarchy, therefore, the semantic opposition of “勤/逸”, “廉/贪”, “勇/惧” stands for the exhortation for intellectual moral behavior ruled by Confucian ideology, the binary opposition of value is engraved in the words and brings about these Chinese antonymous cognate words.

## V. CONCLUSION

As a system, the proliferation of Chinese antonymous cognate words is a regular movement, no matter the analysis of etymological fission from the perspective of conceptual metonymy, or the description from the perspective of the cross-domain mapping of image schemas, all above which we discussed aims to reveal the law of this movement. Explaining the formation of Chinese antonymous cognate words from the perspective of cognitive occurrence will be helpful to overcome the shortcomings of the research paradigms and methods from historical linguistics that have occupied the field of Chinese cognates for a long time, meanwhile, replenish methods and means for the interpretation and judgment of cognate words from the perspective of thinking generation.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Barcelona, A. (2011). Reviewing the properties and prototype structure of metonymy. In R. Benczes, A. Barcelona, & F. J. R. d. M. Ibáñez (Eds.), *Defining Metonymy in Cognitive Linguistics: Towards a consensus view* (pp. pp. 7–58): John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [2] Barcelona, A. (2019). Metonymy. In E. Dąbrowska & D. Divjak (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics Foundations of Language*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
- [3] Croft, W., & Cruse, D. A. (2004). *Cognitive Linguistics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [4] Cruse, D. A. (1986). *Lexical semantics*, Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Gibbs, R. W. (2019). Metaphor. In D. Ewa & D. Dagmar (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics - Foundations of Language* (pp. 195-220): De Gruyter Mouton.
- [6] Gibbs, R. W., & Colston, H. L. (1995). *The cognitive psychological reality of image schemas and their transformations*. 6(4), 347-378.
- [7] Hampe, B. (2005). Image schemas in Cognitive Linguistics: Introduction. In B. Hampe & J. E. Grady (Eds.), *From Perception to Meaning: Image Schemas in Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 1-14): De Gruyter Mouton.
- [8] Hedblom, M. M., Kutz, O., Peñaloza, R., & Guizzardi, G. (2019). Image Schema Combinations and Complex Events. *KI - Künstliche Intelligenz*, 33, 279 - 291.
- [9] Humboldt, W. v. (1997). *On Language: The Diversity of Human Language-Structure and Its Influence on the Mental Development of Mankind* (Y. Xiaoping, Trans.). Beijing: Commercial Press.
- [10] Johnson, M. (1987). *The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason*: University of Chicago Press.
- [11] Karaman, B. I. (2008). On Contronymy. *International Journal of Lexicography*, 21(2), 173-192. doi:10.1093/ijl/ecn011
- [12] Kövecses, Z. (2010a). Metaphor, language, and culture. *DELTA: Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada*, 26(SPE): 739-757.
- [13] Kövecses, Z. (2017). Context in Cultural Linguistics: The Case of Metaphor. In F. Sharifian (Ed.), *Advances in Cultural Linguistics* (pp. 307-323). Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- [14] Kövecses, Z. n. (2005). *Metaphor in Culture: Universality and Variation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [15] Kövecses, Z. n. (2008). Conceptual metaphor theory: Some criticisms and alternative proposals. *Review of Cognitive Linguistics. Published under the auspices of the Spanish Cognitive Linguistics Association*, 6, 168-184.
- [16] Kövecses, Z. n. (2010b). Metaphor and Culture. *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae: Philologica*, 2, 197-220.
- [17] Lakoff, G. (1987). *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal about the Mind*: The University of Chicago Press.
- [18] Lakoff, G. (2010). *Moral politics: How liberals and conservatives think*: University of Chicago Press.
- [19] Lakoff, G. (2016). Language and emotion. *Emotion Review*, 8(3), 269-273.
- [20] Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh : the embodied mind and its challenge to Western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- [21] Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2008). *Metaphors we live by*: University of Chicago Press.
- [22] Langacker, R. W. (1987). *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar: Theoretical prerequisites*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- [23] Langacker, R. W. (1993). Reference-point constructions. *Cognitive Linguistics*, 4(1), 1-38.
- [24] Langacker, R. W. (2008). *Cognitive Grammar: A Basic Introduction*: Oxford University Press.
- [25] Lehrer, A., & Lehrer, K. (1982). Antonymy. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 5(4), 483-501. doi:10.1007/BF00355584
- [26] Littlemore, J. (2015). *Metonymy: Hidden Shortcuts in Language, Thought and Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [27] Liu, L., & Zhang, J. (2009). The Influence of Spatial Metaphors of Time on Time Cognition of Chinese Native Speakers. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 4, 266-271+320.



- [28] Lu, Z. (1981). *The General Theory of Shuowen Jiezi*. Beijing: Beijing Publishing House.
- [29] Mandler, J., & Cánovas, C. P. (2014). On defining image schemas. *Language and Cognition*, 6(4), 510-532.
- [30] Murphy, G. L., & Andrew, J. M. (1993). The conceptual basis of antonymy and synonymy in adjectives. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 32(3), 301-319.
- [31] Oakley, T. (2007). Image schemas. In D. Geeraerts & H. Cuyckens (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of cognitive linguistics* (pp. 214-235). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [32] Panther, K.-U., & Thornburg, L. L. (2008). The role of conceptual metonymy in meaning construction. In J. R. d. M. I. Francisco & M. S. P. Cervel (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics: Internal Dynamics and Interdisciplinary Interaction* (pp. 353-386): De Gruyter Mouton.
- [33] Panther, K.-U., & Thornburg, L. L. (2012). Antonymy in Language Structure and Use. In M. Brdar, M. Ž. Fuchs, & I. Raffaelli (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistics Between Universality and Variation* (pp. 159-186): Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- [34] Radden, G., & Kövecses, Z. (1999). Towards a Theory of Metonymy. In K.-U. Panther & G. Radden (Eds.), *Metonymy in language and thought* (pp. 17-59).
- [35] Szwedek, A. (2019). The Image Schema: A Definition. In C. M. Cmeci (Ed.), *Styles of communication* (Vol. 11, pp. 7-27): University of Bucharest Publishing House.
- [36] Talmy, L. (2000). *Toward a cognitive semantics, Vol. 1: Concept structuring systems*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.
- [37] Verhagen, A. (2010). 48 Construal and Perspectivization. In D. Geeraerts & H. Cuyckens (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics* (pp. 48-81): Oxford University Press.
- [38] Vosshagen, C. (1999). Opposition as a Metonymic Principle. In K.-U. Panther & G. n. Radden (Eds.), *Metonymy in Language and Thought* (pp. 289-308): John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- [39] Wang, N. (1996). *Principles of Exegesis*. Beijing: China International Broadcasting Press.
- [40] wang, W. (2019). *The Temporality of English and the Spatiality of Chinese: A Contrastive Analysis*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [41] Wang, Y. (2007). *Cognitive Linguistics*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- [42] Wang, Y. (2015). *Embodied-Cognitive Linguistics - A Localization Study of Cognitive Linguistics*. Beijing: Commercial Press.
- [43] Wu, S. (2010). research on Auto-antonyms from the Perspective of Metonymy. *Journal of West China Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)*, 6, 77-82.
- [44] Wu, T. (1986). A discussion on the homology of antonyms and auto-antonyms. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research: Foreign Languages Bimonthly*, 2, 23-33.
- [45] Ye, H. (2017). *Embodied Cognition—Principles and Applications*. Beijing: Commercial Press.
- [46] Zhang, S. (1984). *Collection of Zhang Shilu's Linguistics*. Nanjing: Xuelin Press.
- [47] Zhang, Y. (2009). *Semantics, Cognition, Interpretation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

**Weiwei Pan** was born in JiangSu, China in 1981. She received her PH.D. degree in Chinese Philology from Fudan University in 2017.

She is currently an associate professor of University of Shanghai for Science and Technology. She focuses on Chinese Etymology, Discourse Analysis, and Cognitive Language.

# EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Reflections on Different Aspects of Teaching in Saudi Arabia: A Preliminary Qualitative Case Study

Talal Musaed Alghizzi

Department of English Language and Literature, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

**Abstract**—This qualitative investigation addresses the following aspects of Saudi pre-service English as a foreign language teachers: their perceptions of and attitudes toward their English proficiency and teaching competence; their teaching approaches; the motivating and deterring factors when choosing a teaching career; the problems they encountered; and suggestions to improve the English teaching profession. Eight participants who registered for a teaching practicum course at the university and met particular grade point average thresholds (from “passable” to “excellent”) were recruited. After the semester, the participants were asked four questions addressing the aspects mentioned earlier. The results indicate that regardless of gender, the higher participants' grade point average, the more negative their perceptions and attitudes and, therefore, the greater their determination to avoid the profession. This study provides numerous suggestions for researchers on how to address these limitations and expand the investigation of this topic.

**Index Terms**—pre-service teachers, teaching profession, English as a foreign language, Saudi Arabia

## I. INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabia has 64 registered state and private universities (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2021). Each offers an English major—with a specialization in English Language; Literature; Translation; Linguistics (Applied or Theoretical); Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages—or non-English majors with English as the medium of instruction, such as Medicine, Sciences, Computer Sciences, Accounting, and Marketing. However, the number of English major graduates has increased rapidly. According to the annual report for the 2019–2020 academic year by Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, 696 undergraduates received degrees from the College of Languages and Translation's Department of English Language and Literature. Many of these graduates will become English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors, either by choice or by coincidence (Albalawi, 2016). However, only a few of these prospective Saudi EFL instructors can be characterized as having high English proficiency or the ability to teach at the pre-university level.

In 2004, the MoE determined that intermediate and high school Saudi EFL teachers were “neither competent in [the language] nor in the affair of teaching it” (Al-Seghayer, 2011, p. 23). In fact, among the 100 countries and regions represented in the Education First English Proficiency Index (2020), Saudi Arabia ranked 97<sup>th</sup>; hence, its people exhibit low levels of English proficiency. All the following factors lead to unsatisfactory results among English-language learners: the (sometimes complete) lack of sufficiently equipped instructors and support systems; outdated curricula and teaching methodologies; learners' gradual loss of motivation and aptitude; learners' underachievement, poor literacy, and dependence on memorization; rote learning; high-stakes testing (Syed, 2003).

### Statement of the problem

Researchers and educators have made tremendous efforts and conducted studies to help Saudi EFL students overcome their problems in four English skill areas—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—develop their English proficiency, and increase their motivation to learn the language. Although several recommendations provided by those investigators have been adopted by the MoE, there is a need to shift focus to the prospective Saudi EFL instructors themselves. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has investigated Saudi EFL instructors' attitudes toward and perceptions of English and teaching before and after becoming teachers. Further, no study has explored the problems they encountered during their temporary student-teaching experiment and the reasons for becoming EFL instructors at the pre-university level. A greater understanding of these areas can inform prospective interventions or educational programs to increase the efficacy of EFL education, both in Saudi Arabia and globally.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Saudi EFL Teachers' English Proficiency, Teaching Competence, and Teaching Approaches

Both McMullen (2009) and Ashraf (2018) agree that teaching English in Saudi Arabia is still a major challenge for Saudi EFL teachers. These teachers have low English-language proficiency and lack appropriate training programs. This results in the following: a reliance on ineffective teaching approaches; an inability to incorporate textbooks,

technology, or additional materials (Al-Seghayer, 2011, 2014a, 2014b; Alghizzi, 2011, 2012, 2017); difficulties in handling the social and cultural issues related to teaching English (Shah et al., 2013).

For example, English classes at the intermediate and secondary levels in Saudi Arabia can have up to 50 students per class (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014). Further, the classroom instruction is teacher-centered (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015) because—as justified by Al-Seghayer (2014a)—students perceive teachers as directors, controllers, or merely vehicles of knowledge transmission. In addition to difficulties in both class and time management, the teaching approaches of teachers do not provide equal opportunities for all students to practice English sufficiently (Shah et al., 2013). Alghizzi (2011, 2012) confirms that some Saudi teachers do not adhere to a specific teaching approach but instead combine elements from various approaches. Alqahtani (2018) and Al-Seghayer (2014a) find that the most commonly used teaching methodologies in Saudi Arabia are the grammar-translation method, the audio-lingual method, and communicative language teaching. While the former method focuses on memorization and translation into Arabic, Al-Mohanna (2010) notes that the latter centers on two elements—habit formation and drilling—in which teachers frequently combine repetition and grammatical rules. Alghizzi (2011, 2012) emphasizes that Saudi EFL teachers also offer their students model texts, either to memorize or to make simple changes. Elyas and Picard (2010) add that such techniques aim to help students pass their final exam, which results in students aiming for grades rather than acquiring another language or improving their language skills.

Insufficiently trained Saudi EFL teachers have attempted to provide resources and learning aids to students to accelerate their English learning (Fareh, 2010). However, they have found their schools to be ill-equipped and have incorrectly assumed that the supplementary materials would benefit all students regardless of their proficiency and individual differences (Al-Seghayer, 2014a, 2014b).

Saudi EFL teachers' low competence levels and their unsuitable teaching approaches and techniques could be attributed to their low proficiency levels, lack of confidence and training, or desire to create a faster and easier learning process (Alhawsawi, 2013; Rabab'ah, 2005). However, these issues have led to unsatisfactory English-learning outcomes for Saudi students. Moreover, the outcomes are likely to be carried forward, as these students may become EFL instructors in the future (Alshumaimeri, 2003).

Saudi English teachers could improve their proficiency by engaging in pre-service and in-service training, improving teaching methodologies, and implementing classroom controls. Al-Hazmi (2003) and Al-Seghayer (2014a) suggest that pre-service and in-service preparation programs should be updated to train EFL Saudi teachers on how to design lesson plans and activities, adopt teaching methodologies and technologies, implement appropriate student evaluation methods, and manage their time in teaching each language skill.

#### *B. Saudi EFL Teachers' Perceptions of and Attitudes Toward the Teaching Profession and Reasons for Becoming Teachers*

According to Brown (2007), the quality of teaching can be enhanced if teachers understand their roles, accumulate teaching knowledge through trial and error, and have high motivation and positive attitudes toward the profession. This combination would enable teachers to create positive, stimulating, and energizing classrooms and guide students through their learning processes. The Factors Influencing Teaching Choice (2007) project developed by Watt and Richardson, termed FIT-Choice, has since 2001 aimed to unify, develop, and increase the validity and reliability of the motivating factors presented in the literature to help determine how teachers perceive their profession and the factors influencing their career choice. Richardson and Watt (2006, 2010, 2018) and Watt and Richardson (2007, 2008, 2012) attribute the inconsistency of studies addressing teaching motivations to the following: absence of a common theoretical and analytical framework; invalid and unreliable instruments; varied methods of analyzing and reporting results; the lack of accurate definitions, leading to overlapping categorizations of motivating factors. Therefore, these researchers proposed the FIT-Choice questionnaire in which motivating factors are classified as follows: altruistic, intrinsic, extrinsic, or ability-related beliefs; personal and social utilities; the perception and satisfaction of the profession, including job security, time for family, job transferability, the ability to shape the future or work with children or adolescents, enhance social equity, make social contributions, the demands of perceived tasks (difficulty and expertise), and returns (social status and salary). The questionnaire also includes negative motivations such as teaching being a "fallback" career option (Watt & Richardson, 2012).

Nevertheless, EFL researchers have expanded their investigations to include EFL instructors' perspectives of the profession and the effects of other variables. For example, Agcam and Babanoglu (2016) investigate the attitudes of Turkish EFL instructors toward their profession. Their results reveal that the majority have positive attitudes regardless of the problems they encounter. Kamran and Shahbaz (2018) demonstrate that among Pakistani secondary EFL teachers, positive perceptions of teaching are driven by altruistic reasons (e.g., conveying knowledge, satisfying research opportunities, making English easier for students) and intrinsic reasons (e.g., teaching being their favorite profession and a logical choice given their interest in languages and women being instinctively equipped to teach). For female participants, teaching is a secure and safe career. Similarly, Yasan-Ak and Yilmaz-Yendi (2020) research pre-service teachers' attitudes toward teaching based on their gender, age, grade point average (GPA), department, motives for selecting the teaching profession, and parents' educational levels. The results reveal significant differences in participants' attitudes toward the profession by GPA, motives, gender, and department but not age or parents' educational levels. Most importantly, female participants and those with a higher GPA express more positive attitudes

than men and those with a low GPA. Participants who view the teaching profession as a “dream job” have more positive attitudes than those who join the profession for other reasons such as the employment opportunity and conditions, the dominance of the profession, desire or pressure from family, and university entrance exam scores.

Sharbain and Tan (2012) find a strong correlation between teaching competence and attitudes toward the teaching profession among Palestinian pre-service EFL teachers. Participants develop strong, positive attitudes toward the profession as a result of the teaching competence acquired from the training program. Sharbain and Tan (2013) show that 50 of their sample’s female primary EFL teachers have more significantly positive attitudes toward the teaching profession than their male counterparts. Further, Ertasoglu and Gursay (2019) examine primary and high school English teachers’ attitudes toward the teaching profession, social status, motivation, and (dis)contentment factors in their career choice. They find that regardless of the participants’ gender, age, work experience, and school type, those respondents have positive perceptions of teaching, even with the majority experiencing dissatisfaction with their working conditions and a general undervaluing of the profession by society. Half of their participants became teachers because they wanted to contribute to society, seek social justice, and build the future by working with children. This factor is followed by self-perceptions such as one’s security, free time with family, and job transferability. Overall, the respondents seem content with their job choice.

### C. Saudi EFL Teachers’ Obstacles

Saudi EFL teachers often face difficulties that prevent them from providing an optimal environment for EFL learners. In particular, they must manage students with mixed abilities, insufficient classroom hours, and varying cultures (Orafi & Borg, 2009). Moreover, teachers lack access to suitable training programs and often graduate from college without the appropriate training (Al-Seghayer, 2014a). Additionally, the English-language textbooks used in the Saudi Arabian educational system have been criticized for their focus on declarative knowledge rather than improving students’ English communication skills. This is reflected in teachers’ employment of grammar and vocabulary in their lessons, with little emphasis on communicative tasks (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013).

Fareh (2010) notes that EFL programs in the Arab world are negatively influenced by inappropriately trained teachers, the absence of technology, students’ lack of motivation, rote learning, inappropriate teaching materials and assessment methods, and infrequent exposure to English. Ur Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013) stipulate that training teachers, choosing appropriate methodologies, and motivating students are all necessary to improve EFL education in Saudi Arabia. Thus, offering pre- and in-service teacher training programs is crucial to improving the performance of novice teachers.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

The adopted design for this research is both descriptive and qualitative.

### B. Setting and Participants

This study was conducted during the first semester of the 2018–2019 academic year at a college that offers a four-year bachelor’s degree in English Language. At the time, the study was already officially approved by the college dean’s office. According to the Students’ Academic Affairs Office, 280 male and female undergraduates registered for a teaching practicum course. The college mandates that these undergraduates must form groups of four supervised by one instructor. Of the teaching fellows assigned to the supervision, only one male and one female instructor decided to participate voluntarily in the research. The Students’ Academic Affairs Office was then required to provide a computer-generated randomized list of two gender-based groups of eight participants (four each), representing four GPA levels: “passable,” “good,” “very good,” and “excellent.” Each participant was contacted to obtain their approval of their voluntary participation. The office was also requested to provide a list of alternative prospective participants with appropriate GPA levels if one of the research participants decided not to participate or to withdraw. Table 1 presents the participants’ demographic information.

The second semester of the academic year was overlooked in this study because of the drastic changes to the course specification as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown regulations that applied to all pre-university and university-level schools. Instead of EFL pre-service teachers visiting pre-university schools to practice teaching, they were obligated to work on lesson preparations, exams, presentations, and reflections to present to their supervisors through virtual classes.

TABLE 1  
PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Participants' Alias	Gender	Age Range	Range of English Exposure	GPA	Educational Level	Teaching Hours
MP	Male	22–26	14–17	2.45	High School	8
MG				3.15		
MGG				3.87		
ME				4.76		
FP	Female	22–24	14–16	2.60		
FG				3.54		
FGG				3.98		
FE				4.84		

### C. Procedures

At the beginning of the semester, the researcher met with the male supervisor and his participants and used the online meeting platform Zoom to broadcast the meeting with the female supervisor and her participants. All were provided with detailed information about their designated schools, procedures, and requirements and were told to journal their teaching experience, addressing the same research questions. They were also instructed to record their lesson plans, teaching approaches, and any problems they encountered. Every two weeks, the two supervisors attended the participants' classes and provided them with feedback on their strengths and weaknesses, as observed during the lessons. The participants were told that their supervisors were not the only source of information; they had to rely on themselves while keeping records of the problems they encountered and the solutions found for these problems. At the end of the semester, and after the participants received their teaching practicum course scores, they were required to read their diaries and answer four questions—modified from the research questions—along with any other information they would like to share with the researcher, with no word count restrictions.

### D. Research Questions

1. What are the Saudi EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions of their English proficiency, teaching competence, and teaching approaches they used before and after registering in the teaching practicum course? Why?
2. What are the Saudi EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward the teaching profession before and after the teaching practicum and their motivating or deterring factors to continue in such a career?
3. What are the problems encountered during teaching, and how did they overcome them?
4. What do the Saudi EFL pre-service teachers suggest to improve the profession and its outcomes?

### E. Data Collection and Analysis

The participants' responses were e-mailed to the researcher, with word counts ranging from 84 to 760 words. The questions generated were thematically categorized and reported, as discussed in the following section. Any mistakes in grammar, spelling, and clarity were amended as indicated in brackets.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results indicated that for the first research question that addresses the participants' perceptions of their English proficiency and teaching competence as well as the justifications of their teaching approaches, the answers were somewhat similar, with minor differences. For example, the "passable" GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers both stated the following:

"My English language [is] good, but my teaching, I think, is very good. I translate words and sentences in[to] Arabic and ask students to memorize them" (MP).

I'm sure my English and teaching [are] very good because some students told me that. I like to write and say the meaning[s] of words and sentences in Arabic. I [...] exercise [...] with students and [tell] the meaning in Arabic. Students must memorize everything in the book (FP).

Similarly, the "good" GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers stated the following:

"I think my English is very good because I can talk [speak] and write. My teaching is [...] excellent. When I teach, I translate everything into the book in Arabic. I ask my students to memorize words and rules, and sometimes I g[i]ve them some texts to memorize" (MG).

"My English proficiency is good and nice, especially [in comparison to] students in high schools. My teaching competence is also very good because I prepare the lessons very carefully. I translate everything for my students in[to] Arabic, even the English rules, and they [have] to memoriz[e] the words and passages" (FG).

The "very good" GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers noted the following:

"My English and my teaching are very good and this is what my professors and students [have] told me. I am a big fan of the grammar-translation method because I learned English during my intermediate and high school [years] using it. I think it is beneficial and easy to apply. Students love it because they will be able to understand everything in the textbook" (MGG).

"I [...scored] 6 in IELTS [International English Language Testing System], so this means my English is very good. In addition, my teaching is excellent because I know all the teaching approaches I studied at college. My mark [on] the course is 90. When I teach, I sometimes use English to give basic instructions, greet, or ask the students. However, I have to translate so that students can understand them. Sometimes, students translate their homework and write [their] answers without help. I want them to depend on themselves" (FGG).

Next, the "excellent" GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers maintained the following:

"I'm not trying to show off when saying that I'm a native speaker of English as I spent more than 15 years abroad. Having said that, I feel that my teaching competence is somehow not great! This does not mean that I do not know how to teach students, [...] I feel that we as undergraduates were not taught as we should in terms of the teaching approaches and assessments. We studied only two theoretical courses on teaching approaches. Although I tried to apply different teaching approaches, such as 'suggestopedia' [or a] 'communicative approach', [...] students were not intrigued or seemed motivated for me to continue. Eventually, I used the grammar-translation method because students are used to such. However, I tried to effectively apply this method to [...] us[e] only English in class by endorsing different teaching techniques.

First, I chose to use the electronic version of the textbook designed by the [MoE], in which students can study and answer questions online. The electronic textbook includes [...] audio for many things. Second, I provided students with supplementary materials on the topics covered [in] the textbook explained in Arabic and English to help them understand why, where, and when to use a rule/word. Students were asked to read and write every lesson in their notebooks. In every class, students were divided into groups and were given 10 [to] 15 minutes to talk in English. They have to prepare and write what they want to say in class at home using the online dictionaries I provided. To increase their motivation, I brought my laptop and PlayStation 4 to class to play online with the groups who scored more [...] I also invited my friends whose English [was] very good to be interviewed by students who were told to prepare questions and translated their answers [to] the questions. Finally, I taught students how to read test questions and study before the exams, and it was effective because none of the students scored less than 13 out of 15 in the mid-term or quizzes, although the proficiency levels of most of them were very low" (ME).

"Both my English proficiency and teaching competence are excellent. At first, my students were afraid of English and [were] not motivated to learn it. So I started with the grammar-translation method and slowly [...] taught students how to effectively use English and Arabic dictionaries. I asked them to translate every word in the textbook before they [came] to class; then, we discussed their translations. I told them that memorization is a very effective method [for] learn[ing] English if they apply it correctly and repetitive[ly]. I showed them how to look for short stories and analyze them to be able to write their own stories. We wrote short stories together, and it was fun. I also incorporated video games and mobile apps and showed them how to use them at home. [...]. Finally, I taught them how to study [...] English by giving them sample tests" (FE).

These answers indicate that regardless of the participants' GPA and gender, they all believed that their language proficiency and teaching competence were good, very good, or excellent, except for one male participant with an "excellent" GPA who believed his teaching ability was subpar. The "passable" and "good" GPA participants' belief in their English proficiency and teaching competence did not support the findings of Al-Seghayer's (2011) report. However, the current results could be driven by a poor understanding of how proficiency is measured, depending on their own impressions, words from their students or supervisors, or comparison to their students' proficiency. Nonetheless, they all applied the same teaching approaches regardless of their GPA and gender, except the high-GPA participants. The participants incorporated the grammar-translation method when teaching, which relies heavily on the memorization of words, rules, and/or passages (Al-Mohanna, 2010; Alqahtani, 2018; Al-Seghayer, 2014a, 2015; Elyas & Picard, 2010). Nevertheless, the class instruction among the "passable," "good," and "very good" Saudi male and female EFL pre-service teachers seemed to be teacher-centered, as criticized by Alrashidi and Phan (2015) and Fareh (2010).

Moreover, both Alhawsawi (2013) and Rabab'ah (2005) maintain that reliance on such teaching approaches, which center on Arabic as a means of instruction, could be attributed to their low proficiency, lack of confidence, and/or aim to accelerate the learning process. Other researchers have indicated that pre-service teachers are ill-equipped (Alghizzi, 2011, 2012; Al-Seghayer, 2014a, 2014b, 2015; Shah et al., 2013) because they only studied two theoretical courses on teaching approaches and use the same methods they learned when they were students (Albalawi, 2016; Alshumaimeri, 2003; Goodlad, 1990). Arabic has been appreciated by teachers and students in both the current research and prior studies (AlHarbi, 2018; Al-Nofaie, 2010). Further, Saudi male and female pre-service teachers with an "excellent" GPA provided supplementary materials, which do not support Fareh's (2010) findings, including the incorporation of technologies and instruction focused on self-autonomy and final exams (Al-Seghayer, 2014a; Fareh, 2010). However, such improvised and vague teaching approaches and strategies are not based on solid teaching theories; they are difficult to assess by other means than students' performance in class or on exams (Alghizzi, 2011, 2012).

Regarding the second research question, which addressed the participants' perceptions of teaching before and after registering for the teaching practicum course and their motivating or deterring factors to continue in the profession, the

results revealed similar, different, and paradoxical answers among all the participants in terms of their GPA and gender. For instance, the “passable” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers stated the following:

“I want to become a teacher [of] English for many reasons. First, I will have a good salary, [...a] long holiday, and I will teach English because it is an international language, and I want students to learn it” (MP).

“[The] teaching profession is very important and very prophetic. I want to become a teacher for many reasons, such as [the] salary, long vacation, and beautiful environment. My parents and most [of my] extended family [are] teachers, so I want to be like them. [However, ...] one problem with teaching is that [once the MoE accepts...] me as a teacher, they will send me [to] far cities or villages” (FP).

Similarly, the “good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers mentioned the following:

“I love teaching because I think I like teaching children and young people. In teaching, you will have long holidays and high salary[ies]. I always teach my brothers and sisters English. My dad is also a teacher” (MG).

“Teaching is [a] relaxing job. It is good and provide[s] you with [a monthly] salary. If you are a teacher, you have short working hours and long holidays. I want to become a teacher because of [these] reasons and because my father want[s] me to, and I do not want [to] because the Ministry will ask me to teach first in far[-]away villages” (FG).

The “very good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers noted the following:

“Teaching English is not a bad career because of the high salaries and long holidays. If I do not get any other job, I will be a teacher because I can easily obtain the requirements to become a teacher. [In addition], teachers work shorter hours than other jobs, so I can work in another job as a part-time [job] after I finish my teaching hours at school. The only issues with teaching are the annual tests that you have to pass to obtain your job and the fact that I will not be allowed to work in Riyadh in my first year [...]” (MGG).

“I honestly think teaching is not a bad job at all and maybe a second choice. My father and my older brother are teachers, and I think I did and still can do better in teaching or any other job [...]. Teaching is a noble occupation with good salary[ies] and holidays, but I am afraid if the [MoE] accept[s] my application, it will send me to places I have never been to before” (FGG).

The “excellent” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers maintained the following:

“My perception of teaching as a profession has not changed before and after enrolling in the teaching practicum course. I do not really see any advantages in teaching, not a single one. [...In...] fact, the profession has several disadvantages. The reputation of such a career is not great. I have always laughed at the jokes made at teachers’ expense. Lazy, unmotivated, long-holiday-seekers, unambitious, the list goes on. The salary is not sufficient and not fair because I will most likely [...] double the salary if I work in the private sector. Teachers, strangely, are not allowed to pursue their Masters and PhDs unless they have a sponsor. They will mostly lose their English proficiency [due to] repeating the same texts to students whose English proficiency levels are low and the lack of a reading habit. The last disadvantage is related to the fact that none of the new teachers will be assigned [to] the schools of their choice. They will be sent to teach in remote villages and towns for years before they will be reassigned to locations of their choice” (ME).

“The profession of teaching is the most unappreciated type of job [...] in Saudi Arabia. I [...] find it degrading to work as a teacher after all the hard work I have put to have an excellent GPA. My feeling[s] are based on different reasons: teachers are always criticized and mocked [...], the salary is not that high, not all teachers are allowed to pursue their postgraduate studies, and finally, the locations of their assignment will most likely be other than what they want” (FE).

We can draw different conclusions from these responses. First, none of the participants except one “excellent” GPA student indicated whether their perspective of the teaching profession had changed after the teaching practicum course. Thus, they had predetermined perceptions of and attitudes toward choosing a teaching career. Regardless of the participants’ gender, the answers showed that the higher their GPA, the more negative was their perception and attitude and the more determined they were to avoid the profession. The “passable” and “good” GPA participants demonstrated positive attitudes toward teaching and wanted to become teachers. Further, the “very good” GPA participants indicated they would become teachers if they did not find other opportunities. However, the “excellent” GPA participants exhibited negative attitudes and stated they would not become teachers because of career-related issues and because they were convinced that they would find better opportunities.

Van Damme (2017) notes that in many Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development member nations, the teaching profession is primarily occupied by women. Kamran and Shahbaz (2018) provide possible justifications for this demographic imbalance, emphasizing that women are instinctively equipped to teach and perceive the profession as both safe and secure. This could be observed as true for Saudis before the launch of the Saudi government’s Vision 2030 plan, which established equal employment opportunities for both genders. This does not indicate that all Saudi EFL graduates view their teaching career as a last resort, as the results here refute this. However, regardless of gender, the higher the student’s GPA, the less likely they are to become teachers. These results do not support those of Sharbain and Tan (2013) and Şener (2015), who find that female EFL teachers have more positive attitudes toward the profession than men. The results also do not align with those of Yasan-Ak and Yilmaz-Yendi (2020), who conclude that female

pre-service teachers and those with higher GPAs have more positive attitudes toward their teaching career than their male and low-GPA counterparts.

In terms of the factors that motivate students toward the teaching profession or deter them from it (Richardson & Watt, 2006, 2010, 2018; Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2008, 2012), the results revealed various motivators. For example, the “passable,” “good,” and “very good” GPA participants indicated similar intrinsic reasons (working with children; teaching them an international language; beautiful environment; perceptions of a relaxing, noble, or prophetic job) and extrinsic reasons (salary, long holidays, short working hours, family encouragement or influence, easy recruitment requirements, and opportunities to work two jobs) to join the teaching profession. However, the “very good” participants mentioned a negative altruistic reason—teaching was their second or “last resort” career option.

The “passable” and “good” GPA female participants and “very good” GPA male and female participants provided another factor deterring them from a teaching career: assignment to teaching locations far from where they would prefer. The “very good” GPA male participants expressed their reservations toward the annual test teachers must take to obtain a salary increase. Conversely, the MoE’s assignment of new teachers’ locations was not cited by the “excellent” GPA participants as a reason for joining teaching. They revealed such intrinsic reasons as the fact that teaching careers have no advantages and are still unappreciated. They also believed teachers would eventually lose their English proficiency from repeatedly teaching from the same textbooks, thereby passing their low proficiency and poor reading habits onto their students. The participants also provided some extrinsic reasons such as the salary, long vacation, and heightened reputation, as well as altruistic reasons such as teachers not being able to pursue postgraduate studies. Finally, the differences found between the participants who had successfully finished two teaching courses and registered for the teaching practicum course were not in line with other results in the literature. Sharbain and Tan (2012) emphasize that the positive attitudes of pre-service male and female teachers increase after they enroll in a teaching training course.

Regarding the third research question, which addressed the problems the participants encountered while teaching, the answers appeared to depend on their GPA. For example, the “passable” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers stated the following:

“I didn’t face [...] any problems” (MP).

“Honestly, I have nothing to say about problems [because] everything was good” (FP).

Moreover, the “good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers mentioned the following:

“I only faced one problem relat[ed] to students’ many numbers [i.e., the number of students in the classroom], [and] that is all. I tried to ask the princip[al] to divide the students, but he refused” (MG).

“I had a problem with class time. It is not enough to teach, so I took other waiting classes to fix this” (FG).

The “very good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers said the following:

“[...] I have to admit that they were many. I had a problem with students['] numbers and time and class management because you need to explain, for example, a rule and do exercises with student[s] in 45 minutes only. I decided to only give one example and answer one or two questions in class, and the rest must be [done at] home. I check the homework in my free time and write comments if need[ed]” (MGG).

“My biggest problem was the EFL teacher who is supposed to be my mentor inside the school. One time, I wrote a test that was difficult for students, and although she saw it before the time of the test, she did not say anything. My students were complaining, so I wrote another one and showed it to my supervisor. She provided me with magnificent comments and corrected my second test based on them. My students were happy because most of them could understand what is [being] asked” (FGG).

Finally, the “excellent” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers maintained the following:

“I’ve encountered many problems during my field experience as a teacher. I’ve already explained in detail in [Q]uestion 1 the diversified teaching approach I used to increase students’ awareness of their low English proficiency, motivat[e their] attachment to the subject, and [address] their ineffective studying techniques. None of the things I did, however, were introduced to me in college [...] They were improvised, and although I feel that they were working, I would really be satisfied more if I were taught the best assessment methods by which I could measure the positive effectiveness of the things I did” (ME).

“The problems I encounter[ed] while teaching can be attributed to students’ attitudes toward English, [their] experiences in and motivation to learn the language, and test anxiety. Students told me that they kn[e]w how important the language [was], but they [...] always found it difficult to learn. Teachers, in many cases and across different levels, taught them to memorize things for the final exam and forget them later on. The memorization technique is a good method [for] learn[ing] the language, but it must be applied correctly. [...] Some of the things I did to solve these issues were [the] incorporati[on of] video games and mobile apps to help them practice English. I also taught them how to use online Arabic English dictionaries to help them understand the English gaming tasks I assigned to them. I have also taught them how to study for the exam by explaining the formats of the questions and how to answer them accurately” (FE).

These responses demonstrated that the higher the GPA of Saudi EFL pre-service teachers, the greater their observations and analyses in specifying problem(s) and the greater their creativity and determination in finding solutions. On the one hand, the “passable” GPA participants stated that they did not encounter any problems. This could be attributed to those participants’ low proficiency. On the other hand, the “good” GPA participants mentioned



problems such as the large number of students and time management. However, and possibly based on their previous experience as students, these participants appeared to endorse typically ineffective solutions. They either asked the principal to divide students into smaller groups or incorporated “waiting” classes, named as such because they are assigned to other teachers when those designated to these classes are absent. These respondents also appeared to restrict the learning processes within the school, as implicitly stressed by Al-Seghayer (2014a, 2015), Elyas and Picard (2010), and Elyas and Grigri (2014), and not outside school, as with the “very good” GPA participants. The “very good” GPA participants admitted encountering problems with student numbers, time management, and test proficiency and consulted their supervisors who were experts in the field for guidance. Nevertheless, only one “very good” GPA male participant—perhaps unintentionally—expanded the learning process to include their homes by asking them to perform exercises and commenting on their work if needed.

Additionally, and in parallel with the prior literature, the “excellent” GPA participants revealed that they encountered many problems: students’ low proficiency, motivation, experience in their learning and attitudes toward English, ineffective studying techniques, and test anxiety (Elyas & Al Grigri, 2014; Khan, 2011; Khankar, 2001; Ur Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). The “excellent” GPA male participant acknowledged not being introduced to such problems in college and therefore not having been taught how to address them. This lack of training confirms the findings of Al-Seghayer (2014a, 2014b, 2015), Al-Hazmi (2003), Alghizzi (2011, 2012), and Ibn Talib (2003). However, both “excellent” GPA participants admitted to improvising in their applied solutions here and those mentioned in the first question regarding the use of technologies, group work, analyses of stories, explaining the final exam format, discussions, translation tasks, and studying techniques, among others. This did not support Fareh’s (2010) findings. Simultaneously, such informative answers could mean the following. First, the “excellent” GPA participants were more independent. Second, they attempted to expand students’ proficiency and attachment to the language and allotted time to practice the language by including work outside the classroom. Third, they applied a communicative approach that AlHarbi (2018) finds is effective in decreasing anxiety and increasing motivation.

Finally, the results for the last research question, which aimed to gather suggestions to improve the profession and its outcomes, revealed both similar and different answers. For instance, the “passable” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers stated the following:

“Teaching English does not [require] anything. It is good [as it is]” (MP).

“There is nothing to suggest [...] here” (FP).

Similarly, the “good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers mentioned the following:

“I don’t have any suggestions because I am not [an] expert” (MG).

“Nothing to say as I think our education[al] system is good” (FG).

The “very good” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers noted the following:

“I suggest hav[ing] many training courses for amateur and professional teachers in teaching and evaluation. I think that the [MoE] should develop English textbooks and prepare [...] schools for teaching English, that is to say, labs” (MGG).

“I think the most important two things to develop English teaching is to have new textbooks every now and then and train teacher[s] on how to use them perfectly” (FGG).

Finally, the “excellent” GPA pre-service male and female EFL teachers maintained the following:

“For the [MoE] to develop the teaching of English in Saudi Arabia, some stringent decisions have to be [made]. The first [...] is not to allow graduates [with a] low English proficiency and GPA become EFL teachers. In many cases, these can become teachers because they do not have any other alternatives, and it is easy for them to fulfill their employment requirements. Therefore, the [MoE] must increase [its] profession[al] employment requirements by increasing the minimum GPA score and total score [from the] STEP test [i.e., Standardized Test of English Proficiency] and require a sample teaching presentation undertaken by these prospective teachers. The second [...] is to determine the motivation and reasons why an applicant wants to become a teacher” (ME).

“Increasing the salary, decreasing the number of students in classrooms, and having flexible working hours are very important, but there are other things that need to be considered, such as assigning [a] mentor for amateur teachers, allowing them to experiment on students by applying new teaching approaches such as drama or role[-]play, establish[ing] English clubs and magazines to allow students write and use the language, and help[ing teachers] understand the essence and elements of self-autonomy so they can become independent and pass their knowledge to their students” (FE).

The “passable” and “good” GPA participants seemed satisfied with their current status and the outcomes from teaching English, lacked experience, or were ill-equipped to determine and write about what is needed to develop it. According to Firkins et al. (2007), their low-proficiency EFL participants were similar to those with learning disabilities in terms of the following: producing less coherent, less refined, and shorter written samples; experiencing difficulties in producing organized samples; generating ideas; applying metacognitive skills. For the “very good” GPA participants, the profession only needs training courses, preparation among schools, and new textbooks. Such suggestions partially confirm the findings of many studies that highlight the reasons for EFL teachers’ limitations and/or emphasize the

suggestions by which teachers can improve (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Al-Seghayer, 2011, 2014a, 2014b, 2015; Ashraf, 2018; Syed, 2003).

The MoE has signed agreements with organizations to provide training courses and teaching materials for EFL teachers, as reported by Alghamidi (2015), Alhumaidi (2013), and Cengage (2016). However, these agreements would indicate that the Saudi male and female EFL pre-service teachers either have no information on such matters or simply believe that such things are still insufficient (Alghizzi, 2017). Finally, the “excellent” GPA participants’ answers were direct and precise, demonstrating that although they ultimately did not want to become teachers, some factors could motivate other high-GPA graduates to join the teaching profession. These factors or suggestions included increasing employment requirements, assigning mentors to new teachers, allowing teachers to experiment with new teaching approaches, applying self-autonomy, and decreasing the number of students in classrooms. These answers support the suggestions highlighted by some specialists (Albalawi, 2016; Al-Seghayer, 2015). However, other suggestions such as determining the motivating or deterring factors to join the profession, increasing salaries, defining more flexible work hours, and establishing English clubs, labs, and/or journals remain unaddressed.

## V. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This study provides important findings on Saudi male and female EFL pre-service teachers’ perceptions of and attitudes toward their English proficiency levels and teaching competence. It throws light on the teaching approaches used, the motivating and deterring factors in whether to choose a teaching career, the problems encountered, and their suggestions for improving the English teaching profession. Future researchers should accumulate information on and hone the areas discussed here by expanding the scope to include supervisors’ and mentors’ perspectives as well as other universities and school levels such as the primary and intermediate levels.

Another limitation of this research relates to the participants’ number and succinct answers, which is possibly due to their inability to generate and discuss ideas in English. Some methods to address this could involve stipulating a minimum word count for the questions given to participants, analyzing their supervisor’s and mentor’s comments written after observing their classes, and conducting semi-structured interviews with the participants. If the collected data still have a low word count, researchers could allow students, especially those with low and intermediate English proficiency, to answer in Arabic.

Finally, incorporating the proposed FIT-Choice questionnaire can help future research. However, the questionnaire has certain limitations in not addressing the teaching profession-related factors found in this research (e.g., proficiency levels, teaching abilities, salary, holidays, work location assignments). Through the consistent development of the questionnaire by including the results of local and international studies investigating the teaching profession in general and English in particular, future research can provide knowledge by which education policies, textbooks, and training courses can be improved.

## VI. PEDAGOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

To a large extent, English remains the only second language taught at pre-university (primary, intermediate, and secondary) levels in Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries; however, Saudi EFL learners’ outcomes remain unsatisfactory. Therefore, some stringent recommendations for the Saudi MoE must be considered. First, the MoE should determine the motivating and deterring factors among current EFL teachers and those specializing in English in general or its sub-fields (e.g., literature, translation, linguistics, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) regarding their choice of teaching as a career and adjust and improve its educational policy accordingly. Second, it should require universities to increase theoretical and practical training courses within their curricula or provide additional graduate diplomas in teaching. Third, it should increase educator employment requirements to include high minimum score thresholds on English proficiency tests and GPAs and extra teaching qualifications. Finally, the MoE should sign agreements with professional international educational organizations to provide current and prospective EFL instructors with intensive training courses on English-language skills, teaching methodologies, the incorporation of technology, assessments, and writing research. Thus, this educational cycle—a cycle of poor Saudi English learners becoming EFL instructors—that has been perpetuated in research and literature will be redirected to result in more satisfactory outcomes.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Agcam, R., & Babanoglu, M. P. (2016). An investigation on EFL teachers’ attitude toward teaching profession. *Higher Education Studies*, 6(3), 21–31. DOI: 10.5539/hes.v6n3p21
- [2] Albalawi, F. H. (2016, January 20). ضعف مخرجات تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية. أين يكمن الخلل؟ [Poor English language learning outcomes: Where is the problem?]. *Al-Jazirah*. <http://al-jazirah.com/2016/20160120/ar9.htm> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [3] Alghamidi, A. (2015, January 7). Training 8. *EFL teachers* [معلم لغة إنجليزية 8700 تدريب]. *Okadh Newspaper*. <http://www.okaz.com.sa/new/mobile/20150107/Con20150107745435.htm> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [4] AlHarbi, M. S. (2018). *Exploring English language teaching approaches in Saudi Higher Education in the West Province* [Doctoral dissertation] University of Glasgow.

- [5] Alhawsawi, S. (2013). *Investigating student experiences of learning English as a foreign language in a preparatory programme in a Saudi university* [Doctoral dissertation] University of Sussex.
- [6] Al-Hazmi, S. (2003). EFL teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia: Trends and challenges. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 341–344. DOI: 10.2307/3588509
- [7] Alhumaidi, M. (2013, November 8). *من حيز الورق إلى تطبيقات التقنية بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في السعودية*. يستهدف أربعة ملايين طالب العام المقبل [Teaching English language in Saudi Arabia: From the paper-based phase to electronic-based phase: In preparation for the application of the electronic project targeting four million students next year]. *Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper*. <http://aawsat.com/home/article/8730> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [8] Al-Mohanna, A. (2010). English teaching in Saudi Arabian context: How communicatively oriented is it? *Journal of King Saudi University: Languages and Translation*, 22, 69–88.
- [9] Al-Nofaie, H. (2010). The attitudes of teachers and students towards using Arabic in EFL classrooms in Saudi public schools: A case study. *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and Language)*, 4(1), 64–95.
- [10] Alqahtani, S. M. A. (2018). English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. In C. Moskovsky & M. Picard (Eds.), *English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia: New insights into teaching and learning English* (pp. 120–137). Routledge.
- [11] 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. DOI: 10.5539/elt.v8n5p33
- [12] Al-Seghayer, K. (2011). *English teaching in Saudi Arabia: Status, issues, and challenges*. Hala Printed, Co.
- [13] Al-Seghayer, K. (2014a). The four most common constraints affecting English teaching in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 4(5), 17. DOI: 10.5539/ijel.v4n5p17
- [14] Al-Seghayer, K. (2014b). The actuality, inefficiency, and needs of EFL teacher-preparation programs in Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 3(1), 143–151. DOI: 10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.3n.1p.143
- [15] Al-Seghayer, K. (2015). Salient key features of actual English instructional practices in Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*, 8(6), 89–99. DOI: 10.5539/elt.v8n6p89
- [16] Alshumaimeri, Y. (2003). *A study of classroom exposure to oral pedagogic tasks in relation to the motivation and performance of Saudi secondary learners of English in a context of potential curriculum reform* [Doctoral dissertation] University of Leeds.
- [17] Ashraf, T. A. (2018). Teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia: Struggles and strategies. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 6(1), 133–154. DOI: 10.5296/ijele.v6i1.13148
- [18] Alghizzi, T. M. (2011). *The role of English writing instruction methodologies on the types of written mistakes/errors EFL graduate diploma students can identify in their writings* [Master's thesis] Dublin International Foundation College.
- [19] Alghizzi, T. M. (2012). *The role of English writing instruction methodologies on the types of written mistakes/errors Saudi EFL pre-university students can identify in their writings* [Master's thesis] University College Cork.
- [20] Alghizzi, T. M. (2017). *Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency (CAF) development in L2 writing: The effects of proficiency level, learning environment, text type, and time among Saudi EFL learners* [Doctoral dissertation] University College Cork.
- [21] Brown, D. H. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.
- [22] Cengage. (2016, November 29). *Cengage partners with Tatweer company for educational services to deliver professional development program to English language teachers in Saudi Arabia*. Cengage.com. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/cengage-partners-with-tatweer-company-for-educational-services-to-deliver-professional-development-program-to-english-language-teachers-in-saudi-arabia-300369682.html> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [23] Education First English Proficiency Index. (2020). *The world's largest ranking of countries and regions by English skills*. Ef.com. <https://www.ef.com/wwen/epi/> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [24] Elyas, T., & Al Grigri, W. H. (2014). Obstacles to teaching English in Saudi Arabia public schools: Teachers' and supervisors' perceptions. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2(3), 74–89.
- [25] Elyas, T., & Picard, M. (2010). Saudi Arabian educational history: Impacts on English language teaching. *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues*, 3(2), 136–145. DOI: 10.1108/17537981011047961
- [26] Ertaşoğlu, L. D., & Gursöy, E. (2019). English teachers' perceptions regarding their profession. *Novitas-Royal (Research on Youth and Language)*, 13(2), 122–132.
- [27] Fareh, S. (2010). Challenges of teaching English in the Arab world: Why can't EFL programs deliver as expected? *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2(2), 3600–3604. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.03.559
- [28] Firkins, A., Forey, G., & Sengupta, S. (2007). Teaching writing to low proficiency EFL students. *ELT Journal*, 61(4), 341–352. DOI: 10.1093/elt/ccm052
- [29] Factors Influencing Teaching Choice. (2007). *Fit-choice project: Factors influencing teaching choice*. <http://www.fitchoice.org/>.
- [30] Goodlad, J. (1990). *Teachers for our nation's schools*. Jossey-Bass.
- [31] Ibn Talib, A. (2003). *The reality of teaching aids in the teaching of art education institutes intellectual education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* [Master's thesis] King Saud University.
- [32] Kamran, M., & Shahbaz, M. (2018). Pakistani secondary school teachers' perspectives on choice of profession. *International Research Journal of Arts and Humanities (IRJAH)*, 47(47), 87–99.
- [33] Khan, I. A. (2011). Challenges of teaching/learning English and management. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 11(8), 68–80.
- [34] Khankar, Q. (2001). *Identify the most important problems of language curriculum English for the first grade secondary school from the viewpoint of the parameters Province Taif* [Master's thesis] Umm Al Qura University.
- [35] McMullen, M. G. (2009). Using language learning strategies to improve the writing skills of Saudi EFL students: Will it really work? *System*, 37(3), 418–433. [www.doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.05.001](http://www.doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2009.05.001)
- [36] MoE. (2021). *التعليم الجامعي* [University education]. <https://www.moe.gov.sa/ar/education/highereducation/Pages/default.aspx> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [37] Orafi, S. M. S., & Borg, S. (2009). Intentions and realities in implementing communicative curriculum reform. *System*, 37(2), 243–253.

- [38] Rabab'ah, G. (2005). Communication Problems Facing Arab Learners of English. *Journal of Language and Learning*, 3(1), 180-197.
- [39] Richardson, P. W., & Watt, H. M. G. (2006). Who chooses teaching and why? Profiling characteristics and motivations across three Australian universities. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(1), 27–56. DOI: 10.1080/13598660500480290
- [40] Richardson, P. W., & Watt, H. M. G. (2010). Current and future directions in teacher motivation research. In T. C. Urdan & S. A. Karabenick (Eds.), *The decade ahead: Applications and contexts of motivation and achievement* (pp. 139–173). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- [41] Richardson, P. W., & Watt, H. M. (2018). Teacher professional identity and career motivation: A lifespan perspective. In P. Schutz, J. Hong & D. C. Francis (Eds.), *Research on teacher identity: Mapping challenges and innovation, Agriculturists* (pp. 37–48). Springer International Publishing.
- [42] Şener, S. (2015). Examining trainee teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession: Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University case. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 571–580. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.550
- [43] Shah, S. R., Hussain, M. A., & Nassef, O. A. (2013). Factors impacting EFL teaching: An exploratory study in the Saudi Arabian context. *Arab World English Journal*, 4(3), 104–123.
- [44] Sharbain, I. H. A., & Tan, K. E. (2012). Pre-service teachers' level of competence and their attitudes towards the teaching profession. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1(3), 14–22.
- [45] Sharbain, I. H. A., & Tan, K. E. (2013). Gender differences in primary English language teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession. *Wudpecker Journal of Educational Research*, 2(5), 71–77.
- [46] Syed, Z. (2003). The sociocultural context of English language teaching in the Gulf. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 337–340. DOI: 10.2307/3588508
- [47] Ur Rahman, M. M., & Alhaisoni, E. (2013). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: Prospects and challenges. *Academic Research International*, 4(1), 112–118.
- [48] Van Damme, D. (2017, March 1). *Why do so many women want to become teachers?* OECD Education and Skills Today. <https://oecdeditoday.com/why-do-so-many-women-want-to-become-teachers/> Retrieved on February 13, 2022
- [49] Watt, H. M. G., & Richardson, P. W. (2007). Motivational factors influencing teaching as a career choice: Development and validation of the FIT-Choice scale. *Journal of Experimental Education*, 75(3), 167–202. DOI: 10.3200/JEXE.75.3.167-202
- [50] Watt, H. M. G., & Richardson, P. W. (2008). Motivation for teaching. *Learning and Instruction*, 18(5), 405–407. DOI: 10.1016/j.learninstruc.2008.06.009
- [51] Watt, H. M. G., & Richardson, P. W. (2012). An introduction to teaching motivations in different countries: Comparisons using the FIT-Choice scale. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(3), 185–197. DOI: 10.1080/1359866X.2012.700049
- [52] Yasan-Ak, N., & Yılmaz-Yendi, B. (2020). An investigation of pre-service teachers' attitudes towards teaching profession in regard to some variables: The case of Middle East Technical University. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, (IOJET), 7(1), 111–125.

**Talal Alghizzi** is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University-IMSIU (Saudi Arabia). He holds a BA in English Language and Literature and an MA in Translation (Saudi Arabia). He also holds another MA and A PhD in Applied Linguistics (Ireland). Dr. Alghizzi was the chairman of the Quality Department as well as the chairman of the Chinese Department at the College of Languages and Translation at IMSIU. Dr. Alghizzi's areas of interest include Language Skills, Technology Integration, Learning Environment, and Translation. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1088-9216>

# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

## Aims and Scope

Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
- Curriculum development and teaching methods
- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
- Language education
- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills
- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
- Language and culture, cognition, and pragmatics
- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

## Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 15 to 30 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
  - o Submission of extended version
  - o Notification of acceptance
  - o Final submission due
  - o Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- Preparing the "Call for Papers" to be included on the Journal's Web site.
- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal's style, together with all authors' contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

More information is available on the web site at <http://www.academypublication.com/jltr/>



---

How do Chinese Antonymous Cognate Words Emerge? A Study From the Perspective of Metonymy and Metaphor <i>Weiwei Pan</i>	1365
EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Reflections on Different Aspects of Teaching in Saudi Arabia: A Preliminary Qualitative Case Study <i>Talal Musaed Alghizzi</i>	1374

---

---

Effects of the Instruction With <i>Liushu</i> on Mandarin Learners' Chinese Character Achievement and Motivation <i>Qing Li Guo, Fong Peng Chew, and Yin Yin Yeoh</i>	1211
Lexical Borrowing of Covid-19 Terminologies in the Indonesian Language <i>Dewa Ayu Kadek Claria, Ketut Artawa, Made Sri Satyawati, and Anak Agung Putu Putra</i>	1222
Gender Role of Characters in the Illustrations of Local and Introduced Edition Textbooks of College Portuguese Teaching in China <i>Jiajia Sui</i>	1232
Consolidation Through Rebellion in Kate Chopin's <i>The Awakening</i> <i>Farhadiba H. Khan</i>	1243
Language Learning With Neurolinguistic Programming: An Integrative Review <i>Edhy Rustan</i>	1251
A Bibliometric Analysis on Teaching Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language Outside Mainland China (2001-2020) <i>Siqi Deng and Xiao Xie</i>	1259
EFL Teachers' Practices and Challenges Towards Implementing Critical Thinking Skills Online During Covid-19 Pandemic <i>Nasser Alasmari</i>	1269
Marriage Break-Ups and Its Effect on Children's Future: An Exploration of the Novel <i>Custody</i> <i>Jayajothilakshmi V, Mohan S, and Kannan R</i>	1279
A Corpus-Based Study on the Semantic Use of Reporting Verbs in English Majors' Undergraduate Thesis Writing <i>Yueyue Huang</i>	1287
Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL Teaching: A Sociocognitive Perspective <i>Sami Abdullah Hamdi</i>	1296
The Indonesian Di- Passive and Discourse Contexts <i>I Nyoman Udayana</i>	1304
Interactional Metadiscourse and Author Identity Construction in Academic Theses <i>Guobing Liu and Junlan Zhang</i>	1313
Demotivating Teaching Practices in EFL Classrooms in Saudi Secondary Schools <i>Alhanouf Alharbi and Nashwa Saaty</i>	1324
Deculturalization of Culturally Bound Meaning: Indonesian-English Translation Evidence <i>Ni Wayan Sukarini, Ida Bagus Putra Yadnya, Ida Ayu Made Puspani, and Ni Luh Ketut Mas Indrawati</i>	1332
A Multimodal Ecological Discourse Analysis of Presentation PowerPoint Slides in Business English Class <i>Wenjin Qi and Yutao Hu</i>	1341
Enhancing EFL Learners' Verbal Communication Engagement Through WhatsApp Chat Group's Voice Messages Using Referential and Display Questions <i>Amir Abdalla Minalla</i>	1351
E-Learning and Social Media for ELT — Teachers' Perspective <i>Gayathri Paliath and Marie Evangeline</i>	1357

---