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Contents

The Effects of Form-Focused Communicative Grammar Instruction on Students' Speaking Fluency and Their Attitudes Toward Speaking Lessons

Temesgen Heliso Woymo[*]
Wolaita Sodo University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia

Mebratu Mulatu Bachore
Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia

Meshesha Make Jobo
English Language and Indigenous Studies, Wolaita Sodo University, Wolaita Sodo, Ethiopia

Abstract—**Integrating form-focused instruction (FFI) in the communicative language classroom is the most recently used instructional approach today. To draw learners' attention to grammatical structures, this approach implements different integrative corrective feedback techniques. The current study investigates the effects of FFI integrated with communicative grammar activities on the speaking fluency of students and their attitudes toward speaking lessons. To carry out the study, participants included 11th-grade students divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. Four English teachers from Adilo High School also participated in this study - one of whom intervened and three who had scored the students' speaking fluency based on the given scoring rubrics. The cognitive and behavioral attitudes of the students were examined through before and after questionnaires. Additionally, the study utilized a quasi-experimental research design with pre- and post-tests to examine students speaking fluency. The finding revealed that FFI integrated with communicative grammar instruction enhanced students' speaking fluency and their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. This suggests that High School students benefit from FFI techniques used in combination with information, opinion, and reasoning-gap communicative grammar activities thus it helped them to improve speaking fluency and change their cognitive and behavioral attitude towards speaking lessons.**

Index Terms—**attitude, CLT, FFI, speaking fluency**

I. INTRODUCTION

Having come about as a result of the interactionist theory, communicative language teaching (CLT) theory is a recently recognized approach to language teaching. Its primary purpose is developing communicative competence, and according to Vu and Binh (2014), it has become one of the more favorable methods of language teaching.

Designing grammar lessons to include communicative tasks leads students to communicative competence (Billah, 2020). Teaching grammar communicatively requires the implementation of effective teaching strategies that help students clearly transmit their ideas. These strategies include designing and implementing different communicative activities in the classroom (BaDilla & ChaCón, 2013).

A communicative grammar lesson allows students to practice the target grammar, and the first step of this lesson often focuses on accuracy while fluency becomes more important during the practice stage. As such, the real conditions are often facilitated through speaking activities (Billah, 2020). Communicative grammar activities that are the means to communicative competence have an impact on language learning and encourage learners to learn in a meaningful way (Ratnasari, 2019). Moreover, they encourage students to continue what was learned in real-life situations.

Communicative grammar activities include information, opinion, and reasoning gap activities (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Information gap activities include finding similarities and differences, putting things in the right order, drawing pictures, and solving puzzles (Sartika, 2016). These activities build students' confidence in learning English speaking skills (Arjuna & Rozimela, 2020). Other activities that enable students to exchange their own preferences, feelings, and opinions in the actions of responsibility are called opinion gap activities (Fallahi et al., 2015; as cited in Namaziandost et al., 2019). Reasoning gap activities are tasks that involve making deductions to get new information from the given one (Namaziandost et al., 2019). Additionally, there are also different communicative grammar tasks but the

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[*] Corresponding Author

aforementioned activities are the ones that have given attention to the designing of communicative grammar instruction in the current study.

The communicative language syllabus came about because of the shift in attention of language education from language form to meaning-ignored grammar instruction (Mart, 2019). To help students recognize language forms in context and use them for meaningful communication, integrating communicative language use with grammar instruction is important. Mart (2019) revealed that if learners attend to form within communicative practice, they obtain language structure by using form-meaning association to convey meaning. The current study focuses on exploring the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on students' speaking fluency and their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

Speaking is one of the most frequently used language skills by which people express their opinions. It is viewed as a crucial skill in the EFL teaching and learning process. Recently, the aim of teaching speaking skills has become to develop students' communication skills (Kayi, 2012). However, many teachers view this task as being very difficult to do (Tavil, 2010), and students often see speaking EFL as one of the most troublesome aspects of learning the language (Brown & Yule; as cited in Getachew, 2017). Tiglu (2008) mentioned that many Ethiopian students present low proficiency in English and face many problems in trying to convey a message through speaking. A related finding was reported by Dereje (2021) who indicated that a majority of high school students face problems in speaking English in Ethiopia. Esayas (2019) also reported that the number of Ethiopian students who speak English has shown a decline over the last few decades. Ebissa and Bhavani (2017) stated that, although the design of English language textbooks, the way teachers teach, and the implementation of communicative language teaching at schools were all based on CLT, the learners failed to communicate through speaking. As Esayas (2019) pointed out, the challenges students face in speaking English are common in many countries. Researching scholarly literature and other studies on the English language teaching experience showed that there was quite a bit of doubt surrounding the communicative competence of students.

There are a variety of dilemmas linked to EFL students and their challenges concerning their speaking skills. According to Getachew (2017), unsuitable methodology in teaching speaking skills is a gap that is related to the inability of students to convey meaning through speaking. Currently, theoretical views on language teaching and learning have overreacted to the failures of the form-based approach and the strengths of CLT (Jensen, 2008). The use of explicit grammar teaching, error corrections and other traditional methods may have a place in the classroom, but they often went unnoticed. As far as the researcher is aware, little to no research has been conducted on the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on the speaking fluency of high school students and their cognitive and behavioral attitude towards spoken lessons in an Ethiopian context.

However, some studies were done on the general areas of speaking skills, CLT, and FFI. For example, Mart (2019) studied a comparison of form-focused content-based and mixed approaches to literature-based instruction to develop the speaking skills of learners. It revealed that language instruction integrating form and content produced the knowledge and skills necessary for communicative competence.

A study was carried out by Mokhberi and Marzban (2012) on the effects of form instruction on intermediate EFL learners' grammar learning in task-based language teaching. It proved that the reactive FFI in comparison to preemptive techniques provided an admirable means of improving the skills needed to use the grammatical knowledge of the target form in context.

Research was also carried out by Zaheer (2014) on the effects of FFI on the accuracy of the writing skills of students. The results of the study showed that a planned focus on forms practiced in their L2 classrooms was beneficial to the students and their writing. Moreover, it was suggested that explicit FFI may present some benefit to the accuracy of L2 learners' writings.

A study carried out by BaDilla and ChaCón (2013) briefly examined the advantages of integrating CLT with traditional grammar lessons and how it helps students learn a second language in an interactive and creative classroom environment. The findings disclosed that CLT helped teachers improve their grammar lessons at Universidad Nacional (BaDilla & ChaCón, 2013).

Nevertheless, no studies have examined the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on the speaking fluency of students and their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. Inspired by practical and theoretical gaps, the researchers of this study were interested in carrying out a study to see whether form-focused communicative grammar instruction helps students acquire English speaking fluency and improves the attitudes of students towards speaking lessons.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Research objectives formulated for this study are:

1)   to investigate the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on students' performance of fluency in speaking;

2)   to examine the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on students' cognitive attitude toward speaking lessons;

3)   to explore the effects of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on students' behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

To achieve the purposes of the study, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

HO1: There was no significant difference in the performance of fluency in speaking between the experimental and control groups in pre- and post-tests.

HA1: There was a significant difference in the performance of fluency in speaking between the experimental and control groups in pre- and post-tests.

HO2: There was no significant difference in the students' cognitive attitude toward speaking lessons before and after intervention.

HA2: There was a significant difference in the students' cognitive attitude toward speaking lessons before and after intervention.

H03: There was no significant difference in the students' behavioral attitude toward speaking lessons before and after intervention.

HA3: There was a significant difference in the students' behavioral attitude toward speaking lessons before and after intervention.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Design

To achieve its purpose the study followed a quasi-experimental study design in the form of pre- and post-tests with experimental and control groups. The design of the study is concisely showed in Figure 1 below:
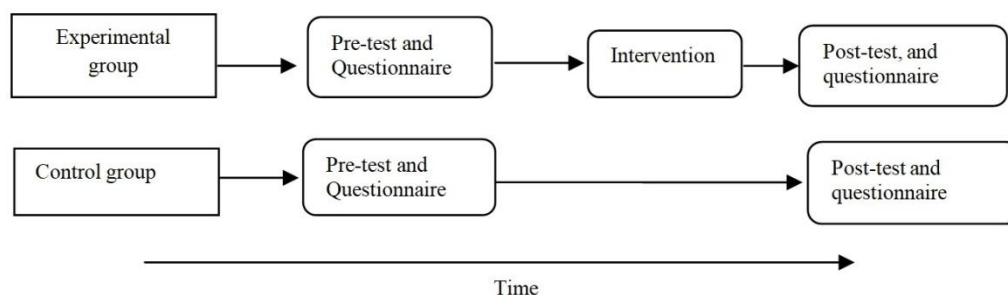
Figure 1. Design of the Study

B. Participants and Setting

For this study, two sections of Grade 11 students from Adilo High School were selected and took part as both the experimental and control groups. Since the selected classes were intact classes, it was expected that the students had similarities in English capability. The selection was made with the school administrators' permission. The teacher who was teaching both the experimental and control groups was selected using the convenient sampling technique since his assignments were done before the classes were selected as the experimental and control groups. The teachers who would be performing the rating were selected following random sampling techniques and based on their agreement. Both experimental and control groups had 40 students each. Moreover, the students' gender categories between the two groups were not very different from one another.

C. Instruments

The data-gathering tools employed for the study were pre- and post-tests, before and after intervention questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The pretest was given in need to study the students' equivalence in their background performance of fluency in speaking. Both pre- and post-tests were used in order to gather quantitative data from the intervention. Five speaking test items containing speaking fluency were administered to both the experimental and the control groups before and after the intervention. The formats of the speaking tests included presentation, dialogue and picture descriptions. The content was designed to contain information, opinion and reasoning gap communicative grammar activities. The pre- and post-tests were designed in the same format. Concerning the test types, responsive, interactive and extensive task assessment test types and holistic scoring techniques were employed. The scoring rubrics were adapted from the Council of Europe (2014; as cited in Ulker, 2017). Scores ranged from 1 to 5.

There were 16 questionnaire items that were designed and administered before and after the experiment. Both experimental and control group students participated in filling out the questionnaire. The goal of the questionnaire given before intervention was to look into students' cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward the speaking lessons before any

treatment took place. The goal of the questionnaire that was employed after the intervention was to prove the difference before and after treatments.

D. Data Analysis

Both the quantitative data of tests and the questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26. An independent sample t-test was employed to analyze pretest results in order to discover whether or not there was a significant pre-existing difference in the speaking fluency between the two groups before intervention. Likewise, it was used to compare the results of the control and experimental groups and check whether the intervention had produced a relatively statistically significant change in speaking fluency. Furthermore, the questionnaire data was statistically analyzed by employing an independent sample t-test to compare the results of both the experimental and control groups of students.

E. Procedures

The experiment lasted for 11 weeks from 03 October to 16 December 2022 including the administrations of the pre- and post-tests, the before and after intervention questionnaires and the interviews. The content of teaching material for the experimental group was developed parallel to the normal curriculum of a Grade 11 student's textbook. The experiment with the experimental group was carried out using the same content but designed to include information, opinion, and reasoning gap communicative grammar activities. The teaching method used for the experimental group was strictly form-focused. It implemented input flood and enhancement, explicit and implicit, planned and incidental meta-linguistic explanation corrective feedback techniques [all together] for the purpose of the intervention. Both groups were taught speaking using similar content for each parallel lesson in order to avoid material bias.

The lesson plan for the control group was as usual. The pre- and post-tests and questionnaire items were prepared before starting the intervention. Similarly, the teacher's training manual, teaching materials, and rating rubrics were developed before the intervention.

The pre-test was administered to both groups of students a week before the intervention. All the treatments were conducted between the second and eleventh weeks. The first week was used to complete the pre-tests and questionnaires. The twelfth week was used to collect data using post-tests, post-intervention questionnaires and interviews. Each test took six hours and forty minutes for each group. The raters were carefully trained on scoring from the rubric before each test. The data collection using questionnaires was employed a day after pre- and post-tests. It was completed within 45 minutes. The results of the interview helped the researcher prove the results gained from the questionnaire and tests. To this effect, out of 40 students from the experimental group, nine students were selected based on their achievement using the stratified random sampling technique and were interviewed afterward.

V. RESULTS

A. Results of the Pre-Test

As indicated in Table 1, below, the findings of the study indicated that the speaking fluency mean scores of the experimental group and control group totaling 40 students were 1.71 and 1.74, respectively, for the pretest. The p-value of the pretest was 0.805. This value shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' pretest results performance of fluency in speaking.

TABLE 1
PRETEST SCORE OF SPEAKING FLUENCY

Group	N	M	S.D.	T	P
Experimental	40	1.71	0.666	0.061	0.805
Control	40	1.74	0.716	0.065	

B. Results of the Post-Test

As shown in Table 2, the average scores of the post-test of both the experimental and control groups were 3.08 and 1.85, respectively. The p-value of both groups was 0.000. This result shows that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups' post-test results performance of fluency in speaking. This suggests that the experimental group made significant improvement on its post-test compared to that of the control group's speaking fluency. The findings of the tests showed that form-focused communicative grammar instruction could contribute greatly to enhancing students' performance of fluency in speaking.

TABLE 2
POST TEST SCORE OF SPEAKING FLUENCY

Group	N	M	S.D.	T	P
Experimental	40	3.10	0.771	0.070	0.000
Control	40	1.91	0.534	0.049	

C. The Results of the Before Intervention Questionnaire of Cognitive Attitude

In Table 3 below, the results of the Before Intervention Questionnaire of Cognitive Attitude toward speaking lessons highlighted the fact that the mean scores of both the experimental and the control groups were 1.65 and 1.63, respectively. Additionally, the p-value was 0.867. Both the mean and p-value scores illustrated that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups before intervention. Thus, the mean and p-value confirmed that the two groups were equivalent in cognitive attitude towards speaking lessons before the intervention.

TABLE 3
THE BEFORE INTERVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS OF COGNITIVE ATTITUDE

Group	N	M	SD.	T-score	P-value
Experimental	40	1.65	0.700	0.111	0.867
Control	40	1.63	0.628	0.099	

D. The Results of the Post Intervention Questionnaire of Cognitive Attitude

The results of the Post Intervention Questionnaire of Cognitive Attitude Toward Speaking Lessons (Table 4) pointed out that the average score of the experimental group was 2.90, and the average score of the control group was 1.89. The p-value was 0.00. This score suggests that there was a statistically significant difference formed between both the experimental and the control groups after intervention concerning the cognitive attitudes of students.

TABLE 4
AFTER INTERVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS OF COGNITIVE ATTITUDE

Group	N	M	SD.	T-score	P-value
Experimental	40	2.90	0.591	0.093	0.000
Control	40	1.89	0.599	0.095	

E. The Results of Before Intervention Questionnaire of Behavioral Attitude

The results of the questionnaire on Before Intervention Questionnaire of Behavioral Attitude Toward Speaking Lessons, shown below in Table 5, show that the mean scores of the experimental and the control groups were both 1.70. Moreover, the p-value was 1.000. Thus, the mean and p-value confirmed that the two groups were equivalent in their behavioral attitude towards speaking lessons before the intervention.

TABLE 5
BEFORE INTERVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS OF STUDENTS' BEHAVIORAL ATTITUDE

Group	N	M	S.D.	T-Score	P
Experimental	40	1.70	0.687	0.109	1.000
Control	40	1.70	0.687	0.109	

F. The Results of the After Intervention Questionnaire of Behavioral Attitude

Below, Table 6 presents the findings of the Post Intervention Behavioral Attitude Towards Speaking Lessons informed the researchers that the mean score of the experimental group was 2.98 and the mean score of the control group was 1.86. The p-value was 0.00. The mean and the p-value scores show that there were statistically considerable variations made between both the experimental and the control groups after intervention on the behavioral attitude students.

TABLE 6
AFTER INTERVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS OF STUDENTS' BEHAVIORAL ATTITUDE

Group	N	M	S.D.	T	P
Experimental	40	2.98	0.733	0.116	0.000
Control	40	1.86	0.620	0.098	

G. Results of Students' Interview

The respondents of the interview pointed out that, before the treatments, they could produce speech, but with pausing and hindrance. They also added that they were using pre-packaged utterances and pausing for grammar and lexical planning to repair communication before intervention. They noted that they could produce patterns and expressions spontaneously and express themselves more smoothly after intervention. The students interviewed stated that the implementation of integrated form-focused instructional techniques such as implicit and explicit, and planned and incidental corrective feedback helped them improve their fluency in speaking. Furthermore, the participants noted that integrated form-focused instructional techniques were critical to enhancing their fluency in speaking. In general, the students who participated in the interview indicated that form-focused communicative grammar instruction helped them to produce communicatively effective fluency in speaking.

Those who participated in the interview told the researchers that learning spoken English was one of the skills of English they were taught before the implementation of FFI. The respondents believed that learning spoken English was challenging and confessed to facing setbacks. They also said that they preferred to learn through grammar rules. Moreover, the students who participated in the interviews also informed the researchers that their preferred language

skills were reading and writing. The participants offered a different perspective about the function of learning spoken English as a means of exchanging information with others and having confidence in learning other school subjects rather than only learning one English language skill after the intervention. The respondents commented that the intervention on the challenges of learning spoken English improved through the comments of others that were given while learning spoken English due to the mistakes they made as part of the learning process. They added that their preferred way of learning spoken English was communicating with others through speaking. The interview respondents also said that speaking skills became their priority among all language skills. In general, they told the researchers that form-focused communicative grammar instruction improved their interest and became their preference for speaking lessons.

The students who were interviewed also reported that, before the intervention took place, whenever they felt challenged by speaking English and needed clarification, their preferred strategies included asking the speaker to repeat and slow down. However, after the intervention, their preference of asking for clarification became guessing based on the speaker's gestures and other contexts.

Concerning their attitude towards the strategies of practicing the English language before intervention, the students who were interviewed thought that using their own new expressions could improve their spoken English abilities. After the intervention, however, their opinion towards the strategies of practicing English changed to following the expressions of native speakers and practicing them helped improve their spoken English. They also stated that, before the intervention, they became shy to talk to friends and native speakers, but after the intervention, they started talking to native speakers. They also started initiating conversation with friends, making conversation on familiar topics and even prepared what they would say in advance of making conversation. The students also presented that they encourage others to correct them when they make mistakes and informed researchers that they started implementing different strategies that could help advance their speaking skills. These students also added that they started to practice speaking in different situations after the implementation of form-focused communicative grammar instruction and using different techniques in the classroom. In general, they reported that the pedagogical intervention used was convenient and interesting for them and they became more interested in speaking English.

H. Group Comparisons of Enhancement

The paired-sample t-test is a parametric test. It is used when researchers are interested in the difference between two variables for the same subject but separated by time. The purpose of the test is to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the mean difference between paired observations is significantly different from zero.

In the current study, the paired-sample t-test was used to compare the effects of the interventions in both the experimental group and the control group both before and after the interventions. The results of the paired-sample t-test of the experimental group students are presented in Table 7, below:

TABLE 7
RESULTS OF THE PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Test	Pre-test		Post-test		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Fluency	1.71	0.666	3.10	0.771	0.070	1.933	.000

According to the results in Table 7, there was a significant difference in both pre- and post-tests. The Cohen's difference of fluency between pre- and post-tests was 1.933. This effect size is greater than the effect size of 0.8 and thus, it is a very large effect size. This means that the experimental group showed a significant difference between the pre- and post-test results of their fluency in speaking. In the same way, the improvement was made from pre- to post-test at $p < 0.05$ (0.000) for fluency in speaking.

TABLE 8
RESULTS OF THE PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE CONTROL GROUP

Test	Pre-test		Post-test		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Fluency	1.74	0.716	1.91	0.534	0.065	0.272	0.805

The results in Table 8 indicate that the change in the control group was not statistically significant for all tests at $p > 0.05$ level (0.805) for fluency in speaking. The Cohen's difference in the pre- and post-test was 0.272. This effect size (0.272) is less than the moderate effect size (0.5) Thus, it is a small effect size. This means that the control group students did not show a statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-test results of their fluency in speaking. In the same way, the p-value (0.805) is greater than its average level of 0.05 for the speaking fluency of students.

The results of both experimental and control groups imply that the experimental group showed significantly higher scores and faster progress than the control group on the speaking fluency of students and their post-test results.

TABLE 9
RESULTS OF THE PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S ATTITUDE

Attitude	Pre-test		Post-test		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Cognitive	1.65	0.700	2.90	0.591	0.093	1.938	.000
Behavioral	1.70	0.687	2.98	0.733	0.116	1.802	.000

According to the results in Table 9, there was a significant difference in the results of both questionnaires with the experimental group showing a significant improvement from pre- to post-questionnaire at p < 0.05 (0.000) for both cognitive and behavioral attitude towards speaking lessons. The Cohen's difference of the pre- and post-questionnaires for cognitive and behavioral attitudes were 1.938 and 1.802 respectively. These effect sizes are greater than the large effect size (0.8) and thus, it is a very large effect size. This let the researchers know that the experimental group students showed a statistically significant difference between the pre-intervention questionnaire and post-intervention questionnaire results of their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. In the same way, the p-value (0.000) is less than its average (0.05) significance level. This shows that there were statistically significant improvements in the experimental group students' cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

TABLE 10
RESULTS OF THE PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE CONTROL GROUP'S ATTITUDE

Attitude	Pre-test		Post-test		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Cognitive	1.63	0.628	1.89	0.599	0.095	0.423	.086
Behavioral	1.70	0.687	1.86	0.620	0.098	0.245	.262

According to the results in Table 10, there was not a statistically significant difference in both pre- and post-tests. The control group did not show a statistically significant improvement from pre to post-test at p > 0.05 for cognitive (0.086) and behavioral (0.262) attitudes toward speaking lessons. The significance level shows that there were no statistically significant improvements shown in the control group students' cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. The effect sizes of the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire for cognitive and behavioral attitudes were 0.423 and 0.245, respectively. These effect sizes (0.423 and 0.245) are less than the moderate effect size (0.5) and thus, it is a small effect size. This means that the control group students did not statistically show a worthy difference between the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire results of their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

VI. DISCUSSION

Communicative language teaching has recently become the most popular method for teaching and learning languages. Thus, many scholars have been trying to manage the strengths and weaknesses of grammar-based teaching approaches (Jensen, 2008). Despite its popularity, however, CLT is not successful in improving the English-speaking skills of Ethiopian high school students (Esayas, 2019). To equip students to be fluent in speaking English, confirming the suitable method of teaching was the focus of this study. As a result, the present study intended to verify the effects of form-focused communicative grammar teaching on the speaking fluency of students and their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. To remedy the failure of CLT, different error correction and explicit grammar teaching techniques were implemented in the study. These teaching methods were implemented in FFI by combining explicit grammar instruction with communicative grammar instruction.

Implementing CLT with grammar instruction presents obvious benefits for students to distinguish language structures in context and use them in real-life situations (Mart, 2019). The findings of the study greatly concur with this idea. The data showed that the experimental group scored higher results in the speaking fluency of students in a post-test. Likewise, the post-intervention questionnaire data indicated that the cognitive and behavioral attitudes of students toward speaking lessons were influenced positively. The results of the interview also confirmed that pedagogical intervention helped students improve their fluency in speaking and improved their attitudes toward speaking lessons.

Thus the study accommodated information, opinion, and reasoning gap communicative grammar activities which were integrated with the flexibly implemented planned technique versus the accidental, explicit vs. implicit, information flood, and information-enhanced form-focused instructional techniques. Still, it did not contain all aspects of FFI; on the contrary, it was not limited to certain fixed FFI techniques. Likewise, it did not include all types of language structures and the overall context of CLT instruction.

Another limitation is that the study was not implemented with various communicative activities that appeal to the four language skills. Consequently, it suggests that additional studies having different communicative grammar tasks and FFI techniques be carried out. In sum, reality showed that FFI taught in combination with communicative grammar instruction helped the learners improve their fluency in speaking and improved their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. Thus, it is suggested that high school EFL teachers apply communicative grammar activities incorporated into form-focused instruction while teaching English speaking skills.

VII. Conclusions

As high school students, speaking and understanding English as a foreign language (EFL) does not require only the need to know a long list of vocabulary and grammatical structures, but speaking English fluently also requires the use of grammatical structures in a meaningful way.

The present study explores the effect of form-focused communicative grammar instruction on the speaking fluency of some Ethiopian students and their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons. The findings of the study indicated that the experimental group of students who had been taught spoken English using form-focused communicative grammar instruction as the intervention showed the most improvement in the post-test score of speaking fluency and in their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

The study revealed that communicative grammar instruction (i.e. information, opinion and reasoning gap communicative grammar activities) integrated with different form-focused instructional activities (i.e. explicit and implicit, planned and accidental, input enhanced and flood techniques, recast, and clarification request) could contribute to the development of student performance in speaking fluency. Likewise, they also enhanced their cognitive and behavioral attitudes toward speaking lessons.

In general, the present study revealed a new way to focus on form by taking into account the opinions of students regarding the changes to be exerted in the process of instruction. Taken together, the present study will contribute to the line of research on form-focused communicative grammar instruction as an alternative methodology, especially in teaching speaking skills. Therefore, such research activities may create major insights that draw on methodological inquiries to combine methodologies about EFL students' needs.

VIII. Limitations

The study was limited in its scope. The communicative grammar instruction implemented in this study comprises only information, opinion, and reasoning gap communicative grammar activities that were integrated with form-focused instruction to advance the speaking fluency of learners and their cognitive and behavioral attitude towards speaking lessons.

Other factors such as the type of grammatical form, the overall context of instruction, and the students' ages might have influenced the findings of the study. The study was conducted in an adult EFL context at the high school level. More extensive research is necessary to have more noticeable results regarding the learners' age groups, proficiency levels and other contexts in the execution of form-focused communicative grammar activities.

Despite the limitations, this study has made some valuable findings. Concerning the selection of target forms and language skills which might have drawn more realistic and conclusive results, it makes suggestions for further study using a range of activities that demand different language skills.

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Temesgen Heliso Woymo enrolled in Diploma studies in English Language Teaching at the Hawasa Teachers' Training College of Ethiopia in Septtember 2002 and completed his training in August 2003, thus gaining a Diploma in English Language Teaching. After two years of teaching, he enrolled in BA studies at Addis Ababa University which he completed in Septtember 2009 with a Bachelor's Degree in English Education. In March 2010, Temesgen enrolled in MSc. studies in Computational Linguistics from the same university and completed his education in July 2012 through a study titled "Designing an English-Kambaatissata Bilingual Electronic Dictionary Using English-Kambaatissata Parallel Corpora" where earned his MSc. in Computational Linguistics. Currently he was a PhD candidate at Wolaita Sodo University College of Social Science and Humanities Department of English Language and Literature in English Language Teaching (ELT).

Mebratu Mulatu Bachore (PhD) graduated from Addis Ababa University with B.A in English Language and Literature, MA and PhD in TEFL. Currently, he is a Professor of TEFL at Hawassa University. He has been teaching different undergraduate and graduate level language education and research courses. And, he has been supervising MA and PhD candidates in the area of language education at different universities. Likewise, he has been participating in designing and evaluation of language curricula, syllabi and teaching materials for different level learners. Moreover, he has more than 26 scientific publications in internationally reputable journals. What is more, he is serving as a reviewer for 10 academic journals of popular publishers like Elsevier and Taylor and Francis. His research interest includes teaching language Skills, Teacher education, Technology Based Language Instruction and Literacy Instruction.

Meshesha Make Jobo studied his PhD in English from University of South Africa (Pretoria, South Africa), his MA in English from Haramaya University (Dire Dawa, Ethiopia) and his BA in English from Addis Ababa University (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia). He is an Associate Professor of English Language and Indigenous Studies at Wolaita Sodo University (WSU), Ethiopia. Since October 2011, he has been an English language instructor and researcher at WSU. He offers courses and advises PhD, MA and BA students in the Department of English Language and Literature, WSU. Since August 2022, he has been a visiting Professor of Language and Culture at the University of Pittsburgh, USA. He published 17 research articles in internationally reputable journals and authored two books. He won the 'First Best Researcher's Award' of Wolaita Sodo University in the year 2019. He also won two international grants and more than 10 WSU grants. He presented more than 20 research papers in national and international research conferences of different countries such as USA, Japan and Ethiopia. His current research interests are folklore, sociolinguistics, engendered pedagogy, discourse analysis, culture, indigenous knowledge, proverbs, culturally relevant pedagogy, English language education, higher education leadership, language acquisition and semiotics (but not limited). Dr. Meshesha is a professional member of Foundations for Endangered Languages (UK), International Society for Development and Sustainability, advisory board member, editor and reviewer of large number of international and national scientific journals.

Readiness and Challenges of Prishtina University Students for ESP Classes

Sadete Tërnava-Osmani
Faculty of Philology, University of Prishtina, Prishtinë, Kosovo

Meliha Brestovci
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Prishtina, Prishtinë, Kosovo

Abstract—**Learning and teaching a language for specific purposes, in our case English language, is quite a new approach at the Public University of Prishtina, which was established only in 1970. Considering this fact, English language teaching in Kosovo has been around ever since. It was initially taught as General English (GE) in the schools of the capital city and later, namely from the 1980s to date throughout the country. Nevertheless, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is one of the most recent courses that have started to attract the attention of the domestic teaching authorities, mainly at the university level, while it continues to be absent in secondary schools. Despite this, the reason for the absence of ESP in secondary education relates to the lack of planning, extracurricular teaching materials or specific textbooks. In this paper, we will review the current state of GE at the University of Prishtina by assessing the English language first-term exam results for two groups of students in the first year in the Departments of History and Political Sciences, with the aim of finding out whether they are ready to attend ESP courses in the second semester. Research has taken place amongst male and female students, aged 18-19, who attended the A1 and B2+GE level as per the CEFR requirements. The students who pass the exam may be qualified to attend the ESP classes in the second semester, whereas students who did not should continue with GE classes.**

Index Terms—**ESP, GE, university students, B2, comparison**

I. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to communicate successfully in English is fundamental to everyone. Learners have different levels of language ability, and opinions about English language level can be subjective, as some skills could be developed better than some others. In this context, there is a need for a clear objective to describe language skills to foster debate amongst academics.

As communication is the main goal for people to learn languages, much research has been done on foreign language teaching and learning approaches, methodologies and techniques. Generally, methods of learning are related to the respective curricula objectives but they largely depend on the educational circumstances, the difficulty of the language, the types of learners and teachers and their aptitudes for language learning. However, with new teaching and learning opportunities, students are enabled to fulfil their goals and demands for a higher English language standard. To this end, in Kosovo, learning and teaching ESP is a relatively new approach that has begun to attract a level of growing interest in academic circles.

This specialized area aims to equip students with the language skills needed for specific professional, academic, or occupational purposes. Even though ESP programs have some limits to their effectiveness, there is a rising global demand for them. In her research, Gollin-Kies et al. (2015) investigated the notion that ESP's interdisciplinary nature does not *per se*, make it a specialized sub-field of teaching, arguing that language for specific purposes (LSP) is: "interdisciplinary even within linguistics and other academic disciplines, gains insights from, and contributes to, fields such as pragmatics, discourse analysis, motivation theory, philosophy of science, genre and register theory, sociolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, technical and professional communication, literacy, terminology studies, intercultural communication, epistemology, management communication, computational linguistics, lexicography, language planning, semantics, text linguistics, stylistics, language acquisition, translation and interpreting and many others" (p. 17).

She explains that the prior knowledge, use of authentic materials, and experience in ESP are to be taken as an advantage, as authentic materials can also help learners develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to succeed in their target profession or context.

In this framework and even though English language teaching in Kosovo has been taught since as long ago as the mid-1970s/early 1980s, the interest in ESP teaching started only after 2000. This watershed came in 1999 when the war ended in Kosovo and the international community started to govern the country, which subsequently influenced the demand for ESP courses in various fields of study.

Although, such an aspiration was present in higher education at that time, it was not possible to begin with content-related books as no specific teaching materials existed; no textbooks were in place nor there were any appropriately designed courses for specifically interested groups of learners. Similarly, no related training was offered, such as the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach.

On the other hand, since students in Kosovo learn General English (GE) language from kindergarten and primary school age, it is reasonable for students to start learning ESP at university level. One may understand the need to teach and learn ESP as a combination of related teaching techniques with suitable teaching materials, important for the students' level of knowledge and the purpose of their field of study at the university, which ultimately prepares them for a successful professional career.

In Kosovo, students start the first university academic semester with their GE knowledge, and as they move on to a second semester they need to have a specific consolidated vocabulary to be prepared for their future academic and/or professional careers. Therefore, ESP primarily gives students the opportunity to hone their English knowledge and skills towards their specific professional profile. These new opportunities in learning ESP would help them write better projects and seminars and attend foreign lectures at university level or participate more successfully in different exchange programs.

Bearing all the above mentioned in mind, the aim of this paper is to investigate the implication of ESP in Kosovo by reviewing the level and the competence of the students learning ESP at the Public Prishtina University.

The research included 126 students from the two Departments of History and Political Sciences; 82 students from the upper-intermediate level (B2+) in the Department of Political Sciences and 44 students from the intermediate level (B1) in the History Department. Evaluation of student readiness was explored through a test which included a placement grammar test, (articles, prepositions and vocabulary), and a reading comprehension taken from the textbook they had learned during semester one (On Screen B1, Virginia Evans, Jennie Dooly; On Screen B2+, Virginia Evans, Jennie Dooly). After evaluation, recommendations on continuing with the ESP course in the second semester became possible.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

The overall research objective is to assess whether students of the Departments of History and Political Sciences are ready to attend ESP classes in the second semester of the first year of studies.

Specifically, the aim of the research is to evaluate the preparation and challenges of students of respective departments in the University of Prishtina through testing, which includes vocabulary, selected grammar exercises and reading comprehension at B1 and B2+ level according to the CEFR.

The following hypotheses have been developed:

1. Students of Political Sciences will show higher results in the test related to vocabulary compared to History students.

2. Both groups will show similar results regarding grammar structures and reading comprehension.

The paper also aims to answer questions related to barriers and/or advantages that hindered or supported the current level of ESP students in respective departments.

To back up the named questions, we developed additional hypotheses, including suppositions that while benefits for students from general English textbooks may include a consolidated general reading comprehension level, they may have a restricted specific vocabulary due to a lack of extracurricular material to motivate them to become familiar with ESP.

From observation and intermediary formative assessment taken with the respective students beforehand, the following findings may be related and relevant to the research:

- The level of the students varies from beginner, namely A2 to pre-intermediate or B1 (according to the CEFR).

- The class teaching material includes textbooks (Evans and Dooley; On Screen B1 & On Screen B2+, 2014) with adjusted extracurricular activities selected by respective teachers, namely the authors of this research.

- There are three classes per week, lecturing and exercises of 60 minutes each.

- Students are tested regularly, sitting two mid-term tests and an end-of-term main exam (the final assessment depends on both test results and other academic requirements, including attendance, activity and homework).

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses have gradually become popular in the field of language education. ESP is designed to meet the language needs of students who are preparing to enter a specific field of study or work. The courses help students develop the necessary language skills in order to communicate effectively in their preferred field. However, there is a common challenge among students when it comes to their readiness for the ESP classes, as well as the various challenges that arise during the course. In this review the readiness and challenges of students for the ESP classes will be explored through several authors, including Anthony (2018), Hutchinson and Waters (1987), Kováčiková (2020), Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008), Boulton, Carter-Thomas, and Rowley-Jolivet (2012), Kırkgöz and Dikilitas (2019), Sarré and Whyte (2017), Hyland and Wong (2019), and Habibie and Hyland (2019).

Anthony (2018) highlights the importance of assessing students' needs for the ESP courses, stating that: "For a needs analysis to be reliable, it should produce the same results if repeated (adjusting, of course, for time). To be valid, the needs analysis should reveal the individuals' different perspectives on needs, and not some unrelated other factor. In contrast, to be practical, a needs analysis should be designed in a way that allows it to be carried out within a reasonable time and cost" (p. 71).

This shows the significance of conducting a comprehensive assessment of students to determine their language proficiency and tailor the course content to their needs.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) provide a framework for the design and implementation of ESP courses. They emphasize the importance of setting clear objectives and determining the needs of the target group. This helps to ensure that the course is designed to meet the specific language needs of the students, thereby improving their chances of success. They argue that the objective of ESP is not to teach English as an end, but to equip students with the language skills they will need for their academic or professional lives through a process, highlighting that: "A truly valid approach to ESP must be based on an understanding of the processes of language learning" (p. 14).

Kováčiková (2020) sheds more light onto questions around ESP, the relationship between Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and ESP and the challenges faced by teachers and students in ESP courses arguing over joint purposes and objectives between ESP and CLIL. She states "CLIL and teaching ESP have common objectives, beliefs, principles, and approaches. The aim of both is to work on the communicative competence of learners, and by using the proper means, methods and techniques, this aim will surely happen even in the most specific contexts. As for the oversimplification of language in CLIL, which is critically claimed by some teachers, we must add that ESP does not work with advanced learners only. Simplification of scientific language is necessary at A2 and B1 levels (according to the CEFR) as well, and it does not mean that the content of the subject is poorer. It has been mentioned that ESP prepares students for the real world by developing their language skills with learning how to write, for example, reports, presentations, or proposals; this would not be in conflict with CLIL methodology" (p. 30).

This highlights the need for teachers to create engaging and relevant course content that aligns with the students' interests and goals. Additionally, she points out that students may struggle with the specialized vocabulary used in ESP courses, as it may be unfamiliar and challenging for them.

Related to this, authors Kırkgöz and Dikilitas (2019) explore the challenges faced by students and teachers in ESP classes from a variety of perspectives. They argue that since students from different cultural backgrounds may have different perspectives and expectations from the course, teachers should analyze their needs, stating that: "They might then analyse their students' needs before developing materials and a curriculum which address these needs in as authentic a way as possible" (p. 103).

Fortanet-Gómez and Räisänen (2008) argue that ESP programs should be designed to meet the specific needs of students in terms of their language proficiency and the demands of their academic and professional fields. They point out that ESP programs must take into account the linguistic, cultural, and academic background of the students, as well as their motivations and expectations. This requires close collaboration between language teachers and other subject teachers, to ensure that the language and content of the courses are integrated and relevant to the student's needs. Similarly, Sarré and Whyte (2017) emphasize the importance of taking into account the needs and expectations of the students in ESP classes. They argue that ESP courses should be designed in such a way as to address the linguistic and communicative needs of the students, while also providing opportunities for them to develop their intercultural communication skills. The authors stress the importance of considering the students' perspectives and preferences, in order to ensure that the courses are engaging and relevant to their needs.

On the other hand, Boulton et al. (2012) argue that corpus-informed research can be a valuable tool for ESP teachers in the design of courses and materials. By analyzing the language used in real-life texts and contexts, ESP teachers can gain a better understanding of the language needs and demands of the students and their fields. This information can then be used to design courses and materials that are relevant, engaging and effective for the students. Additionally, Hafner and Miller (2018) argue that ESP courses should be designed using a multidimensional approach, taking into account the linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary needs of the students. They argue that ESP courses should be designed in such a way as to provide opportunities for students to develop their language skills within the context of their academic and professional fields. By integrating language and content, ESP courses can provide a more meaningful and engaging learning experience for the students.

As noted, respective authors highlight the importance of considering the readiness of and challenges to students in ESP classes. By considering the linguistic, cultural, and academic background of the students, as well as their motivations and expectations, ESP programs could be designed to meet their specific needs. This requires close collaboration between language teachers and subject teachers, as well as a multidimensional approach to course design that integrates language and content. Ultimately, the goal of ESP programs should be to provide students with a meaningful and engaging learning experience that helps them achieve their academic and professional goals.

To this end, authors Hyland and Wong (2019) discuss the challenges faced by students in ESP classes and the impact of these challenges on their language development. They argue that students may struggle with the language demands of ESP classes, which are typically taught at a higher level than general English classes. This can lead to feelings of

frustration and anxiety, which can in turn impact their motivation and learning. They suggest that ESP teachers need to be aware of these challenges and develop strategies to help students overcome them.

Likewise, Habibie and Hyland (2019) examine the challenges faced by novice writers in publishing their research in English. They argue that ESP classes are crucial in helping students overcome these challenges and become successful writers, noting that the main difficulties are related to expressing their ideas in a clear and concise manner, lack of knowledge of the conventions of academic writing, and the pressure to conform to the norms of the academic community. They argue that ESP classes can help students overcome these challenges by providing them with the language and writing skills they need to succeed.

Both authors emphasize the importance of ESP classes in helping students achieve their academic and professional goals. ESP classes can provide students with the language support they need to succeed in their studies and ultimately reach their full potential. However, it is important for ESP teachers to be aware of the challenges faced by students and to develop effective strategies to help students overcome these challenges.

In conclusion, authors Hyland and Wong and Habibie and Hyland provide insights into the readiness of and challenges to students in ESP classes. They cite that ESP classes are crucial in helping students overcome the challenges they face and achieve their academic and professional goals but at the same time ESP teachers should be aware of these challenges and develop effective strategies to help students overcome them. Since the authors' works provide valuable insights into the field of ESP, they may be used as very useful resources for ESP teachers, students, and researchers.

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The authors of this paper drafted and administered the test, which consisted of vocabulary, grammar structures and a reading comprehension section. Students were given 60 minutes for the test, which included a total of 100 points. 50 points were for specific vocabulary, 25 for grammar structures and 25 for reading comprehension. Test results identify student levels from A1 to B2 based on the CEFR.

In order to evaluate the test, use was made of numerical assessment from five (5) as the lowest grade to ten (10) as the highest.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF GRADES BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS OF HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCES

Grade	History	Political Sciences
10	1 student	5 students
9	1 student	6 students
8	3 students	7 students
7	9 students	6 students
6	6 students	16 students
5	22 students	33 students
Abstain	2 students	9 students

Table 1 shows a comparison of grades between two departments, History and Political Sciences. The grades range from ten to five (10 to 5), with ten (10) being the highest and five (5) being the lowest. The data shown in the table indicate that the distribution of grades in the Political Sciences Department differs from that of the History Department in that out of 44 students only one student achieved the maximum score, or 100% of the calculated points. In addition, only one student achieved 9, while three scored grade 8. Nine students achieved 7, while six passed the exam. Twenty-two failed with two not sitting the test.

On the other hand, the Political Sciences Department produced better results. Out of 82 students, five of them achieved the top grade; six students achieved 9; seven achieved 8, while six others got 7 and 16 of them only just passed. In the end, 33 students failed the exam while nine students did not take it.

One potential explanation for the differences in grades between the two departments could be the level of difficulty of the courses offered at each department. It is likely that the courses in the Political Sciences Department are more challenging and require a deeper understanding of the material, leading to a higher number of students with lower grades.

Another factor that could contribute to the differences in grades is the study habits and academic abilities of the students in each department. It is possible that the students in the Political Sciences Department have stronger study habits and academic abilities, which equipped them to get better grades, though this would need to be verified through further research. Moreover, it is to be noted that they did not miss classes and showed higher interest through their participation during exercises in classes as well as being more active during class assignments.

In conclusion, the respective departmental results were not very different in terms of the overall grades but only in correlation to the number of students with high and low grades. Possible explanations for the respective differences may include the following factors observed and recorded throughout the semester:

- Prior diverse levels of school education
- Differing academic abilities of the students in each department
- Lack of previous ESP courses
- Lack of previous GE courses

-    Unequal economic family circumstances preventing attendance on private English courses

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF RESULTS DIVIDED ACCORDING TO TEST REQUIREMENTS

Departments	Articles	Prepositions	Vocabulary	Reading comprehension
Political Sciences	40 (+)	37 (+)	55 (+)	50 (+)
	42 (-)	45 (-)	27 (-)	32 (-)
History	19 (+)	14 (+)	24 (+)	31 (+)
	25 (-)	30 (-)	20 (-)	13 (-)

The provided data shows the results of Political Sciences and History students in four areas of grammar: articles, prepositions, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. It reflects mixed results of the students' language abilities, showing that the most consolidated grammar area is vocabulary, followed by the reading comprehension section, while articles and prepositions are indicated to be the most challenging test items. In light of this, the category of articles shows that 59 students from both departments scored above the threshold while 67 students scored below. This suggests that a significant number of students from both departments struggled to achieve testing requirements.

V. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The above numerical analysis indicates that several factors may be related to the result. Lack of understanding of the rules and conventions surrounding respective sets of articles, or lack of exposure to the language in real-life situations may be the predominant factors. When paired with the lack of tentative listening and consequently lack of attention to details, this presents a worrying writing-skills deficiency.

On the other hand, the results in the categories of vocabulary and reading comprehension are more favorable. This is likely due to more frequent exposure to the language, reportedly via social media and other outlets as well as the extracurricular reading materials completed as homework assignments.

This suggests that students in general have a good understanding and command of the language; they can comprehend the message; they can relate the reading experience to the written assignments they had to fulfill as part of their academic demands and to some extent can connect previous experiences. Yet, they are some distance from achieving the B2+ level.

It may be suggested that to improve their overall English language abilities, the respective students may use additional support or resources, available at the Prishtina University Campus, such as the American Corner situated on the premises of the Kosovo National Library and the Language Center on the premises of the Philology Faculty.

It is again interesting as to why respective students showed more advanced vocabulary and reading comprehension skills as foreign language learners compared to other parts of grammar. One can argue that this is because vocabulary acquisition is easier, bearing in mind contextual teaching and learning factors. It is their previous learning experience, such as teaching in Kosovo that may still encourage memorizing and repetition as specific abilities.

During lectures, it was brought to the attention of the authors that during their high school studies, students had spent a considerable amount of time memorizing and practicing new vocabulary, which consequently reflected in an improved ability to connect any potential similarities between the reading comprehension section and its better understanding.

Reading comprehension requires a broad vocabulary to make connections between words and understand the meaning of complex sentences. Moreover, foreign students may have a greater motivation to improve their reading and vocabulary skills, which translate into career or personal growth opportunities in the international market.

Additionally, while grammar is crucial, certain of its components might be harder to understand than vocabulary or reading comprehension. For instance, mastering articles and prepositions involves regular rehearsal and real-life situations because they may be complicated by the contrasts between the two languages using them, especially related to the use of prepositions. Therefore, students need to put emphasis on the shortcomings related to grammatical constructions because failing to master them may jeopardize students' ambitions to access education mobility courses abroad and other interests related to career development and labor market opportunities.

VI. CONCLUSION

Even though ESP has not been learned in primary and secondary schools in Kosovo, the research has shown that students at the University of Prishtina are ready to proceed with learning ESP courses in the second semester.

The research showed that ESP could provide students with a consolidated and communicative language skill, especially when combined with CLIL, as shown with the case of Political Sciences students who would present a valuable group of highly qualified future professionals with opportunities for a promising, bright career in their respective domestic and international fields.

It is essential for university teachers to activate and endorse the various ESP teaching approaches and curriculum. This would equip students primarily with good reading skills and specific vocabulary since they need to be updated with the latest textbooks in the relevant fields, as this is important for further developing their professional knowledge.

In conclusion, both benefits and disadvantages have an impact on the present level of ESP students. To overcome these obstacles, ESP teachers must ensure that their lessons are tailored to the requirements of their students in order to inspire them to participate fully in the learning process. ESP teachers may also use the constructivist approach to use students' past knowledge and experience even though that may involve memorization, as well as use of authentic resources in their teaching to maximize the associated benefits. By doing this, ESP teachers may enhance the value of their classes and assist students in achieving their personal and academic objectives.

Designing appropriate ESP courses for various groups of learners may serve as a professional recommendation to the Ministry of Education, since GE in Kosovo continues to prevail in all secondary schools. Since the Ministry has not yet developed any ESP curriculum for secondary schoolteachers, this task may be assigned to the English Department professors from the Public University of Prishtina, who strive to follow modern, global approaches to language teaching.

The English Department would rather develop a specific training package on approaches, methodologies and techniques over materials and accompanying didactic means to master ESP for all university departments. This should ensure that concerns over potential misconstructions and retrogression on the advancement of the ESP do not arise.

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Sadete Tërnava-Osmani is an English lecturer at Prishtina University, Faculty of Philology, Kosovo. She holds a PHD in applied linguistics and her research interests focus on language skills, second and foreign language writing and pedagogy of English teaching. She has presented papers at national and international conferences, published research articles and papers in various journals, and authored three books.

Dr. Tërnava-Osmani has also an extended experience on human rights and gender equality.

Meliha Brestovci is an English lecturer to students of Psychology, Political Science, Philosophy and History, at Prishtina University, Faculty of Philosophy, Kosovo. From 2010, she holds a PhD in English syntax and her fields of interest include philology, teaching and writing. She has published several scientific papers in various journals and has received different training on the methodology of teaching and innovative approaches.

Dr. Brestovci is in charge of editing the in-house journals and papers.

Literary and Sufi Analysis of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's Poem "al-Tā'iyyat al-kubrā": A Philosophical Educational Approach

Giuseppe Scattolin
The Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, Rome, Italy

Ahmed Hasan Anwar
Faculty of Arts, Port Said University, Egypt

Shaimaa Mohamed Hassanin.
English Literature, Horus University, Egypt

Abstract—The present paper offers a new approach to the poetry of the Egyptian Sufi poet ʿUmar Ibn al-Fāriḍ (576-632AH/ 1181-1235AD). This approach is based on the text of Ibn al- Fāriḍ's Great Sufi Poem, al-Tā'iyyat al-kubrā, in which the poet expresses in full his spiritual experience. First, the basic hermeneutical question is discussed, e.g., what is the way of approaching a literary text in order to understand the experience of the poet? Also, it deals with a Sufi text, its context and the relationship between text and experience. To what extent does the author express his inner world verbally? In the end, there is a distance between the interior experience of a Sufi and his verbal expression. Eventually, this method is applied to the poetry of Ibn al-Fāriḍ. He describes his Sufi experience as a journey through three steps: from separation (farq) to unity (ittiḥād) to universal union (ǧamʿ). On such a partition, ten basic units are highlighted, forming the structure of his Sufi poem.

Index Terms—poetry, ʿUmar Ibn al-Fāriḍ, mysticism, Sufi poetry, learners

I. INTRODUCTION

ʿUmar Ibn al–Fāriḍ (d. 632 AH/ 1235 AD) is a well–known poet in the Arabic Islamic Sufi and literary milieu. For his unprecedented lofty poetic expression of the Divine Love, the Egyptian Sufi poet was deservedly called sulṭān al–ʿašiqīn (i.e., the Prince of Lovers). A careful reading of his poetry shows that love is not the essential theme of his Sufi poetic experience, though it seems so, and that his poetry hides more secrets than it tells. This is why the grandeur of his love mystique has probably driven many ancient commentators and modern researchers to approach his difficult and mysterious language; in fact, there are numerous explanations and studies on Ibn al–Fāriḍ's poetry, trying to decipher its meaning. The present study adopts the hermeneutical and semantic approach in order to highlight the meanings of words in the direct context of the text without recalling the 'foreign' readings, if any. The paper, thus, focuses on some significant results of their own research work on Ibn al–Fāriḍ's Dīwān, especially those related to their hermeneutical analysis of "al–Tā'iyyat al–Kubrā," so that they should call for a new approach of comprehending and analyzing Sufi texts.

Ibn al-Fāriḍ's Sufi poetry has been the subject of plentiful serious debates among his commentators and researchers throughout history. They are triggered because of the lack of a clear–cut method of analysis, suitable for reading and understanding Ibn al-Fāriḍ's Sufi poetry. Three reasons could explain the misreading dilemma, however. Firstly, Ibn al–Fāriḍ, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, wrote nothing but his collection of poems to distill his Sufi experience. Secondly, biographies and data about his life are very few, let alone untrustworthy. Thirdly, his poetic language proves vague and/or mysterious, as mystical as Sufi (i.e., mystical) experience ought to be.

Even worse, the disciples of al–šayḫ al–akbar Ibn al–ʿ Arabī (d. 638 AH/ 1240 AD) incorporated their master's ideas and terminology into their explanations of Ibn al–Fāriḍ's poetry in a manner that projected Ibn al–ʿArabī's Sufi theory onto Ibn al–Fāriḍ's poem "al–Tā'iyyat al–Kubrā." That method was widely adopted by Ibn al–ʿ Arabī's school to enrich the Sufi tradition with insights and ideas and to attribute them all to the big canonical works of their master. Consequently, Ibn al–Fāriḍ's Sufi experience risked losing its particular identity and genuine vision when explained and comprehended in Ibn al–ʿArabī's Sufi terms and vision, not in Ibn al–Fāriḍ's counterparts. Here comes the significance of re–reading Ibn al–Fāriḍ's poems in general, and his masterpiece "*al–Tā'iyyat al–Kubrā*," in particular.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. The Sufi Approach: Experience and Language

In dealing with a Sufi text, "one has to have some acquaintance with the Sufi language, its formation, and its complexity" (Gilliot, 2002, p. 110). The Sufi language, in fact, developed in the course of history into a vocabulary of its own, reaching a great degree of symbolism, understood many times only by those initiated into it. The Koranic text has been from the very beginning the center of Muslim life. From the beginning of Islamic history, understanding the Koranic text has been a main concern for Muslim scholars, and its exegesis (tafsīr) has been a major issue for them (Massignon, 1999, p. 104). In the same way, the Koranic text has been the starting point of the Sufi experience and language. This fact is now generally accepted by scholars, East and West. Louis Massignon (d. 1962) rightly pointed to the important role the continuous recitation (tilāwa) of the Koranic text, its interiorization (istinbāṭ) through repetition and meditation played a great role in the life of the first Muslim ascetic circles, similar in this to the practice of the lectio continua (the continuous reading of Scripture) of Christian monks (Nwyia, 1970, pp. 312-313).

On his part, Paul Nwyia, while agreeing with Massignon on the importance of the technique of istinbāṭ, underlines also the weight personal experience (taǧrība, ḏawq) had as a way for Sufis to 'delve' into the Koranic text in search of its deepest meanings. Sufi language, he says, has been born out of a lived experience, in which words and realities are reconciled, and images and symbols are continuously re-created by ever-new experiences. In his view, Sufis much more than poets and scholars managed to create a true language of experience (Nwyia, 1968, pp. 181-230).

Sufi language developed also in other two important directions. The first is the science of letters (ǧafr), dealing with the symbolic meaning of letters; the second is the language of love (ḥubb), which took the traditional love images of Arabic love literature as symbols for Sufi love. Such developments appeared already quite clear in Sufi authors of the III/IX c., such as Abū l-Ḥasan al-Nūrī (d. 295AH/ 907AD), al-Ḥusayn al-Ḥallāǧ (d. 309AH/ 922AD), al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmiḏī (d. 320AH/ 932AD), later on in Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī (d. 505AH/ 1111AD) and others.

Sufi hermeneutical effort was taken to its highest level by the 'greatest Sufi master' (al-šayḫ al-akbar) Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638AH/ 1340AD) (Ibn ʿArabī, 1966, pp. 43-44). Ibn al-ʿArabī, in fact, had a large recourse to symbolic language throughout his enormous literal output, adding new developments and insights. A typical example of his symbolic exegesis is the commentary he wrote on his own collection of love poems (Tarǧumān al-ašwāq), which he composed in Mekka, in praise of a beautiful princess he fell in love with. Ibn al-ʿArabī explains every single word of his verses (such as doves, branches, colors, sounds, shapes and nouns of places, etc.) to signify various spiritual states and Divine manifestations (Scattolin, 1993, p. 331).

In fact, Ibn al-ʿArabī's school produced a considerable number of commentaries and explanations, enriching the Sufi tradition with new insights and ideas. However, one has to remark that such an exegetical work was always in danger of simply projecting Ibn al-ʿArabī's Sufi vision in all Sufi texts, making them say whatever one wanted from them. In this way, any Sufi text could become just a pre-text in order to express Ibn al-ʿArabī's Sufi views, far beyond the capacity of the textual wording. This was the method Ibn al-ʿArabī's school adopted in its approach to Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poems.

However, Ibn al-Fāriḍ's language has proved to be a particularly complicated and intricate problem for many reasons. Firstly, we don't know much about the poet's Sufi background. Then, we are left with only his collection of poems (Dīwān), and nothing else that could help us in understanding his Sufi vision. In fact, many of these scholars avow that Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetical language was for them a particularly challenging test. The Italian scholar, Carlo Alfonso Nallino, confessed that for him Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetical language was "a continuous puzzle"; the British scholar, Reynold Alleyne Nicholson, noted that "much of it is enigmatic to the last degree", as if done so as "to put to the test the cleverness of any reader" (Nicholson, 1921, pp. 166-167); and, finally, another British scholar, Arthur John Arberry avows that he found it "a peculiarly stubborn problem" (Arberry, 1952, p. 7).

The Structure of the Poem: Finding a structure in the 761 verses of the Tā'iyya is no easy task. Its verses seem, at first reading, to have been heaped up together with no apparent order. The poet seems to enjoy leaping, without any evident explanation, from the first to the second and to the third person in a very twisted and apparently confusing method. Some attempts at outlining the poem's structure have been made by Nallino, Nicholson and Arberry in their studies. The poem can be alienated into ten main sections, which can be further subdivided into smaller units. As a result of this partition, the main stages of the poet's mystical experience have been highlighted and expressed in the terms the poet himself used in his text. These three stages are:

al-farq (separation): at this stage, the poet experiences to be in a state of separation from his Beloved.

al-ittiḥād (absolute unity): At this point, the poet feels completely united with his Beloved, as shown by phrases like "I am She" and "She is My-self", ultimately leading to a complete sense of self-identity as "I am My-self".

al-ǧamʿ (universal union): at this stage, the poet involvements to be in a state of universal union or synthesis of the One and the Many, the Self (anā) and the whole.

These three stages are interwoven in ten units of the poem, in a progressive movement that represents the progressive journey of the poet in the discovery of the dimensions or the true identity of his own self (anā). It must be noticed also that the movement of the three stages in the poem is not just horizontal, nor merely ascendant, but actually is like a spiral movement, elevating towards higher stages. In this way, it appears that the poet has described his mystical

experience in the poem as a sequence of stages that takes the shape of a journey (a quite common concept in the Sufi language), or as a dynamic progression from the state of division and duality to that of the utmost unity, al-ǧamʿ:

> And take (the mystical knowledge) from a sea into which I plunged,
> while those of old stopped on its shores, in reverence to me
> (Scattolin, 2004, v. 288)

B. The Journey Beyond Love

Ibn al-Fāriḍ has been praised in Sufi writings as (Sulṭān al-ʿāšiqīn), suggesting that love was the central focus of his spiritual journey. Contrary to all that tradition, on the basis of an accurate semantic analysis of the poem, such an interpretation appears inaccurate. From the analysis of the eighteen roots of the synonyms of love, it has clearly appeared that the vocabulary of love in the poem is centered on three main roots:

i - (Ḥ B B): from which important terms, such as 'love' (ḥubb, maḥabba), 'lover' (muḥibb), 'beloved' (habīb) and, of course, the verb 'to love' (aḥabba), and other derivatives come.

ii - (H W Y): from which drive terms such as 'passion' (hawā/ pl. ahwāʾ) and the verb 'to be passionate' (hawia, yahwā), and other derivatives come.

iii - (W L Y): from which terms such as 'friendship' (walā'), a basic term in Sufism meaning 'nearness to God or sainthood' (walāya), and 'friend of God or saint' (walī) come. The semantic analysis has also shown that precisely the derivatives of the root (W L Y) have the most extensive semantic usage.

While the derivatives of (Ḥ B B) are not used beyond the second stage, the terms of the root (W L Y), on the contrary, have a larger semantic spectrum, which covers all three mystical stages. The reason for such preference is given, throughout the poem, in the relationship of the terms of the root (W L Y) with the pre-eternal agreement (mīṯāq) between God and human souls, mentioned in Koran 7, 172. For many Sufis, especially since al-Ǧunayd (III H/X CE), such pre-eternal covenant has been considered the starting point as well as the ultimate goal of their Sufi experience. In fact, they saw in that primordial bond the original witness of the Divine and transcendent Unity of God that has been sealed forever in human souls, through the mysterious dialogue between them and their Lord mentioned in the Koranic verse: "Am I not your Lord? They answered: Yes, indeed! So that you will not say in the day of resurrection: I did not know" (A lastu bi-Rabbi-kum? Qālū: balā!; allā taqūlū yawma al-qiyāma: innā kunnā ʿan ḏālika ġāfilīn).

On this basis, it seems that the traditional designation of Ibn al-Fāriḍ as *Sulṭān al-ʿāšiqīn* does not fully express the highest point of his Sufi experience. Presumably, this title should be changed to "The Poet of Universal, all-comprehensive Union (*ǧamʿ*). Love, important as it may be in his poetry, is but a stage in his mystical path towards such universal union, a stage that must be overcome for a higher one.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Into the depth of Universal Union

Immersed in the depths of universal unity (biḥār al-ǧamʿ), Ibn al-Fāriḍ articulates his remarkable encounter using a diverse range of language and imagery, as if ascending with complete freedom into a realm not bound by the ordinary rules of our everyday lives. He communicates to his apprentice his elevated condition, stating:

> And haughtily sweep with thy skirts, the skirts of an impassioned lover,
> who in his union (with the Beloved) trails over the Milky Way.
> And pass through the various degrees of Oneness (ittiḥād) and do not join a party,
> that lost their life in something different (from that Oneness)
> (Nicholson, 1921, vv. 300-301)

Out of the great variety of words and images, the poet uses to describe this stage, a number of them play a fundamental role in defining the characteristics of such stage of universal union (ǧamʿ), and they clearly constitute the basic semantic vocabulary of this section of the poem. These words are derivatives of a number of linguistical roots on which the poet builds the vocabulary of this section. They are:

i. (W Ǧ D): from which terms such as waǧd (ecstasy) and wuǧūd (the act of finding, existence) derive.

ii. (Š H D): from which terms such as šuhūd (vision) and mušāhada (contemplation) derive.

iii. (W Ḥ D): from which terms such as ittiḥād (union as self-identity) and tawḥīd (the profession of unity), waḥda (unity) derive.

iv. (Ǧ M ʿ): from which terms such as ǧamʿ (universal union) and other terms derive.

It is to be noted that, in Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poetry, the term wuǧūd is related to multiplicity and duality, and so to the first stage of his mystical ascension, that of separation (farq). In the poem, in fact, the term wuǧūd connotes the encounter (wuǧūd, from waǧada, "to find, to come across") or the experience of reality, but still in a stage of multiplicity, division, and so of imperfection. The experience of wuǧūd, therefore, is described as a state that must be overthrown to reach the true and real vision (šuhūd) of reality, that of unity (waḥda). Only through such a true vision does the poet enter into the world of unity, in which he discovers firstly his identity with his beloved (ittiḥād), and then reaches the full awareness of his universal union (ǧamʿ). The two terms wuǧūd and šuhūd, in fact, are always opposed in the poem as two contradictory states of experience and never is wuǧūd connotated with ontological qualifications such as real (ḥaqq), absolute (muṭlaq) and universal (kullī). Therefore, one should translate the Fāriḍian wuǧūd not with 'being', but as an

'empirical finding or experiencing' of realities of the perceptible world of senses, while the Fāriḍian šuhūd should be translated as the 'true vision of the Real in its deepest unity'.

The second stage of the same journey is characterized by the experience of unity, in the sense of self-identity, indicated by the derivatives of the root (W Ḥ D) and, in particular, by the term ittiḥād, which is one of the key terms of the poem. In this stage the poet becomes aware of his union, but of his identity with his Beloved.

During this phase, the poet realizes that his individual self (anā) is not just the origin of all things, but it exists within everything, transcending the constraints of space and time. With this newfound perception of reality and becoming one with it, the poet is able to create new, unfamiliar melodies that may be unsettling for some, but captivating and intriguing for others. The ultimate source of such an extraordinary and transcendent union is to be found in the reality of ğamʿ of which the poet is now fully conscious, as he declares:

> But for me, no existence (of the visible world) (wuğūd) would have come into being,
>
> nor would there have been vision (of unity) (šuhūd),
>
> nor would religious covenants (ʿuhūd) have been taken in fidelity.
>
> (Scattolin, 2004, vv. 638)

There are, however, some others that play an important role in the poem and to which those semantic fields are constantly referred: they are 'soul' (nafs), 'spirit' (rūḥ) and 'essence' (ḏāt). These terms are called 'pivotal terms', as they are constantly referred to the whole vocabulary of the poem. They have been often understood as expressions of concepts such as One Being, One Soul, One Spirit, and One Essence as if a monistic language was the basis of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's vocabulary.

Firstly, when examining the terms nafs (commonly translated as soul) and ḏāt (commonly translated as essence), it becomes evident that they frequently appear in the poem in connection with the term anā (I, my-self), to the extent that they can substitute it at various points. On the contrary, the term rūḥ (often translated as spirit) is used differently, as it is never employed as an identity term for anā. Instead, it typically signifies certain attributes of anā, particularly the spiritual ones as opposed to the sensory ones, which are then linked to the term 'soul' (nafs).

The Main Partitions of Ibn al- Fāriḍ's Great Sufi Poem, al-Tā'iyyat al-kubrā.

To better understand Ibn Fāriḍ's al-Tā'iyyat al-kubrā, a partition of the poem is analyzed according to the three main stages (farq - ittiḥād - ğamʿ) of the poet's mystical journey.

1. The Love Prelude or the final Introduction (vv. 1-116)

Resorting to the traditional language of Arabic love poetry, since long adopted by Sufis to express their spiritual experience of Divine love, the poet proclaims his ardent love. Imitating the stock vocabulary of love poets, he describes the pains of his passion: this is burning inside him, wasting him away, moreover, the poet swears to be well prepared to die and be utterly annihilated for his Beloved's sake. Answering him back, the Beloved, resorting likewise to the traditional vocabulary of love poetry, rebukes the poet, showing that his words are not sincere and that he is still far away from true self-annihilation (fanā') in love.

> The hand of my eye has given me to sip
>
> the ardent wine of love,
>
> my cup was the face of Her
>
> that [all] beauty transcends.
>
> (Borg, 2001, vv. 1)

2. A Description of Union (ğamʿ) (vv. 117-196)

In a crescendo of images, the poet discloses the feelings stirred in him by the Beloved's presence in his inmost self. Finally, it is in prayer that his secret comes to light: in prayer, the poet discovers and becomes fully aware of his radical identity with his Beloved: in prayer lover and Beloved become one and the same, each of them being prostrated to their one reality. Moreover, the poet realizes that such a union has been the one and the same since eternity.

> In prayer, my eye beholds Her
>
> in front of me,
>
> whilst my heart beholds me
>
> that I am imām of [all] my imāms.
>
> (Scattolin, 2004, vv. 149)

3. Description of his Mystical State (vv. 197-285)

Furthermore, the poet describes again how he has reached the stage of union with his Beloved. He explains that it was after a long ascetic journey that he could reach the state of true vision where all visible perceptions are obliterated. In such a state of union, he has become aware too of his own deepest reality, because in it, as he says: "My essence (ḏāt-ī) became endued with my essence ((Ibn al-Fāriḍ, al-Tā'iyyat al-kubrā, v. 212). This stage of union is called here ittiḥād, which means 'union of identity' because in it the poet discovers his identity with his Beloved: the two are one essence.

> Then, I became a beloved,
>
> nay, one in love with one's own self,
>
> and not, as I said before,
>
> that my soul was my Beloved.

(Scattolin, 2004, v. 205)

4. The Sublimity of a Mystical State (vv. 286-333)

The poet begins by describing the transcendence of the mystical state he has achieved and declares that this state has lifted him beyond all aspects of love. He has moved beyond the state of unity-identity of 'I am She' (anā iyyā-hā) and "I am I, My-self" (anā iyyā-ya), and his journey is now directed towards the vast and all-encompassing union of the univer.

> The realm of the highest degrees of love
> is my possession,
> their realities are my army
> and all lovers are my subjects.
> (Scattolin, 2004, v. 293)

5. The Contraries Become One (vv. 334-440)

In this part, the poet initiates the revelation of what can be termed as 'the marvels of union'. He introduces it with a fresh 'love prelude (taġazzul)' (vv. 334-387) that parallels the one at the beginning of the poem (vv. 1-116). However, at this point, the significance of the love symbols has become more apparent: the two, lover and Beloved, are essentially one and the same entity that manifests itself to itself and loves itself through itself.

> Were She to dissolve my body,
> She would see that in every atom of it
> there is every heart,
> in which there every love dwells.
> (Scattolin, 2004, vv. 387)

6. The Poet as the Supreme Pole of Existence (vv. 441-503)

In this part, the poet expands his perspective until he recognizes that he is the focal point of the entire universe: all the worlds revolve around him because he is the supreme Pole (quṭb) of existence. As the Pole of existence, all religious worship is directed towards him, and all of creation derives its movement from him. Additionally, all spiritual levels are granted through him, embodied in the spiritual qualities of prophets and saints throughout history.

> I have indicated by means
> of what the expression can yield,
> and that which remains hidden
> I have made it clear by a subtle allegory.
> (Scattolin, 2004, v. 494)

7. The Wonders of Union (vv. 504-588)

This section starts with verses about love (taġazzul) in which the poet expresses his love for his Beloved, now in a state of complete intoxication (sukr) from their union. All pronouns are changed to the first person, creating unique and captivating sounds and images. The poet then shifts to a more theological tone, stating that his union transcends all distinctions known in classical theology, such as the difference between God's essence (ḏāt) and his attributes (ṣifāt), names (asmā') and acts (afʿāl):

> I seek Her from myself,
> though She was ever beside me:
> I marveled at the way
> She was hidden from me through myself.
> (Borg, 2001, v. 512)

8. The Wonders of Union: The Poet's anā (I, Myself) Extends Through Space and Time Beyond All Limits (vv. 588-650)

While in this state of union, the poet realizes that as the ultimate Pole (quṭb) of the universe, his actions go beyond any limits of space and time. He is the one who has performed all the miracles (muǧizāt) attributed to the prophets and the wonders (karāmāt) attributed to the saints in every time and place. Above all, he embodies the greatest Divine qualities, such as majesty (ǧalāl), beauty (ǧamāl), and perfection (kamāl), in a way that includes all of them together.

> I survey all the horizons [of the earth]
> in a flash of thought,
> and I pass through all the seven layers of heaven
> in one step. (Borg, 2001, vv. 593)

9. The Wonders of Union: Examples and Explanations of Such a Sublime State (vv. 651-731)

In this part, the poet once more shares with his disciple his mystical encounter, which may seem illogical to a rational mind: How can unity and multiplicity coexist? How can he be present in everything and everything be present in him? To illustrate his point, the poet uses examples from everyday experiences. Then, in a lengthy passage (vv. 677-706), he presents a description of the 'play of the shadows' (ḥayāl al-ẓill) as the most suitable example to carry his meaning.

> Whatever you have contemplated [in the play]
> was in fact the act of only one, alone [agent],

only [enwrapped] in the veils of occultation.
(Borg, 2001, vv. 704)

10. The Wonders of Union: The Poet's anā (I, Myself) is the Goal of All Religions which are but Its Self-Manifestations throughout Human History (vv. 732-761)

In fact, Ibn al-Fāriḍ seems to reveal a glimpse of the deep mystery that is presented in his verses. He explicitly states that he has realized that he is one and the same with the 'Eternal Light', which is a recognized Sufi reference to the 'Eternal Light of Muḥammad' (al-nūr al-muḥammadī) or the 'Eternal Reality of Muḥammad'. This same idea was immersed in Ibn al-Fāriḍ's time by the 'greatest Sufi Master' (al-Šayḫ al-akbar), Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638/1240), with the idea of the 'Perfect Man' (al-insān al-kāmil).

In all religions humans' eyes
have not gone astray,
neither have their thoughts deviated
in every religious belief.
(Borg, 2001, vv. 738)

IV. CONCLUSION

Hermeneutics is a never-ending work. In fact, it is an approach to reality through language, but reality always lies beyond any language, any expression and any interpretation. Here, one unavoidably enters into the well-known hermeneutical circle, i.e., hermeneutics as an ever-going process of interpretation. In fact, after all the work is done, one becomes all the more aware that in order to understand reality, one should become that reality. Being and logos are one, said the Greek philosophers, and only in such unity true understanding is reached. The 'fusion of horizons', prospected by Gadamer, can never be really achieved, unless there is also a 'fusion of beings'. Here lies the basic problem of hermeneutics, which eluded many times in many ways. A pure intellectual, technical approach to mystical texts, though necessary, will never be adequate to understand the mystical experience expressed in them.

In the end, it's interesting and important to mention a highly expressive saying attributed to ʿAlī b. Abū Ṭālib (d. 40AH/ 661AD), the cousin of Muḥammad, the Prophet of Islam. During the battle of Siffin (37AH/ 657AD), the army of Muʿawiyya (d. 60AH/ 680AD), his opponent, raised some sheets of the Koranic text on the top of their spears, claiming God's judgment upon the dispute for the caliphate. ʿAlī's supporters were impressed by such a move and were inclined to accept the proposal. Then, ʿAlī pronounced his famous sentence: "This Koran is a text written (masṭūr) between two covers; it does not speak, it is in need of an interpreter (tarǧumān). It is people who speak on its behalf" (Alī b. Abū Ṭālib, 1951, p. 5). This sentence summarizes the core of the hermeneutical question. Texts, even the revealed ones, are in themselves silent, it is their readers that make them speak, for good or evil. They are the interpreters of the texts.

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Giuseppe Scattolin, a priest since 1968 and, Combonian Missionary, has worked in Lebanon, Sudan and Egypt. At present, he is a professor of Islamic mystical theology at the Gregorian University, at the PISAI and at Dar Comboni (Cairo).

He has about 66 publications to his name including books and articles, among which: *Esperienze mistiche nell'Islam* (2000); *L'Islam nella globalizzazione* (2004); *Dio e Uomo nell'Islam* (2004); *Islam e dialogo* (2004); *Spiritualità nell'Islam* (2004); *The Diwan of Ibn al-Farid* (2004, critical edition).

Ahmed Hasan Anwar, an associate Professor of Islamic Philosophy and Sufism, Faculty of Arts - Port Said University, Egypt. Visiting Researcher, Faculty of Arts, Ghent University, Belgium, from 1/5/2023 to 14/5/2023. Visiting Researcher, Faculty of Arts, Ghent University, Belgium, from 15/4/2022 to 30/6/2022.

Visiting Researcher (scientific mission for research and teaching) at the Faculty of Arts, Comenius University in Slovakia from 10/11/2019 to 12/10/2021.

He published many books and research papers concerning Sufism, Islamic philosophy and Orientalism.

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Shaimaa Mohamed Hassanin, an English literature and Translation assistant professor at Horus University-Egypt (HUE). Her scholarly work encompasses various branches of literature, with a particular focus on American Literature (Poetry and Novels). Dr. Hassanin's research interests lie in early modern literature, with a specific emphasis on literary reception, comparative literature, and cultural diversities. In addition to her academic pursuits, she is an accomplished writer, having published numerous short stories and poems in various reputable journals.

Dr. Hassanin has authored three books, including "*Literature, Life and Culture*", "*Cultural Zionism through the Novels of Leon Uris*" and "*Unbelonging in Poetry of Langston Hughes and `Antarah Ibn Shaddād*". Furthermore, she has contributed to the academic discourse with approximately 15 papers in English and Arabic Literature in local journals and international journals. Her expertise is also recognized through her role as a Reviewer for numerous national and international scientific journals.

The Portrayal of Spring in English and Arabic Poetry: A Comparative Stylistic Study of Selected Poems

Emad A. Abuhammam
The University of Seville, Spain;
The University of Jordan, Jordan

Zaid M. Al-dabbagh
Languages Center, The University of Jordan, Jordan

Abdullah M. Ibrahim
Department of Arabic Language, The University of Jordan, Jordan

Ismail S. Almazaidah
Department of Arabic Language, The University of Jordan, Jordan

Abstract—**This comparative study highlights many romantic affinities in some poems by modern and classic English and Arabic poets. These romantic poets represent spring similarly as a source of pleasure, peace, and comfort. They see spring as their place of sharing compassion, love, and happiness. The study is mainly based on the Parallelism theory of the American School of Comparative Literature which focuses on the parallel themes, linguistic devices, and images of different authors whose social, historical, traditional, and linguistic aspects are different (Bressler, 2011, p. 42). It also adopts the New Criticism's methodology of analyzing poetic metaphors, symbols, structures, and similes. Their romantic compositions connect spring spiritually, aesthetically, and invisibly with these poets' souls. They glorify and adopt spring and its influence on them as a symbol of pleasure and comfort.**

Index Terms—**Arabic and English poetry, stylistic study, romanticism, spring**

I. INTRODUCTION

Nature is a well-depicted aspect in different world works of literature. It is a shelter for poets seeking peace, love, and pleasure in Arabic and English traditions and styles. In English literature, romanticism is highly appreciated and portrayed by many poets, such as S.T. Coleridge, William Wordsworth, Robert Frost, William Blake, Shelley, and William Shakespeare. While this study tries to investigate their portrayal of nature, especially spring. Wordsworth and his companion S.T. Coleridge are the founders of the Romantic movement during the late 19th century. Their poems represent how they were influenced by nature and its natural objects. Wordsworth confesses that he is the poet of nature. He depicts many themes related to the normal and simple life of people. Doren (1951) states that "He still speaks for a special world, our world, that has great need of him, and to say this is to define the modern age" (p. 9). Other poets like S.T. Coleridge treat nature as his private world of delight and peace through his imaginative stanzas. Brenton (1934) argues that "The unreal, unearthly aspect that is largely a result of the dreamy tendency of his temperament" (p. 10). English romantic poets tend to be relative, stylistic, and similar in historical and social determination. They are affected by literary conventions, similar ideologies, and cultural and social ideas. These poets tackle nature itself as an oversimplified relationship between the surrounding environment and human beings. Arabic poets portray this from the classic age until the post-modern era of Arabic literature. They represent nature as their place of freedom, peace, and creativity. The most known Arabic classic poets are famous for their romantic content and style. The most famous classic poets during the Abbasid era are Abu-Tammam and Al-Bohtory. These two poets depict nature similarly while they are friends. Spring is their shelter of tranquility and softness. Other modern Arabic poets, such as Ahmad Shawqi, Elia Abu-Madi, Ibrahim Naji, and Bader Shaker Al-Syab represent nature like those other previous Arabic poets who treated it in their poems.

Classic and modern Arabic and English poets tackled spring specifically in their poems similarly. They focused on their imagination, individuality, and self-admiration of nature. These selected poets recognized previously in both Arabic and English traditions treated spring as a motif of living and touching nature's beauty. Al-Zahrawi (2000) states that Al-Bohtory is the poet of descriptions, especially nature "Al-Bohtory divides his description into different sections: A description of the Abbasid castles, a description of nature, and description of towns and regions" (p. 8). This is what

the other classic poet Abu-Tammam presented. He showed nature, especially spring, as a perfect and ideal place to live where all people try to feel its goodness. Mahdi (1999) states that Abu-Tammam describes nature and spring in his poetry "His traditional side in the introductions has a brief about his life, a description of nature and spring, especially when he interacts with the elements of nature" (p. 93). This study examines some thematic affinities in different selected poems in both Arabic and English styles and compositions, especially that of spring and nature. The study adopts the theoretical and analytical aspects of Parallelism theory that concentrate on "studying the affinities of different writers whose social and historical evolution are similar" (Bressler, 2011, p. 42). This study also relies on the analytical methods of New Criticism that focus on studying the literary texts through their structures, syntax, symbols, imagery, personifications, and metaphors. The Arabic poems are analyzed based on our translation since there are no definite sources of their translation that can be used. All the selected poems are quoted from the poets' collections and poetic books. This study addresses the following questions:

1- How do English and Arabic poets depict similar romantic poetry?
2- To what extent do these poets treat and symbolize spring as the place of pleasure?
3- How do these poets receive nature as a romantic aspect?
4- What are the similar thematic and linguistic devices used by these poets?

II. SPRING IN ARABIC POETRY

In Arabic classics and modern literature, nature gained a gigantic significance for poets. It became a part of their lives to realize that nature's description can help them express their happiness, sadness, pessimism, and optimism. It is a shelter for reducing their pains and increasing pleasure. The Arabic poet reflects a clear image of his surrounding nature and its influence on the human mood and mind. In Arabic poetry, the reader finds various beautiful images of rivers, fields, gardens, seas, mountains, rain, and spring. Based on a deep observation of Arabic poetry, it can be found that nature is admired by most of the Arabic poets from the pre-classic era until the post-modern age. Spring is the main element of nature that appears clearly when the reader tastes the beauty of Arabic poetry. For instance, the Arabic Abbasid poet Abu-Tammam (803-845 CE) describes spring's perfectness and charm in his "Spring's Magic" poem. He delivers a real image of it, especially its coming in a happy mood after winter's passage. He evokes various images of its beauty while the speaker feels pleased and comfortable. The speaker invites the reader to release his eyesight and see, touch, and enjoy its smell. The persona firstly shows a metaphor in the first two lines of how rain helps the land and soil to spring and makes every natural object green and bright before the coming of summer:

> The margins of time watered shakily
> And the soil started to break with its charm
> The pre-summer fell down benignly
> While the winter's hand is renewed
> If it weren't the one who winter in hand
> The summer will not find wood [Our Translation]
> (Yousef & Mustafa, 1942, p. 18)

The speaker initiates his poem by describing rain's virtue to land. Without rain, spring cannot make the land green and charming. He switches between two times, winter, and summer, but in the next lines, he profoundly delivers various wonderful images of spring:

> Is our spring on the 19th of Dhul-Hijja?
> Indeed, it is the blooming spring
> Days would not steal the pleasure
> If the orchard's beauty was created
> […]
> Oh, my friend, release your eyesight
> And see how the land's faces are shown
> See the sunny day that looks like
> The flower which is like the moon [Our Translation]
> (Yousef & Mustafa, 1942, p. 169)

The persona describes how his friend and other men feel pleased and comfortable for being with Spring. It is depicted as the source of peace and beauty. The speaker identifies the exact time of spring as "On the 19th of Dhul-Hijja", it is the time when the persona composes his poem, and it reflects how important this date is for Arab people and spring. The speaker personifies the land with many "faces" to show how spring can renew the humans' mood and mind during this sunny day. The persona finishes the previous stanza with a metaphor; he depicts the "flower" as the "moon" that looks shaped and bright. It makes the land feel nature's beauty and perfection. The persona follows in the successive lines during spring. He portrays it as dewy, beautiful, and virgin. It is young and fresh:

> Every flower is rippling by dew
> As an eye that looks sharply
> It looks lonely as
> Virgin once and very shy [Our Translation]

(Yousef & Mustafa, 1942, p. 169)

Indeed, the persona depicts a metaphor showing this flower as beautiful, young, and a virgin. He admires its charm and attraction. He symbolizes it as a figure of beauty and softness, it is a young girl who is still beautiful and young. The speaker finishes the poem by presenting how he admires spring with its colorful shapes and softness. The pleasure, peace, comfort, and tranquility of spring are similarly depicted by another Arabic Abbasid poet Al-Bohtory (821-897 CE). He is influenced by Abu-Tammam. He depicts a very similar image of spring. It is shown as a comfort factor that makes all people, animals, and nature pleased. In his "The Free Prod Spring Had Gladly Come", he personifies spring in the first line, it is like a man coming proud and happy:

> The free proud Spring had gladly come
> And for the beauty, it would even speak
> And Nowruz warned in the intensive darkness
> Beautiful flowers that had been sleeping yesterday
> (Al-Matarneh & Abuhammam, 2021, p. 1386)

The speaker initially moves to express similarly to Abu-Tammam how dew comes and covers the flowers during spring. It "herniated" the flowers, which means that the flowers enjoy the coming of spring. Occasionally, the dew is personified to be a teller of flowers. It talks to the flowers as telling them secrets and happiness. Metaphorically said, the speaker represents how spring makes the trees wear greenness and enjoy spring's beauty. The trees are shown as charming girls with the new dress "The cold dew covered and herniated the flowers as/ Telling them secretive words that were hidden yesterday/ And from the trees Spring dressed up itself" (Al-Matarneh & Abuhammam, 2021, p. 1386). The speaker obviously shows how spring makes the land, trees, and flowers happy. It is clearly presented as a source of pleasure and a happy mood.

This image of spring is repeated in another poem. Al-Bohtory depicts its image when he was coming back from Iraq to Syria after spending a while there. He came back during spring, and he was amazed by the beauty of spring. He depicts the imagery of spring influencing both nature and humans leading to pleasure and a pleasant mood. In "Living in Darya's Cold Night" poem, Al-Bohtory depicts how spring changed the whole place into a green paradise that influences everything. He presents his masterpiece with a glad speaker who enjoys spring "Living in Darya's cold night/ Where a wine is blended with water from Barada". The speaker relates the image of the happy spring with "wine" while all people touch pleasure and comfort. In the next lines, he portrays Damascus metaphorically as a charming woman who enjoys her life. The persona invites the reader to fill his/her soul with this spring's beauty, especially after the passage of winter and clouds. The persona feels grateful to these clouds that came at night and watered trees, flowers, and grass:

> Damascus has shown its beauty and perfectness
> And the promising thing has loyally performed the promise
> If you want, you will fill your eyes from
> The beautiful town and time which are similar
> The clouds spread over the town's districts at night
> (Al-Matarneh & Abuhammam, 2021, p. 1386)

At the end of the stanza, the speaker confesses that the reason for this beauty and perfection is spring "As if the summer has passed after coming/ or spring comes close after a long absence". Eventually, spring makes "people, birds, and plants happy. Pleasure is linked to the joyful moods the speaker feels" (Al-Matarneh & Abuhammam, 2021, p. 1387). As Abu-Tammam, Al-Bohtory emphasizes how he recalls his poetic talent to share his admiration of nature, especially spring. He depicts spring in many other different poems, such as Al-Mutawakiliah and Al-Siniah. We find he starts some of his poems for instance about love, but intentionally moves to speak about nature's charm like spring. On the other hand, another Arabic modern poet who depicted spring similarly to those Arabic classic poets is Bader Shaker A-Syab. His "Songs of Spring" poem is famous in Arabic literature. He portrays a marvelous image of spring. The speaker mentions and blends other natural creatures with the charm of spring. The persona tends to show pleasure mixed with nature and how the birds, orchards, water springs, and butterflies are full of pleasure and comfort. He initiates his poem with a line that describes the happiness of the birds while they twitter and fly in the gardens during spring:

> A dream in the scope of pleasure
> Drawn by the birds' wings
> And there are hopes over the flowers
> Between the bushy trees in the chests [Our Translation]
> (Al-Syab, 2016, p. 140)

Clearly depicted, the speaker presents his mood as happy and enjoying through the first lines and tone. He is optimistic about seeing the flowers and greenness of the land. The "bushy trees" also make him pleased while birds sing in the fields. The persona continues his happy images of spring by depicting the breeze, flowers, and the field. He personifies the breeze dancing on the flowers while water springs feed the trees and the and. This image is imaginative; it lets the reader think about how the breeze dances and gets happy during spring. The butterfly is also pleased due to the greenness and the field's pleasure. The persona shows that his butterfly gets higher and lower than himself

indicating his high hopes and optimism. Al-Syab is as Abu-Tammam and Al-Bohtory, he emphasizes the idea of dew with the image of the flowers during spring. He presents "dew" as the dawn's beauty that covers the flowers. It is depicted beautifully with flowers to enhance the idea of self-peace and comfort that the speaker feels "Dawn builds for the dew/ A beautiful place among the lowers" (Al-Syab, 2016, p. 140). The speaker concludes his poem by showing that love, peace, and happiness are blended with each other with the presence of spring and the land's greenness.

In other content, Al-Syab introduces similar images to spring while he describes it in Algeria. In his "Spring of Algeria" poem, he initiates his first stanza by describing that the land is destroyed and not valid for living. Then, in the next lines, he begins to show how rain helps the land to fit living. After the rain, the land gets green, pleasant, and comfortable. The persona concludes the rain makes the thirsty soil full of water, and it cleans dirtiness:

> The rain came while the clouds are released
> And watered the hungry soil for the seeds
> Then, the ironic wing melt
> On the redness of dawn that cleans
> The remains of the martyr [Our Translation]
> (Al-Syab, 2016, p. 148)

The speaker explains how spring and rain clean everything even the remains of war in Algeria. Spring is the fundamental reason to forget pains and start a peaceful life. In the next stanza, the speaker asks and exclaims how this land will receive spring with those peoples' sorrows. "How will you receive spring/ With the remains of the dead bones?", the speaker obviously presents the only reason for people's happiness and peace is the coming of spring, while it also means the spring of nature indicating peaceful and comfortable life.

Similarly, Ahmad Shawqi (1868-1932 CE) is another modern Arabic poet who depicts a very similar image of spring to those classic and modern Arabic poets. In his poem "Spring", he asserts and begins it with a deep greeting and welcome. He personifies spring as a coming human being as depicted by the previous Arabic Abbasid poet Al-Bohtory. In this context, the persona welcomes spring with its pleasure and colors. It is depicted as a blessing of time that makes the land happy. It is also shown as young and fresh:

> Welcome to spring with its youngness
> With its brightness and with its time blessing
> The land was arranged like processions
> While time blows its festival! [Our Translation]
> (Shawqi, 2016, p. 84)

Indeed, spring is the young and fresh blessing that all people feel and touch. The persona continues his depiction by personifying it as a walking person who wanders during spring in the fields. Spring is shown as the reason to keep the land dressed by greenness and perfectness. Like Abu-Tammam, Al-Bohtory, and Al-Syab, Ahmad Shawqi uses spring personified as wearing a person of greenness and charm. This person can be a young lady that attracts all people. Metaphorically portrayed, spring is the paradise that owns rivers "The long rivers are a paradise/ while there were scarfs wrapped" [Our Translation]. Spring is fascinating and tempting. It makes all people admire it with its rivers and beauty. The persona continues by describing how water can help flowers grow during spring and how they get beautifully colored. Shawqi returns to the image of the bird and flower. As Al-Syab, he delivers the image of the twittering bird wandering in the orchard while sunshine covers them. The birds sing as if they are at a wedding, while spring makes them happy and comfortable. The speaker concludes that spring light and brightness come from composing poetry, and spring can be tasted by poetry. It is the best way to reflect on and explain spring's beauty and perfection "The light of spring comes from poetry/ While it is settled on the branches" [Our Translation]. To sum up, Shawqi portrays spring as his natural shelter to complain about his sorrows and pains, while it is shown as a place where he feels pleasure and tranquility.

In the end, Shawqi's spring presented in the previous lines is natural, but at the end of the whole poem, it is shown as it is a spring of his home and the whole Arabic town. He praises it and its beautiful spring. So, the two images of spring are unified as beautiful and comfortable to him. However, Elia Abu-Madi (1890-1957 CE) is another modern Arabic poet. He portrays spring's image perfectly as the former poets tackled it. In his "Spring Has Gone", he laments spring's passage before summer. We find him praising spring with all its colors and beauty. Abu-Madi initiates his poem with a gloomy atmosphere. Sadness is driven by spring's leaving and departure. He portrays the trees as sad and weak while spring has passed. Abu-Madi uses the double-feelings technique for the end and the inception of his poem. He delivers the first image differently while after the first lines, he starts to mention obviously the beautiful image of spring, he firstly recites:

> Spring has been gone, and the trees are depressed
> We also are as sad as the trees
> If you kept, we won't get sad
> While we lost flowers and Nisrina [Our Translation]
> (Abu-Madi, 2007, p. 184)

The speaker addresses spring and asks why it has left, while all people including the speaker were enjoying it. He concludes that if "you" (the spring) last, people will get pleased and comfortable with its presence and greenness. After

the persona's inceptive lines, he initiates to flirt with spring's charm. The speaker feels, enjoys, smells, and tastes the beauty of spring. He wishes that spring's time is not short, limited, and fast. So, he cannot feed himself from its comfort. The persona at the end of the poem concludes that spring is like his companion in his life. This is what Ibrahim Naji (1898-1953 CE) portrays in his "Welcome to Spring" poem. He depicts it as Abu-Madi and Shawqi, welcoming the coming of spring and singing in its presence, perfectness, and peace. He shows his immersion in spring and its spiritual influence over him. Psychologically, he treats its image to find it as a relief from his pains and sorrowful life. He begins his poem by welcoming spring and recognizing it as the best day of the year for the speaker. He feels its bright days and moments that keep him happy in a pleased mood. The coming of spring is an invitation for the speaker to live and work. This spring also comes beautifully after the passage of winter:

> Welcome, welcome to this year's spring
> Shine while you have the bright days
> After winter and its long depression
> Shown as your face's pleasure [Our Translation]
> (Naji, 1980, p. 200)

The speaker moves to conclude how spring can be a reason for the pleasure that he feels. Winter is depicted as gloomy while the priority of beauty is for spring. It is assumed that the speaker avoids mentioning winter due to its depressed, desperate, and sad times. Finally, the persona pins his hopes on spring's coming, while he feels that it is the only place and time where he feels comfortable and peaceful. At the end of the poem, the speaker delivers a simile as its smell is like a human's perfume. He needs spring to send and spray its beautiful smell and breeze to let all people feel spring's attractive smell. This perfume is the flower's smell, while they are blooming and growing during spring.

III. Spring in English Poetry

Poetry of nature in English tradition is presented for a long time beginning from the classic, and middle until the post-modern periods. One of the best-known poets of the 19th century is William Wordsworth (1770-1850 CE). He is stated as the founder of English Romanticism with his companion S. T. Coleridge. He portrays nature beautifully, especially spring. For instance, he depicts spring in his "Lines Written in Early Spring" with his situation as comfortable and pleased for being with birds, grass, and flowers. Nature to him is his shelter where he enjoys life and hopes to achieve. Al-Matarneh and Abuhammam (2021) state that this poem shows how the speaker "claims that nature is connected to humanity through the perfection of the soul, nature's soul is not away from humanity and life" (p. 1385). The speaker initiates his description by stating that he was sitting "reclined" in the orchard while he was enjoying spring and the twittering birds. After a while, the persona got sad for remembering a past thought. In the second poem, the speaker connects the human's soul with nature's soul through a thorough personification. It is like the beautiful lady that enjoys nature's beauty. The speaker thinks about what "man has made of man" then he moves to the material world where he does not find enjoyment and optimism. There are two images of spring; the first is with his soul as a charming lady, while the second is the speaker's peaceful place of tranquility:

> To her fair works did Nature link
> The human soul that through me ran;
> And much it grieved my heart to think
> What man has made of man.
> (Al-Matarneh & Abuhammam, 2021, p. 1385)

The persona then moves to show flowers enjoying spring's breeze and peace. He shows that the land is green, the birds are twittering, and the flowers feel pleasant. Here, the enjoyment is for both, the speaker himself and the flowers due to their presence in the orchard. The speaker in the next lines personifies the bird as a human who plays and hopes at the same time. It feels comfortable and enjoyable. Moreover, the speaker follows those lines by interrogating how can men get pleased away from nature, especially in spring.

At the end of the poem, the persona concludes that nature's charm and magic are holy. Nature is portrayed as the natural power that lets all people and animals feel enjoyed while the speaker is wondering about "what man has made of man?". A similar image of spring is portrayed by Wordsworth in another poem. In his "A Spring Morning", he initiates the whole poem with the image of rain on a cold night. After that, the sun came shining bright on a spring day while the tone of pleasure and peace are raised. Similarly, the birds are singing, playing, and hoping while all hearers enjoy their twittering:

> There was a roaring in the wind all night;
> The rain came heavily and fell in floods;
> But now the sun is rising calm and bright;
> The birds are singing in the distant woods;
> (Wordsworth, 2004, p. 599)

Again, the speaker shows the image of pleasure, enjoyment, and hope with the image of the enjoyable air which is filled "with pleasant noise of nature". All people and animals are out of "doors" to feel spring after winter. Even the sky enjoys the new morning as well as the bright grass. The speaker concludes at the end with a perfect image of melting fog with the sun on a spring day while the "hare" is personified to be running with her mirth "The hare is running races

in her mirth/ And with her feet she from the plashy earth/ Raises a mist, that, glittering in the sun" (Wordsworth, 2004, p. 599).

A perfectly similar image is presented by Wordsworth's companion S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834 CE). He is considered a real founder of English Romanticism with Wordsworth. S. T. Coleridge depicts spring as enjoying and pleasant. In his "Work Without Hope", he expresses his emotions during spring. This poem was written on 21st February 1825 as mentioned at the beginning of the poem. The persona initiates it with a deep personification; he presents nature busy with work. Based on the first line, it is depicted that all creatures are out of their homes and enjoying the views of spring. The persona mentions the bees, birds, and slugs and wonders about nature's beauty and peace. These natural creatures also wonder about nature's comfort and its psychological relief for their souls:

> All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
> The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
> And Winter slumbering in the open air,
> Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
> (Coleridge, 2001, p. 415)

It is highlighted that the speaker obviously justifies the pleasure drawn on these creatures' faces. It is spring that brings this happiness and enjoyment. The speaker states that even "honey" cannot be made unless spring comes and makes all creatures live and grow by virtue of spring. The persona makes a talk to the flowers, he asks them to bloom to make the land happier. When the land gets colored and green, people will feel and touch pleasure and peace. As Wordsworth, the speaker here invites himself to hope, while spring bestows him an optimistic view of life "With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:/ And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?/ Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve (Coleridge, 2001, p. 415). A person without nature's spring enjoyment may lose hope in life. The persona states that a hopeful outlook on life can be made by spring's pleasure. S.T. Coleridge portrays a similar image of spring in another poem "To A Beautiful Spring in a Village Lyrics", he describes how beautiful the land is! It is green and the water is "milky". The speaker enjoys the wind and breeze while he is wandering near the valley in the village. It is a rural setting while spring covers its terrain with its greenness:

> Once more! sweet Stream! with slow foot wandering near,
> I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
> Escap'd the flashing of the noontide hours,
> With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
> (Coleridge, 2001, p. 72)

The image of pleasure which is presented in the next lines shows even the school students as happy for the beauty of spring. This rustic mode feels the speaker with humanity, generosity, and self-confidence depicting the charm of spring. Again, the speaker "The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks/ With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks, /Releas'd from school, their little hearts at rest" (Coleridge, 2001, p. 72). Again, the persona renews an invitation to live and hope. The view of the sun in the morning with the beauty of spring is enough reason to hope and play while gloom is excluded by spring's presence. Coleridge concludes this poem with a feeling of comfort and self-tranquility while people live peacefully. To sum up, spring is the time when life begins to start bestowing hopes and love. This is what most English poets presented through their poems about nature. Spring is a well-depicted aspect even by English classic poets like William Shakespeare (1564-1616 CE). He portrays spring's image with a pleased tone. He presents the images of spring in a regular rhyme scheme in his "Sonnet 98", he initiates the poem with a clear image of his business with the charming spring. The time was April when all grass grows and the flowers bloom. The speaker has a tone of youth and age, while he feels young and fresh. He smells the beauty of nature in all places around him:

> From you have I been absent in the spring,
> When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,
> Hath put a spirit of youth in everything,
> That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
> (Shakespeare, 2013, p. 56)

The speaker enjoys his business in spring and likes April as a dressed person with greenness. Like S.T. Coleridge and Wordsworth, Shakespeare delivers the image of birds blended with the beauty of spring. In the next lines, he shows the birds as happy, joyful, and free. They move happily on the flowers while the smell of spring covers the whole area. The flowers are perfumed, they are personified to be proud and confident. The speaker admires the flowers' presence, especially the lily's growing with its whiteness "Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell/ Of different flowers in odour and in hue,/ Could make me any summer's story tell," (Shakespeare, 2013, p. 56). In successive lines, the persona addresses his speech to Spring. It is personified as a traveler who will leave his place to let summer begins and comes. The speaker is afraid of spring's fade and departure; he admires its perfume and flowers. The speaker at the end confesses that his pleasure is given by spring "They were, but sweet, but figures of delight". He praises spring's presence for moving from winter while it's shown as the time of gloom. However, spring is a time of hope, optimism, and pleasure. Delight is the main aspect and theme presented by other English poets like William Blake (1757-1827 CE). Blake is a romantic poet who depicted nature and spring in many poems like "Spring". He delivers obvious imagery and symbolism of spring. It is depicted as a source of happiness for all people, plants, trees, and animals. It is the natural

power that connects human pleasure with the material world of nature. Spring is the supernatural key that changes peoples' minds and moods from pessimistic to optimistic souls that seek pleasure and peace. In his poem, he initiates it with a "flute" sound that brings delight. He, as the previous poets mentioned previously emphasizes the imagery of the birds while spring covers the land. These birds are personified to be pleased and twittering. They play and hope, while flowers expand their perfume. The speaker mentions the "lark", it is also happy in the sky. The symbolism of the sky is to highlight its high flight and the pleasure to see all natural beauties during spring:

> Sound the Flute!
> Now it's mute.
> Birds delight
> Day and Night;
> Nightingale, In the dale,
> Lark in Sky,
> Merrily, Merrily, Merrily,
> (Secombe, 1911, p. 33)

The persona is metaphorically depicted happy as the lark in the whole poem. His tone is delighted while both the speaker and birds welcome spring "To welcome in the year". The speaker moves intentionally and initially to show the image of the boy who enjoys spring too. This boy with a "little girl" feels pleased while the speaker repeats the word "Merrily" twice at the end of the second stanza to emphasize the strong feeling of happiness brought by spring. Through a regular rhyme scheme, the speaker moves to represent the "little lamb" as pleasant, it is personified as speaking to men to enjoy its lamb which is filled with grass and joy. It is symbolized as the key idea of delight during spring.

Similar content was presented by another English poet, Robert Frost (1874-1963 CE). In his "A Prayer in Spring", the persona shows the image of pleasure, especially during spring. The speaker recalls delight while he prays to God to feel comfortable and peaceful. The speaker stands in the orchard while he feels pleasure in the flowers. He also asks to be happy as bees while they are symbolized freedom and life. Again, Frost uses birds flying between flowers to show how they are happy and twittering. They are fast and beautiful and perfectly depicted. All natural elements of spring, such as bees, birds, flowers, trees, and orchards make the speaker feels pleasure and touches its softness:

> Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers to-day;
> And give us not to think so far away
> As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
> […]
> Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,
> Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;
> And make us happy in the happy bees,
> (Frost, 2004, p. 24)

In the next lines, the persona recognizes God's blessing of giving spring, while all people feel it. The greenness of spring and the presence of natural objects make the speaker delighted, peaceful, and comfortable. The softness of spring is also depicted by another romantic poet, Percy Shelley (1792-1822 CE). He represents a masterpiece of showing the image of spring while he was staying in Pisa. He observes the *Mimasa Pudica*, it's the soft plant of the title, in an Italian orchard and in the poem that he recites. In his poem, the flowers observed in English fields that he describes show the beauty of spring. He describes this gentler season creatively while he is enjoying the natural views. At the beginning of the poem, the persona personifies the image of the flowers as "sensitive" in such a garden. The speaker then moves to relate how the dew and wind cover it beautifully. The wind is personified as a human who opens and closes his eyes while the dew kisses the flowers at night with love and softness. In the second stanza, the speaker obviously recognizes "spring" in a clear personification. It has a "spirit of love" that everyone feels and enjoys. The view of grass and herbs adds an exclusive beauty to the land and people:

> And the Spring arose on the garden fair,
> Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
> And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
> Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest
> (Shelley, 2004, p. 707)

As the previous poets portrayed, the persona here uses the "doe" in a simile in which it likes the scenes where it walks and lives. The speaker is grateful to rain for making the land green charming. Rain is personified to take a breath like human beings, but this breath is shown in a simile as fresh and soft "The snowdrop, and then the violet,/ Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,/ And their breath was mixed with fresh odour, sent" (Shelley, 2004, p. 707). The speaker moves to show the attempting image of the "Naiad" as being charming and tender. It has a youthful spirit, while it looks bright and lovely "And the Naiad-like lily of the vale". The persona closes the poem by showing various colors of spring while he feels joyful and pleased. The "purple, white, and blue" colors bestow the soul of youngness and freshness. The speaker interacts with his senses to enjoy and feel spring while it should be blended with music "Of music so delicate, soft, and intense". The mixture of spring and music lets the speaker feel the enjoyment of life and the pleasure of nature. This image is also mixed with spiritual feelings while the person listens and notices spring in the

presence of spring. The speaker confesses nature's virtue to him as providing spring to make all surrounding creatures including men pleased, joyful, and grateful.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study examines the portrayal of spring in the selected poems through a thorough analysis. It compares and analyzes the depiction of spring's image spiritually, emotionally, and aesthetically. Spring in the English-selected poems is shown as a source of pleasure and tranquility. Based on a deep observation of the classic and modern periods of English literature, spring is depicted similarly from the age of William Shakespeare until the Romantic and modern ages of English literature founded by Wordsworth and S.T. Coleridge, Blake, and Shelley. Spring is depicted perfectly as a spiritual relief in which the poets feel relaxed, happy, and joyful. A similar representation of spring is portrayed by Arabic poets in the Eastern poetic styles. Since the early classical ages of Arabic literature, spring has been shown as a place where the poet delivers perfect speech and composition. Spring is their opportunity to feel nature, touch its softness, and enjoy its presence. Al-Bohtory and Abu-Tammam are Arabic classic Abbasid poets who enjoyed the views of spring and its magnificent impact on people's minds and moods. A similar depiction of spring in Arabic literature is presented by other modern poets, such as Bader Shaker Al-Syab, Elia Abu-Madi, and Ibrahim Naji. However, the study investigates their poetic reflection related to nature, especially spring. They are like the English poets influenced by the image of spring. All these Arabic and English poets tackle spring with the image of birds, rivers, flowers, trees, and human beings. Similarly, spring is their world of imagination, thinking, and creativity. These poets glorify nature, especially spring to enhance their personal, social, and spiritual perspectives towards their beautiful nature. Spring is significant for their souls to understand or avoid their material world. They tend to be imaginative, individual, and hopeful. Spring is their way of hoping and being in a happy mood, while nature is God's blessing to live and adapt with. Nature is the spiritual world that makes them comfortable and pleased in a peaceful place.

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Emad A. Abuhammam is currently a Ph. D student at the University of Seville, Spain majoring in Philological Studies and Comparative Literature studies in poetry. He is a part-time instructor of the English Language at the University of Jordan in the Languages Center/ English Language Section. He completed his MA in English Literature from Mutah University - Karak-Jordan/2021, and a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature from Tafila Technical University - Tafila-Jordan/2016. Emad has published many articles in reputable journals in poetry. He is interested in comparative studies in poetry.

Zaid M. Al-dabbagh currently is a part-time lecturer of Arabic Language at the Languages Center, The University of Jordan, Jordan. He completed his MA in Arabic Language from the University of Jordan in 2019. He also teaches Arabic Language at the Ministry of Education in Jordan. Zaid is interested in the Arabic Abbasid and modern literary studies.

Abdullah M. Ibrahim is an Associate Professor at the Department of Arabic Language at The University of Jordan. He obtained his Ph.D from the University of Jordan in 2011. He is currently the head of the Arabic Language Department at the University of Jordan. Abdullah has published many papers in Arabic Abbasid poetry and literature.

Ismail S. Almazaidah is an Associate Professor of Arabic literature and criticism in the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at the University of Jordan. He obtained his Ph.D from Mutah University in Jordan. His area of research is literary criticism, comparative literature, and literary studies. During his career, he held many administrative positions like Advisor to the President of the University of Jordan for Cultural Affairs, Head of the Cultural Forum at the University of Jordan, and Dean of Student Affairs. He has many published research papers, books, and poetry collections. His research interests focus on literary theory, modern Arabic poetry, and comparative literature.

Hospitality Discourse on Social Media: Evaluating Online Complaints and Service Recovery for Luxury Hotels

Yau Ni Wan

Department of English Language and Literature, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, China

Gail Forey

Department of Education, University of Bath, United Kingdom

Abstract—The number of hotel visitors who post their personal experiences on online hotel review forums after their trips has increased significantly in the digital age. However, there is limited linguistic research that examines 1) how international travelers communicate online to share their negative hotel experiences and 2) how luxury hotel management resolves complaints and regains customer trust. This study examines electronic word-of mouth (eWOM) in the reviews and focuses on posted by international travelers who stayed at Hong Kong's 5-star luxury hotels and e-replies posted by hotel management groups. The data are based on authentic reviews collected from an online travel review forum. The present study employs appraisal analysis (Martin & White, 2005) and specifically the engagement system to investigate heteroglossic voice in 38 sets of complex e-complaints and responses totaling 17,344 words. The findings contribute to the advancement of professional discourse in hospitality service encounters.

Index Terms—hospitality discourse, e-complaints and e-responses, reviews on online travel forum, appraisal analysis, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms have enabled users to express their opinions on a wide range of goods and services in the digital age. Customers can leave reviews, and these comments have the potential to be viewed by an infinite number of people (Stringam & Gerdes Jr., 2010). Service industry consumers, particularly those in the hospitality sector, rely on review websites as a form of marketing to attract potential consumers (Vo et al., 2022). Traveler recommendations on social media and travel websites appear to be more reliable and have an impact on actual purchasing decisions of other potential customers (Vásquez, 2011). As it appears that customers are easily influenced by the experiences of previous customers (Pop et al., 2022), and actively seek out comments and viewpoints of other similarly minded consumers to reduce the risks of making a wrong decision (Bui, 2022). Travel review websites are becoming a key source that informs and influences the decision making of individuals (Hong, 2020; Vásquez, 2011). Online reviews also afford opportunities for dissatisfied customers to rant and satisfied customers to share their experiences with other consumers. The internet allows for faster communication while also significantly reducing the time and financial costs associated with filing a complaint (Au & Ekiz, 2009). Dissatisfied travelers can use blogs and/or travel review websites to publicly air their discontent in a private setting (Wicker, 2020). For instance, damaged fixtures might not have been fixed as soon as they ought to have been, or the staff might respond to a request slowly, which does not match the traveler's expectations. Due to the inadequate service standards, customers may have posted an online complaint on social media platforms to voice their displeasure with the services offered. The internet has evolved into the ideal medium for customers, or in this case, guests, to express their annoyance at receiving below-par service as it reduces the barriers of time and place for complaints and eliminates the psychological costs such as embarrassment (Gannon et al., 2023). Negative comments and online reviews can help hotels become more aware of their customers' needs and expectations. When guests raise concerns in a public forum, hotel managers respond accordingly. This can improve the hotel's reputation by demonstrating to customers that their concerns are valued and taken seriously. Despite a growing body of literature on hospitality, relatively little linguistics research has investigated how customers use the internet to share negative experiences and how management responds to such reviews (Au et al., 2010). Through the analysis of e-complaints and e-responses from 5-star hotels in Hong Kong on a travel forum website, this paper aims to assess hospitality discourse and identify the most frequent hotel complaints made by guests and how hotels address these issues.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983) is closely related to workplace interpersonal relationships. Emotional labor is defined as "the effort, planning, and control needed to express organizationally desired emotions during interpersonal transactions" (Morris & Feldman, 1996, p. 98). Sociologist Hochschild proposed the term "emotional labor" after researching the job nature of flight attendants and bill collectors. Since then, there has been a trend in professional settings toward understanding emotion-focused meanings in the workplace (Bolton & Boyd, 2003). The duties of a hotel professional include regular interaction with guests, where staff are expected to express positive emotions to reassure the customer. The employee's linguistic choices are underpinned by the concept of emotional labor. The present study identifies the norms and practices that govern professional communication. Effective communication can have a positive impact on visitors' overall experience and has the potential to make or break a customer's experience. Understanding the linguistic complexities of hotel interactions can help to develop effective communication strategies.

In the hotel industry, word-of-mouth (WOM) is especially important for experiential services (Kuppelwieser, 2022). WOM is the transmission of knowledge from one person to another. Market research and practitioners have long recognized the importance of WOM communication (Zeithaml et al., 2006). Customers honestly express their true feelings and thoughts. A disgruntled customer may also spread negative experience through their reviews which leads to negative WOM advertising (Azemi et al., 2020). This is intended to punish businesses that fail to give the customer their expected satisfactory experience (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Negative WOM behavior can have a global spread when it is connected to online customer reviews (Barlow & Møller, 2008). The WOM concept, on the other hand, helps hotel operators improve the quality of their services by analyzing customer feedback (Shea et al., 2005). WOM is critical for providing immediate and, to some extent, free advertising for hotel organizations (Bilgihan et al., 2013). Online reviews have evolved into a powerful decision-making tool in the hospitality industry (Park & Allen, 2013). Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication has emerged as a new marketing tool for consumers (c.f. Jin & Phua, 2014; Verma & Yadav, 2021). eWOM has a significant impact on consumer decisions regarding intangible services (Yuan et al., 2020). Customers can easily obtain online information from other travelers to assist them in making their own purchasing decisions. A travel forum on a social media site refers to the various kinds of content users share about their experiences. It can include images, videos, suggestions, ranking the performance of different aspects of their experience, e.g., cleanliness, service, value for money, etc., and evaluations of various locations or activities. Users evoke a sense of place and atmosphere in a travel forum by using vivid language and personal anecdotes to describe their lived experiences. The forum can assist users in making connections with other travelers who have similar interests to them. Therefore, managing an organization's online reputation is crucial to its marketing strategy (Sparks & Browning, 2011). A timely and well-written response to online complaints on social media platforms can greatly improve a hotel's reputation (Chan & Guillet, 2011). However, there has been little research into how hotel management responds to guest reviews. Ye et al. (2009) suggest that hotel managers should pay closer attention to the reviews that previous guests post on third-party websites. When responding to an online complaint on a social media platform, the primary goal of hotel top management is to demonstrate that they genuinely care about and are attentive to their guests and that they are prepared to take appropriate action to address any issues that may have arisen. Resolving customer complaints effectively helps to reduce bad WOM (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002), and demonstrates how the hotel values guest feedback and strives to provide the best possible experience. Furthermore, hotels can demonstrate their linguistic expertise knowledge by publicly responding to complaints on social media sites, such as establishing different generic stages and utilizing various lexical grammatical features in shaping excellent customer service. This builds trust and improves the hotel's reputation. Potential guests are more likely to select a hotel that responds to customer complaints and values customer feedback. Investigating serious hotel guest complaints and responses from 5-star hotel management posted on travel forums can have significant implications, such as building trust and creating positive brand experiences.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To understand how language makes meaning in the context of e-complaints and e-responses, we have adopted a theory of language, systemic functional linguistics (SFL), which explicitly acknowledges the symbolic relationship between the language system, society, and human activity (Halliday et al., 2007, 1964). Language is a key component of social interaction and is considered the primary social semiotic system in SFL (Halliday, 1978). Language is used by participants to express their meanings and experiences (Halliday et al., 2007, 1964). Language aids in societal understanding, exchange of shared values, and relationship negotiation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). In the present study, hotel management and guests both use language to conduct social activities, such as reviewing and responding to the guest's hotel experience. Speakers or writers choose language options to convey meaning unconsciously. When writing a review, written language is far more conscious than conversation (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). In interactions with hotel staff, language plays a crucial role in the construction and exchange of meanings. The linguistic features used in these interactions must be carefully studied. The appraisal system evolved from the tradition of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). Appraisal is defined as a "major discourse semantic

resource constructing interpersonal meaning" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 34). Appraisal resources enable the analyst to examine attitudinal/evaluative meanings in a text, that is, language choices that inscribe or evoke the authors' point of view (Martin & White, 2005). The system investigates the lexicogrammatical and discourse semantic choices the author makes when expressing opinions. These meanings can be analyzed using the three basic categories of the appraisal system: engagement, attitude, and graduation (Martin & Rose, 2007). Within appraisal, engagement is concerned with the linguistic resources through which writers adopt a stance toward the value positions referenced by the text as well as those addressed (Martin & White, 2005). Studying engagement resources of monoglossic (e.g. *I said*) and heteroglossic realization (e.g. *he claimed that*) can characterize the author's interpersonal style and rhetorical strategies (Martin & White, 2005). The present study explores the various points of view and interpersonal language used in hospitality interactions across engagement resources.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The present study used a comparative analysis to interpret guest comments and hotel responses. This study made use of publicly accessible user-generated content from a travel discussion forum. The dataset for this study consists of a selection of hotel reviews that were taken from a well-known travel review website. Millions of travelers use this platform, sharing their stories by making contributions (Oliveira et al., 2020). On the hotel's website, previous guests have posted their own reviews detailing their positive and/or negative experiences. On a scale of 1 (terrible) to 5 (excellent), customers can rate their satisfaction in different areas. Both positive and negative comments are found on the forum. Only negative comments are chosen because they are the most damaging, and the hotel's response is critical for a successful resolution. Extremely negative reviews might make hotel managers or other professionals pay attention and respond in writing. Data for this study were gathered at upscale and expensive 5-star hotels in Hong Kong. Hotel rating was the primary criterion for selecting hotels. Eighteen five-star luxury hotels were chosen. In the travel forum, hotel reviews can range from "terrible" (0) to "excellent" (5) and are based on member ratings. As part of the screening process, this study selected hotel complaints that were rated "terrible" in the English-language review and viewed as serious complaints from the 5-star hotels. Both the complaint and the hotel response were collected. A total of 38 complaints from the 18 five-star hotels (11647 words) and 38 management responses (5697 words), together a total of 17344 words were carefully examined. The primary goal of this study is to investigate the linguistic features adopting appraisal analysis and not to violate guest or hotel brand privacy, therefore, all sensitive information, including names, dates, numbers, and prices, have been manually coded to ensure anonymity.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Although the content and interpersonal choices of "terrible" hotel guest complaints can vary, when they are posted on public forums, they frequently share some linguistic features. The common generic stages of these e-complaints and e-responses posts are examined in Sections *A* and *B*, and a comprehensive lexicogrammatical analysis of engagement resources in appraisal system is presented in Sections *C* to *E*.

A. Structure of Guest E-Complaints

Customers often feel dissatisfactory when a company's performance falls short of their expectations, particularly when the product is significant to them and of high quality (Varela-Neira et al., 2008). Prior research, however, suggests that most dissatisfied customers chose not to complain or that only a small percentage do due to the high cost of presenting complaints to service providers (Kotler et al., 2010). For instance, Stauss and Seidel (2004) calculated that each complaint costs hundreds of dollars to analyze, prepare, and provide necessary information. However, Hanna and Wozniak (2001) state that service providers should pay attention to these unhappy customers because they are four times more likely to tell others about their bad experiences than satisfied customers. In the present study, it is believed that complaint texts are valuable and scarce linguistic data with significant research value. To understand these texts, we analysed the genre and generic stages found in these texts. Genre is defined as "the unfolding structure through which texts work to achieve their social goals" (Eggins & Martin, 1997, p. 239). The study of generic stages refers to the examination of stage realisation patterns in text structure, and each stage contributes to the overall social goal (Eggins, 2004). The caret sign ^ indicates the stage order; and brackets ( ) indicate the genre's optional stages (cf. Halliday & Hasan, 1980). Based on the analysis of the 38 letters, it emerged that the generic stages of guest complaints on travel forums are as:

Opening ^ Event details ^ Emotional reaction ^ (Impact on the stay) ^ (Individual attempt at resolution) ^ (Continual issues) ^ (Desired outcomes) ^ Closing & reiteration

o **Opening** (obligatory stage): The guest offers a brief description of the incident(s) they encountered while staying at the hotel. For example, *Hotel C was one of the most disappointing hotel experiences I had* (Text 4a).
o **Event details** (obligatory stage): The incident(s) is thoroughly described, including the time and location, hotel policies, as well as the names of any staff members who may have been involved. For example, *the bedding arrangement was awful with a rock-hard bed* (Text 4a).

- o **Emotional reaction** (obligatory stage): The guest's immediate emotional reactions to the incident, such as their frustration, disappointment and rage are heavily discussed. For example, *Completely disgusting!!* (Text 6a).
- o **Impact on the stay** (optional stage): The issue is further elaborated, along with any negative effects it may have had on the guest's comfort, security, or enjoyment during their stay at the hotel. For example, *our staycation was completely ruined* (Text 2a).
- o **Individual attempt at resolution** (optional stage): Any attempts or personal effort the guest made to resolve the issue prior to posting the online review, such as speaking with a hotel manager or a customer service representative, may be discussed. For example, *I contacted the manager with my gripe. No solution except apologies* (Text 10a).
- o **Continual issues** (optional stage): If the issue persisted, the guest could explain why and how they were bothered after they checked out. For example, *Upon getting home I noticed a strange transaction on my card. The card had been charged in full by the hotel* (Text 29a).
- o **Desired outcomes** (optional stage): The guest suggests practical solutions such as a refund, an apology, or a future assurance to provide better service. For example, *I have made a formal complaint through my hotel survey, but I have yet to receive any explanation or apology to date* (Text 21a).
- o **Closing & reiteration** (obligatory stage): The guest states their criticism again and makes any additional comments or suggestions. For example, *I had high expectations for such an expensive place, but I was let down* (Text 12a).

The generic stages of most guest complaints follow a similar pattern: **Opening^ Event details^ Emotional reaction^ Closing & reiteration**. If the complaints are severe, various stages of **Individual attempts at resolution** and **Continual issues** may show up.

B. Structure of Management E-Responses

Negative online reviews influence other guests' decisions and a hotel's reputation, hotel businesses must develop and implement strategies to handle e-complaints and manage service recovery (Chen et al., 2022). Earlier studies referred to service recovery as the steps an organization takes to address a service failure (Andreassen, 2001). Online complainers can quickly become online opinion leaders (Zheng et al., 2009). Management should address complaints quickly as possible. Based on the findings from the present study, the typical generic stages of managements' responses to complaints that are made public online are as:

Acknowledgment ^ Apology ^ (Investigation) ^ (Resolution)^ Follow-up ^ Gratitude

- o **Acknowledgment** (obligatory stage): The first stage is to acknowledge the complaint and thank the guest for bringing it to the company's attention. For example, *Thank you for having taken the time to share your feedback about your recent stay* (Text 3b).
- o **Apology** (obligatory stage): The management sincerely apologizes to the guest for the inconvenience. For example, *I apologize for the inconvenience caused to you* (Text 12b).
- o **Investigation** (optional stage): This step involves thoroughly investigating the issue to ascertain what went wrong and why. This entails looking over the pertinent records, discussing with the involved employees, and gathering any additional information. For example, *We have brought your comments to the attention of the department heads concerned for necessary corrective actions to be taken* (Text 1b).
- o **Resolution** (optional stage): Management entails compensating the client, providing a complimentary service, or providing other remedies or benefits. For example, *Your important comment has been shared with our Director of Rooms Operations for immediate review, who will also look into purchasing softer mattresses as back up should you once again visit Hong Kong, or should any guest wish to have such a mattress* (Text 4b).
- o **Follow-up** (obligatory stage): The final step is to check in with the visitor to see if any additional assistance is needed. For example, *If you would like to further discuss your concerns, please feel free to contact me at comments@hotelP.com* (Text 36b).
- o **Gratitude** (obligatory stage): Express gratitude to the visitor for bringing up the subject and outlining their concerns. For example, *Our ladies and gentlemen and I look forward to having the pleasure of welcoming you back again at Hotel C, Hong Kong should you allow us to redeem ourselves* (Text 4b).

The most helpful stages in the entire text are **Apology**, **Investigation**, and **Resolution**. This is a result of the hotel's efforts and sincere concern for the impacted guests. Overall, these stages of the response can assist in ensuring that customer complaints are successfully and promptly resolved, which is crucial for upholding a positive reputation and attracting new customers.

C. Engagement Analysis

This study examines how appraisal analysis can be used to analyze e-complaints and e-responses on travel forums to better comprehend workplace discourse. There are two sides to the interpersonal representation of meaning in the texts: the e-complaint generally construes negative emotions and comments, whereas the management response expresses empathy and concern in an attempt to undertake service recovery. Monogloss and heterogloss are two subcategories of engagement. The present study investigated engagement analysis using Martin and White's (2005) approach, as shown

in Figure 1. The appraisal analysis, specifically the engagement system, is a significant and organized framework for investigating the author's voice that largely construing the e-complaints and responses.
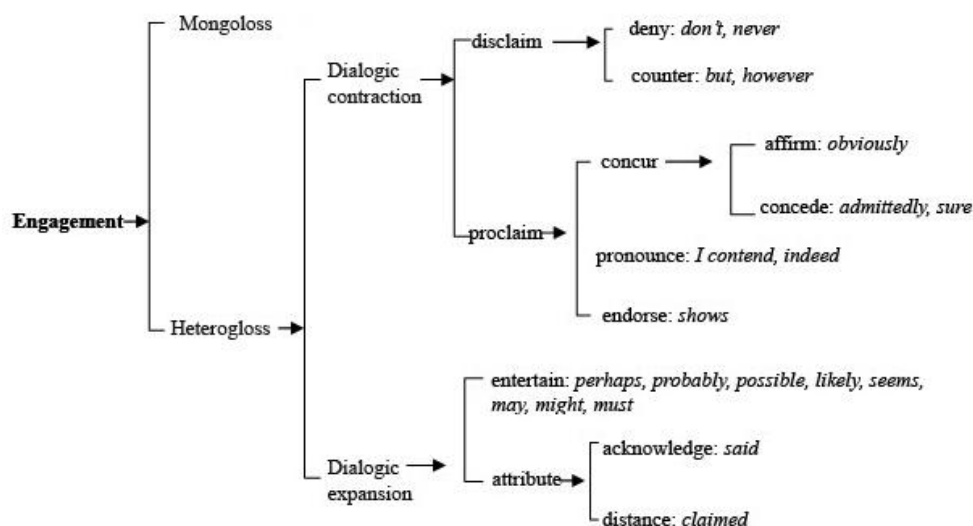

Figure 1. Engagement System (Adopted From Martin & White, 2005, p. 134)

Monoglossic utterances exclude other voices or points of view; heteroglossic utterances suggest or allow for dialogistic alternatives (Martin & White, 2005). The short Extract 1 is introduced as an example of monoglossic voice from the data.

[1] *I said* I would not sign the bill. (Text 15a)

The monoglossic lexical realization of *I said* in Text 15a does not recognize dialogistic alternatives. It leaves no room for compromise or alignment. The guest does not engage the readers, instead providing a descriptive and authoritative statement in the complaint. Monoglossic utterance is a rare occurrence in data. When customers complain, they frequently use heteroglossia resources.

D. Heteroglossia: Dialogic Contraction (Disclaim and Proclaim)

As illustrated in Figure 1, heteroglossic resources can be divided into two broad categories of dialogic contraction and expansion (Martin & White, 2005). Dialogic contraction "acts to challenge, end off or restrict the scope of other voices", while dialogic expansion "makes allowances for dialogically alternative positions and voices" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 102). Both expressly mention the utterances and viewpoints of outside voices. Dialogic contraction has two subcategories: disclaim and proclaim. Disclaim is a textual voice that positions itself as opposing or rejecting a contrary position (Martin & White, 2005, p. 97): deny (*don't, never*) and counter (*but, however, even though*). In the disclaim category, negative polarity is frequently employed, examples include *don't* and *never*. Extracts 2 and 3 are examples of disclaiming in the data.

[2] She was not even smiling and seemed upset when I approached the Guest Relations Department. I just ***don't*** understand how she could give me such a look. (Text 17a)

[3] My stay was terrible, and I will ***never*** come back. (Text 31a)

These statements with the examples of *don't* and *never* are forceful, direct, and leave little room for negotiation. When creating e-complaints, a guest's negation is frequently encountered. Extract 2 provides a compelling illustration of the value of smiling and conveying a positive attitude in the hospitality sector. To reassure the guest, hotel staff must show positive emotions (Xiang et al., 2022). It is therefore inappropriate to look *upset* and *not even smile*. In the service encounter, a pleasant facial expression is one of the preferred emotions during interpersonal interactions (González-Rodríguez et al., 2020). The lexical choice of *never* in Extract 3 conveys a very serious message, and this would be seen as harming the hotel's reputation. Reviews that are unfavorable could lead to a decline in business.

Within the disclaim category, counter refers to the opposite of the original idea and is frequently denoted by the words *but* and *however*. According to Forey (2020), Hood and Forey (2008), the counter concession is examined as part of the appraisal to create counter expectancy. In the data, *but* has 78 tokens in the data, with 69 tokens from guests and 9 tokens from management; *however* has a total of 15 tokens, with 10 tokens from guests and 5 tokens from management. The words *but* and *however* perform important linguistic functions that enhance the impact of a complaint, emphasizing the disparity between what was expected and what was actually encountered. They set up a situation in which the complainant can take control of the discussion by laying out a contrast. As a result, the words *however* and *but* appear frequently in e-complaint, adding to their power and persuasiveness. Extracts 4 to 8 are selected concession examples from the guest complaints.

[4] I was at the lobby with two friends, and we ordered drinks and prepared to have a nice catch up. ***However,*** after 10 minutes of sitting down, we started feeling itchy, and we noticed there were so many mosquitos flying around, and we all got bitten badly. (Text 32a)

[5] Don't be fooled by staff's smile, they say yes, ***but*** delivery takes ages. (Text 2a)

[6] While I was here, my iPhone was stolen from my room. It had been in the room before the housekeeping came and was not there when I returned. I know that the iPhone can do many great things, ***but*** walking out of the room is not one of them. (Text 5a)

[7] As a business traveler, I never feel the need to leave any comment on any internet engine even though it seems to be a popular thing to do... ***But*** with my recent experience at Hotel B, I finally feel like I have to say something for those who trust online travel forums a lot when they travel. (Text 3a)

[8] This is a public platform, and I cannot use a certain language. ***But*** I wish I could express the magnitude of my discontent, anger and disgust. (Text 33a)

In the past, many guests either declined to file complaints or, if they were not satisfied with the outcome, moved on to other businesses (Schoefer & Ennew, 2005). Guests who are irate about a hotel's lack of response may vent their anger through social media. They have the chance to interact with a larger group of people and voice any concerns they may have (Au & Ekiz, 2009). The way the staff interacts with guests, the misleading smile in Extract 5, the misbehavior of the hotel staff in Extract 6, and specific hotel amenities such as poor pest control in the lobby in Extract 4 are examples of complaints. Guests are aware of the power of online review forums for the general public, such as *a public platform* in Extract 8 and the *online travel forum* in Extract 7. Customers may want to put pressure on hotel management to address the negative issues they have experienced and the pressure to quickly resolve any unresolved problems may be strengthened.

Customer experience is at the center of the service product (Chapman & Lovell, 2006). Since customer satisfaction is positively correlated with future purchasing attitudes and intentions, therefore it should be prioritized from a business perspective (Severt et al., 2006). If the complaint is legitimate, management typically reply by sincerely apologizing for the trouble the client has experienced, and hotels might outline their plans for redress after issuing an apology. The following selected examples of concessive *but* and *however* usage in management e-response complaints, from Extracts 9 to 13.

[9] I understand the frustration you feel, ***but*** please be assured that this is not an intentional act. (Text 12b)

[10] We understand that an amenity and an apology cannot possibly compensate for your recent poor experience ***but*** are rather an expression of our embarrassment. (Text 6b)

[11] I can easily understand that you would feel the search of your room to have been invasive, ***but*** in most cases, we actually find such searches to be successful in turning up items that were first reported missing. (Text 5b)

[12] We regret that you have only stayed and used the room facilities briefly, ***but*** we hope to welcome you back in the future for a longer stay. We sincerely hope to have the pleasure of serving you again and making your next stay a more enjoyable one. (Text 17b)

[13] At Hotel C, we strive for the perfection of our products and services and the satisfaction of our customers by continuous improvements, and I am sorry we failed to satisfy you this time; ***however,*** thank you very much for your feedback. (Text 4b)

The management responds to the complaints with sincere words, such as *understand the frustration* and *not an intentional act* in Extract 9, *we understand that* and in *an expression of our embarrassment* in Extract 10, and *I can easily understand* in Extract 11. Service recovery strategies like an apology, like *we regret that* in Extract 12 and *I am sorry we failed to satisfy you this time* in Extract 13, can be used effectively in both online and offline interfaces. Stronger relationships could be maintained with effective complaint management, if a prompt and sincere response is received (Barlow & Møller, 2008).

Proclaim is another type of dialogic contraction in heteroglossia. Proclaim is a textual voice that sets itself against, suppresses, or excludes alternative positions by portraying the proposition as highly justifiable (Martin & White, 2005). The three subtypes of proclamation are concur, pronounce, and endorse. However, the data show that there are few instances of pronounce, such as I *contend* and *indeed*. The emphasis is therefore on concur and endorse, as shown in Extracts 14 and 15.

[14] ***Obviously*** our bus had to come within the drive by area and halt for 5 minutes so that the 16 of us could get in and settle. However, the hotel manager stopped our bus driver from doing this twice. We had to argue with him about this too. Amazingly, this treatment was only given to us. (Text 33a)

[15] Within the next two days, there was a group of 40 Europeans who arrived. To my surprise, the manager that refused to take our luggage to our rooms was running circles around this group and instructing bell boys to quickly assist this group. WOW!!!! I couldn't believe what I had just seen. Hypocrisy and clear discriminative behavior are ***shown*** by this. Discrimination, racism, call it whatever. (Text 33a)

When sharing their unpleasant experience, some guests may describe more emotional details or exaggerate their complaints to attract more attention or damage the hotel's reputation. In Text 33a, the guest records a great deal of minor details about his unfair treatment, for instance, the time *5 minutes*, the number of guests *16 of us*, *40 Europeans*,

the manager's actions *arguing, refusing to take our luggage*, *running around in circles*, *ordering bellboys to assist this group* and his surprise *WOW!!!! I couldn't believe*. These small particulars help other reviewers picture the scenario. The writer used the concur token *obviously* and the endorse token *shown* in Extracts 14 and 15 to convey and visualize his frustration and rage to other readers on the forum. After reading about these details, potential guests can make a decision about whether or not to book that specific hotel. The feedback from these reviews may also benefit hotel management in terms of improving their operations and providing better customer service.

E. Heteroglossia: Dialogic Expansion (Entertain and Attribute)

Heteroglossia dialogic expansion is covered in this section. Dialogic expansion "actively makes allowances for dialogically alternative positions and voices" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 102) as opposed to dialogic contraction. It fosters a dialog between divergent points of view. Entertain and attribute are the two main categories of dialogic expansion: entertain refers to the authorial voice invoking these dialogic alternatives by explicitly presenting the proposition as one of several opposing views and by clearly indicating that it is based on its own contingent, unique subjectivity (Martin & White, 2005); while attribute is defined as "representing proposition as grounded in the subjectivity of an external voice" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 98). The use of modal adjuncts such as *perhaps* and *probably* to express similar likelihood can be used to lexically realize entertain resources. Extracts 16 and 17 contain the entertain (likelihood) examples that were derived from the data.

> [16] ***Perhaps*** I am not one of their frequent customers and just giving a simple promise might not be enough to justify my wanting to stay there again. (Text 26a)
> [17] ***Probably*** it is a good idea to stick with Hotel G and Hotel H (other hotels). At least a correct room type will be given every time. (Text 35a)

The author makes fun of himself in Extract 16 for not being treated with respect and not having a five-star experience. One possible explanation is that he is not a frequent customer who deserves satisfactory treatment. *Perhaps* is a likelihood resource he employs in this argument. The customer in Extract 17 expresses this intention by using the word *probably* to indicate that they will likely stay at other hotels that offer reasonable service. Likelihood can be expressed via modal attributes *possible*, *likely* and *seems* in Extracts 18 to 20.

> [18] Maintaining the highest ***possible*** standard of cleanliness and housekeeping is something that each of our guests will expect at any Hotel D property. (Text 6b)
> [19] Travelers who are not bothered by strong fragrance will most ***likely*** be happy with Hotel N. (Text 28a)
> [20] It ***seems*** that my request had been forgotten. (Text 3a)

In Extract 20, the guest stated that his request appeared to have been forgotten. Failure to respond to requests due to controllable forces can reduce client loyalty (Homburg & Fuersten, 2005). Additionally, modality auxiliaries *must* and *may* are used to achieve dialogic expansion. Extracts 21 and 22 are examples of high modal auxiliary (*must*) used by the guest to express their complaints, whereas Extracts 23 and 24 are examples of low modal auxiliary (*may*) used by the management in service recovery.

> [21] Extremely difficult to find if you come by the airport train as you ***must*** traverse through a rabbit warren shopping complex. Good luck finding it. [Text 10a]
> [22] They ***must*** know that certain rooms are not suitable for use. Why they sell them at a premium rate is beyond me. [Text 1a]
> [23] I would very much like to call you to discuss your feedback so I ***may*** gather some details that ***may*** shed light on our shortcomings and ultimately express our sincere apologies for the inconvenience caused. (Text 20b)
> [24] Please contact me personally with your reservation in hopes that we ***may*** be able meet and exceed your expectations for your future stays. (Text 37b)

When composing complaints and responses, the low and high modalities interact. In Extract 23 and 24, responses from management are usually written in lower modality with a more polite tone that steers clear of being offensive or confrontational. They frequently start by expressing empathy for their situation and understanding their concerns. This demonstrates the significance and value of the business to its clients. As a result, more conflict is averted, and the company's reputation grows. Furthermore, it is clear that the management wants to have a further conversation with the reviewer. An online response might not always be enough to handle the service recovery process. Face-to-face meetings or phone calls are sometimes necessary for time-sensitive issues (Reinartz et al., 2005). Additionally, online reviews are frequently posted under false names, casting doubt on the validity of such comments (Sen & Lerman, 2007). It is advantageous and appropriate for management to carry out more investigation to verify the facts of the event.

Attribute is another type of dialogic expansion. This is most frequently accomplished through "the grammar of directly and indirectly reported speech and thought", with the communicative process verbs *said* and *claimed* (Martin & White, 2005, p. 111). There are two subcategories of attribution: acknowledge and distance. Examples of acknowledge (attribute) resources used in the data can be found in Extracts 25 through 27.

> [25] After a while he came back with insulting expressions and ***said*** "this will be the last exception". (Text 11a)
> [26] The incapable and unhelpful manager even ***said*** if he were me, he would forget about it and go out to enjoy the city! (Text 22a)
> [27] The manager ***said*** there was nothing he could do. I said I would not sign the bill; he could charge my credit card they had on file, and I would dispute it when I got home. (Text 15a)

According to the data, phrases such as *the manager said* are used as indicators of "hearsay" from outside sources. The guest used another person's voice to bolster his arguments by adding relevant details. Because the guest regards the manager as *incapable* and *unhelpful*, the words spoken by these managers are also unprofessional and ineffective. As a result, *the manager said* is interpreted as negative hearsay. The second attribution subcategory is distance. Distance is defined as "an explicit distancing of the authorial voice from the attributed material" (Matin & White, 2005, p. 113).

> [28] If you look at my history on here, you'll see I always stay in 5-star luxury hotels. So, seeing Hotel N ***claiming*** to be 5 stars, I thought I'd give it a go. (Text 30a)

The reviewer disassociates himself from the claim "to be 5 stars" in Extract 28, indicating his reservations. The reviewer believes that there is still room for debate regarding the hotel's 5-star service quality. To summarize, this section provides a detailed lexicogrammatical examination of appraisal analysis and in particular engagement resources. These engagement resources, which include disclaim (counter) tokens such as *but/however*, likelihood tokens via modal adjuncts and attributes such as *perhaps/possible/may/must*, are frequently found in complaint and responses.

VI. CONCLUSION

A negative experience shared on a blog or website could reach millions of readers in an instance, due to the speed and constantly developing technology of the internet (Pan & Fesenmaier, 2006). This is especially significant for hospitality industries because the internet altered how travelers seek information and plan their trips (Ayeh et al., 2013). The growing need to analyze complaints and service recovery is discussed in the hospitality literature (Shams et al., 2021). This analysis of serious hotel guest e-complaints and management e-responses on social media can benefit all parties by providing information to both travelers and hotel management, as well as providing broader industry linguistic insights for the hospitality sector. The present study identifies different linguistic features used by complainants to express their dissatisfaction with their hotel stay. The guest frequently employs descriptive language to paint a vivid picture of the lodging experience, including the quality of the amenities and services, the condition of the rooms, and other elements that affect their overall impression. These online negative comments potentially hurt the company's reputation. To avoid reputational damage, revenue loss, and legal repercussions, hotel management must reply to guest complaints seriously, thoroughly investigate them, and take appropriate action to address the issue. Responses from hotel management can show how committed they are to improving visitor experiences, show potential customers that they are accountable, and encourage good word-of-mouth recommendations. Using the framework of systemic functional linguistics, the present study contributes to the investigation of e-complaint and responses in terms of content, generic stages, and various lexical realizations in particular engagement resources in appraisal system. It is hoped that the study's linguistic structures and language patterns will be incorporated into future English language training programs to improve understanding of business communication in the hospitality sector.

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Yau Ni Wan is an Assistant Professor of Department of English Language and Literature at Hong Kong Shue Yan University in Hong Kong, CHINA. Her research interests include systemic functional linguistics and professional discourse analysis. Author ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7585-1745

Gail Forey is currently Associate Dean (Education) of University of Bath, United Kingdom. She has published in the areas of written and spoken workplace discourse, systemic functional linguistics, discourse analysis, language education and teaching development. Author ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4562-942X

The Evolution of Female Characters From Antiquity to Modernity: An Examination of Marinna Carr's and Carol Lashof's Adaptations of Classical Mythology

Zena D. Mohammed Hassan

English Department, College of Education for Humanities, University of Karbala, Karbala, Iraq

Dheyaa K. Nayel

English Department, College of Education for Humanities, University of Karbala, Karbala, Iraq

Abstract—**Literature relies heavily on mythology. Myths are stories of deities, monsters or immortals which are transformed from one generation to the other. In addition to documenting the religious and cultural experiences of a specific community, myths also outline the consequent literary, artistic and dramatic customs. Some Greek myths have survived for thousands of years because they accurately depict historical events, cultural values, and trends. Among the most famous classical myths are the myths of Medusa and Medea. As for the myth of Medusa, the earliest known record was found in Theogony (700BC) by Hesiod (8 th-7th century BC). A later version of the Medusa myth was made by the Roman poet Ovid (43BC –17/18AD), in his "Metamorphoses" (3-8 AD). Then again, *Medea* is a tragedy produced in 431 BC by the Greek playwright Euripides(480–406BC) based on the myth of Jason and Medea. Both Medusa and Medea are among the most fascinating and complex female protagonists in Greek mythology which have captivated many writers and playwrights for ages. In the twentieth century, there were many adaptations of both mythological figures; among these adaptations were those made by contemporary American and Irish women playwrights like Carol Lashof (1956-) and Marinna Carr (1964-). This paper examines the myths of Medusa and Medea and analyses the ways these myths are borrowed, refashioned and exploited in Lashof's *Medusa's Tale* (1991) and Carr's *By the Bog of Cats* (1998). Both playwrights explore hidden dimensions of the traditional myths, combining elements from the old and modern worlds.**

Index Terms—**myth, Medea, Medusa, *Medusa's Tale*, *By the Bog of Cats***

I. INTRODUCTION

Tales, as products of people's imagination, have been highly popular since ancient times. In Greece, a specific term was coined for these tales – 'mythos' - and this term was translated from Greek as 'myth'. While myths bring to the fore many facts and events, they do not represent historical reality. Different assumptions and theories have been expressed to explain what is behind myths, such as symbolic theory, allegorical theory, euhemerism, and rationalism (Rose, 2005). Yet the efforts of scholars and researchers to develop a comprehensive theory of the origin and crucial meaning of any myth have failed. Given that there is a lack of consensus on definition of myths, it is more appropriate to view myths from the lens of multidimensionality and change (Dowden & Livingstone, 2011). According to Sanders (2007) every Greek myth should be perceived as a story which has been refashioned and modified many times in the process of its transfer from a generation to generation and from one culture to another culture. In more specific terms, a Greek myth is a narration which is produced as a result of social, but not individual efforts, which cannot be attributed to a specific genre and which focuses on the relationships between gods and mortals (Graf, 1993).

However, a distinct characteristic of Greek mythology is that it exposes the cultural and social identity of Greeks and their ways of life and thinking. Despite the fact that Greek myths narrate everyday events within a supernatural context, they vividly illustrate social reality and gender issues prevalent in the Greek world. The first Greek myths were recited before audiences about two thousand years ago and were orally transferred from one storyteller to another (Bremmer, 2014).

In view of their oral nature, myths were exposed to constant changes to satisfy new tastes and interests of the audience. Moreover, the same myths had different versions, depending on region. Later, Greek myths were written down and were borrowed by the Romans, who used them as a basis on which their literature and art were created (Martin, 2003).

Entering into European culture through the literature produced by Roman poets, Greek myths have been widely used and adapted by writers and playwrights. Two characters of Greek mythology have been especially popular among them – Medusa and Medea. The interest of modern writers and playwrights in these characters is explained by their

ambiguity, inscrutability, and psychological complexity. These Greek female characters stand out from others by their diverse behaviors and inconsistent desires (Lauriolla, 2015). Arkins (2003) elucidates that despite the fact that Greek myths were created within a male-dominated realm, these characters act as rebellious females who tend to "disrupt the male system and can be termed 'female intruders'" (p. 202). Yet Greek mythological characters are infused with new characteristics in modern rewritings to serve different spectators and objectives. The purpose of adapting Greek myths in modern drama is to encourage the audience to look at mythological characters with a fresh eye and from the perspective of modernity (Foster, 2012). Through adaptations, modern playwrights seek to persuade the audience of the need to substitute prior perspectives and simple judgements of mythical figures for a more profound and comprehensive vision. In the process of myth adaptations, modern playwrights preserve close ties with the original Greek myths, whilst simultaneously rewriting dialogues and refashioning the portrayals of characters.

However, it should be taken into account that adaptations do not just borrow specific elements from original texts, but also contribute to the creation of meanings (Hutcheon, 2006). Following this line of argument, adaptations are intended to deepen understanding of myths rather than to produce new stories and new meanings. In light of this, Van Weyenberg specifies that adaptation should be viewed as "an ongoing and mutual process, rather than a one-directional line of influence" (2013, p. 21). Drawing on this perspective, adaptation tends to change original texts and, in view of their two-way relationships, original texts and adaptations appear equal to each other, despite the fact that adaptation juxtaposes new and old components.

This paper aims to shed light on modern representations and refashioning of myths of Medusa and Medea produced by an American playwright, Carol Lashof (1956-) and a modern Irish playwright, Marina Carr (1964-), and, in their works *Medusa's Tale* (1991) and *By the Bog of Cats* (1998) respectively. While critics have paid sufficient attention to the analysis of both works, parallels between Lashof's and Carr's use of myths have not been drawn. The paper attempts to fill this gap and provide a comparative analysis of Lashof and Carr, hypothesizing that both playwrights employ the method of remythologization in their plays to present mythological figures from the female perspective and thus "radically reclaim patriarchal mythologies" (Sihra, 2018, p. 271) of Medusa and Medea. As the paper implies, the integration of the female perspective into the rewriting of such mythological female characters as Medusa and Medea stems from desire to produce "a woman-centered 'herstory'" (Johnston E., 2017, p. 184) and thus depict female characters as victims of a culture which reinforces female subjugation.

II. ANALYZING THE REPRESENTATIONS OF MEDUSA AND MEDEA IN THE MYTHS OF OVID (43 BC – 17 AD) AND EURIPIDES (480 – 406 BC).

The first mention of Medusa was discovered in the poem "Theogony" by Hesiod (8-7 BC), yet this literary work provides only a few details of Medusa's birth and death. Hesiod's myth of Medusa was borrowed by the Roman poet, Ovid, who in his epic poem "Metamorphoses" depicted a beautiful, powerful, and dangerous maiden, a daughter of a sea god, capable of turning people into stones with her gaze. The version of Medusa's myth produced by Ovid was the one most widely used by further generations of poets and writers (Wilk, 2000).

What is evident from Ovid's work is that for ancient Greeks and Romans, Medusa was the embodiment of terror and beauty, murder and redemption (Dumoulie, 2016). Once a beautiful woman with astonishing hair, Medusa is punished by Athena for being raped by Poseidon in her virgin temple and is transformed into a dangerous monster with snakes on her head and a deadly gaze. Yet when Perseus beheads Medusa, he uses her head to gain victory over his enemies. In this regard, Medusa's head fulfils the role of an amulet that protects a person from evil. In view of this ambiguous portrayal of Medusa, Ovid implies that it is difficult to distinguish between a monster and a victim. Instead of applying this distinction to Medusa, Ovid presents different manifestations of this female character (Walker, 1998). At first, the poet depicts Medusa as an object of men's sexual desires, accentuating her physical beauty, especially hair and eyes. Further, she appears in the image of a monster who both attracts and frightens men, and finally she becomes a weapon used by a man to prove his power.

What becomes clear from all these manifestations is that Ovid's Medusa echoes the wishes of other figures in the story. The poet does not provide any evidence of the desires of Medusa. Hence, Ovid's portrayal of the female character reveals ancient Greeks' and Romans' fear of women, and of the threat which women might pose to patriarchal authority. As a beautiful woman, Medusa is a seducer who may easily deprive a god of his control and make him follow his sexual instincts. As a revenge, Poseidon not only rapes Medusa, but also plays an implicit role in her transformation into a monster. It is his particular action that results in Athena's rage and punishment. Such an act of punishment is in accordance with the ancient Greek thinking that the victim of rape should be punished for the rape. However, even as a monster, Medusa continues to threaten men. She is beheaded by a man who wants to prove his power over a dangerous female creature, yet Perseus uses her head to triumph over others. Simultaneously, by enslaving Medusa, Perseus preserves his masculinity and contributes to maintaining "rape culture" (Johnston E., 2017, p. 185). In such culture, it is natural for gods and men to rape and dishonor women, simultaneously putting the blame for rape on them (Johnston E., 2017).

Medea is another complex female character who is mentioned in many ancient Greek sources, though these have been preserved only in small fragments. Luke Roman and Monica Roman, renowned authors noted for their comprehensive work in the field of classical studies, "Encyclopedia of Greek and Roman Mythology,"(2010) claim that

the fascination of ancient Greeks with the image of Medea is evident in Euripides's choice of this female character for his tragedy of the same name, despite the fact that this particular choice was not readily supported by Euripides's contemporaries. This lack of support is, to a great extent, explained by the playwright's interest in dark sides of a human being, the shift of focus from male heroes to a highly ambiguous female character, and the address of controversial moral questions. Medea is portrayed by Euripides as a sorceress, the bride of Jason, and a killer of her own brother and children. Most significantly, in Euripides's portrayal, Medea is a woman who cannot control her inner demons, and who turns to revenge because of the humiliation she experiences after Jason's betrayal. Although Medea expresses tenderness to her children, she nevertheless decides to "be ruthless toward her enemies" (Roman & Roman, 2010, p. 307). Instead of acting on her maternal instincts and save her children, Medea puts her desire for revenge above her love for children as well as her powerful emotions above reason and forgiveness. Hence, through the image of Medea, Euripides exposes the ancient conflicts between genders, and, in more specific terms, the fears of ancient Greeks of violent and uncontrollable femininity (Johnston S., 1997). Even in cases when Euripides depicts Medea in the role of a 'helper-maiden', the playwright implies that Medea's magic is a dangerous thing which may threaten men's lives and well-being. As the play progresses and Medea changes into a vengeful woman, it becomes evident that "the wicked woman always lurked within the helper-maiden" (Johnston S., 1997, p. 6).

On the other hand, by depicting Medea as both a helper and murder, Euripides makes an attempt to avoid an easy categorization of this female character. In some instances, she evokes sympathy, while others she evokes horror. In some cases, this female character is so proud that she refuses to accept authority of the king or her husband, while in others she is ready to do everything to retain her husband. Likewise, Medea's struggle with the patriarchal society stems from her struggle with her inner self. Emma Griffiths in her *Medea* (2006) sheds light on previously overlooked aspects of the Medea myth and asserts that such an ambiguous portrayal of Medea suggests that Euripides wants to express the attitude, shared by many ancient Greeks, that a woman should not be trusted, even if she projects an image of a lovable and good female. In ancient Greece deceit was viewed as one of the major characteristics of women.

At the end of Euripides's play, Medea is transformed from a human being into a semi-divine creature who punishes Jason's failure to venerate the authority of eros and the sacredness of marriage oaths. Hence, as is obvious from both Ovid's and Euripides's works, ancient Greeks tended to "figure women as 'the other'" (Griffiths, 2006, p. 61) and attribute negative stereotypes to them. By dehumanizing women through the depiction of their violence, Ovid and Euripides justify their further punishment.

In the modern West, Greek myths, according to Emma Griffiths, have mainly been analyzed by male researchers and critics, and have thus been explored through the male perspective (Griffiths, 2006). Taking into account this male perspective, it becomes obvious why the emphasis in the majority of readings has been placed on Medusa's and Medea's violence against men, and on their issues of negotiating identity. With regard to the latter aspect, both Medea and Medusa possess male and female features. In light of this, their identities are highly distorted. To achieve the balance in perspectives, it is necessary to scrutinize the female perspective to retellings of Greek myths.

III. REFASHIONING THE CHARACTERS OF MEDUSA AND MEDEA BY LASHOF AND CARR

Since the 1970s, writers and playwrights have turned their attention to Greek myths and mythological characters in an attempt to meet diverse intellectual and aesthetic demands of the audience and to revive "dramatic forms through a close engagement with the classical text" (Ioannidou, 2017, p. 131).Yet new lens are used for analyzing mythological characters, and new approaches have been developed for portraying familiar characters in a modern light. Through the refashioning of mythological characters, writers and playwrights uncover hidden aspects of characters' personalities and reinforce the audience's understanding of controversial mythological figures. This is just the case with regard to such Greek mythological characters as Medusa and Medea in their modern transformations by Lashof and Carr. Both playwrights share a similar vision on Medusa and Medea, presenting them not as evil, but as victims of gods or people whom they trusted and loved. By exchanging images of them as monsters with portrayals of victims of either sexual or psychological abuse, Lashof and Carr depict them as women who are in need of protection. Such resonances between Lashof and Carr exemplify attempts of modern playwrights to penetrate deep into a woman's dark side and find out what transforms a woman into a murderer and monster. Yet while Lashof rewrites the character of Medusa, Carr draws implicit parallels between Medea and her principal female character, Hester, living in modern Ireland (Sihra, 2018). In this regard, Carr situates an ancient Greek character within contemporary Irish culture and intensifies her tragedy by adding various painful details of the character's past.

In her play Medusa's Tale, Lashof reconsiders the portrayal of Medusa as a monster, and presents her as an innocent victim who is betrayed, rejected and punished by cruel gods Athena and Poseidon. As is clearly evident from Lashof's play, a man easily rejects a woman whom he raped when she is changed into an ugly creature. Likewise, the goddess turns away from a devoted girl to conceal her own failure:

Medusa: She was my guardian, too. I loved her once.
Perseus: (Pleading) Athena is wise and just. She would not punish someone who was virtuous.
Medusa: She failed me. And she punishes me for having seen her failure". (*Medusa's Tale*, I, p. 282)

This particular dialogue demonstrates that Lashof presents Medusa not only as a helpless woman, but also as "the voice of feminist rage" (Currie, 2011, p. 170). In contrast to Ovid's play, Medusa is not a soundless victim, but a victim

who accuses her torturers and who wants Perseus to hear the true story of her tragedy. The very fact that Lashof endows Medusa with an opportunity to give her version of events leading to her transformation into a monster signifies that the playwright empowers her female character. Instead of killing Medusa at once, Perseus allows her to take his sword and speak to him:

> Medusa: I want to tell you a bedtime story.
> Perseus: Where's my sword?
> Medusa: It's safe. You can have it back when the story's over. Listen closely so you may judge for yourself what the love of the gods is worth". (*Medusa's Tale*, I. p. 245)

As becomes obvious from Medusa's story, Poseidon does nothing to protect the woman who he raped. The god, similar to men, is ready to satisfy his sexual desires with a beautiful woman, but easily betrays her and does not want to bear responsibility for his rape when Athena punishes her.

What is absent in the ancient myth on Medea, but is present in Carr's version in *By the Bog of Cats*, is that the character's desire for revenge stems not only from her husband's betrayal and marriage of another woman, but also from the mother's abandonment of her at the age of seven at the *Bog of Cats*. Like Medea, Hester experiences powerful emotions because of her lover's marriage, but the roots of Hester's anger and hate can be found in her lonely childhood and in her sense of displacement. In Carr's play, modern Medea is represented as a woman whose sufferings and struggle are a reflection of personal and cultural problems. As an abandoned child, Hester avenges not only her husband, but her mother as well. With the progression of the play, it becomes evident that she kills her half-brother because she cannot withstand her brother's closeness to her mother. Yet Carr penetrates deeper in her portrayal of Hester by accentuating not only her abandonment, but also her rejection in society in which she lives. The Irish settled society rejects her mother and Hester for their belonging to a community of travelers. Despite the fact that Hester's father is a settler and that she spends her whole life at the bog, local people refuse to accept her as a member of their community. As Mrs. Kilbride says to Hester: "I've had the measure of you this long time, the lazy shiftless blood in ya, that savage tinker eye ya turn on people to frighten them" (*By the Bog of Cats*, II, p. 55).

While there are obvious parallels between Greek Medea and Hester in that they are both outsiders in the realms in which they live, Greek Medea "exerts a masculine power" (Griffiths, 2006, p. 59). However, while Euripides's Medea kills her children for revenge against her husband, Carr's Hester decides to kill her daughter because she does not want her to live without a mother. In view of ghost's prediction of her upcoming death, Hester "kills her child in a desperate act of love" (Sihra, 2018, p. 120). Hester loves her daughter so much that she does not want her to suffer as she suffered in her own childhood.

In this regard, Carr's character is more emotionally complex than Euripides's Medea. The trauma which Hester undergoes as a child continues to haunt her through the rest of her life and brings about the tragic end for her and her daughter. Hester refuses to leave the place where her mother abandons her, and in a state of despair cuts the throat of her daughter and further commits suicide. Hence, what significantly complicates Carr's character is early separation from the attachment figure. Recalling the moment of mother's leaving, Hester specifies, "And she says, 'No Hetty. You wait here, I'll be back in a while'… And I watched her walk away from me across the Bog of Cats. And across the Bog of Cats, I'll watch her return" (*By the Bog of Cats*, p. 297). It is this separation from the mother that makes Hester experience a sense of loss and become obsessed with the idea of possession. She prefers to kill her daughter rather than to give other people an opportunity to possess her own child. Likewise, Hester prefers to destroy her home rather than to give it to her lover and his new wife: "Carthage Kilbride is mine for always or until I say he is no longer mine. I'm the one who chooses and discards, not him, and certainly not any of yees" (*By the Bog of Cats*, I, I, p. 17).

In such instances, Carr's character significantly resembles Euripides's Medea, as both characters are determined to protect what they consider to belong to them. However, in addition to determination, the desire to possess someone or something by all means signifies the inner emotional turmoil of Carr's Hester and Euripides's Medea.

This emotional complexity is also evident in Lashof's Medusa when the playwright gives voice to the female character. The chief message is that this female character is emotionally and mentally destroyed by the unfair attitudes of Gods to her. The same destruction can be seen in Carr's protagonist. In both Carr's and Lashof's plays, the separation of Hester and Medusa from an attachment figure evokes anger and aggression. These emotions finally destroy them and, in the case of Hester, the members of her family. As Hester admits in her talk with her brother's ghost:

> Hester: Ya think I slit your throat for the few auld pound me father left me?
> Joseph: Then why?
> Hester: Should've been with her for always and would have only for you". (*By the Bog of Cats*, III, p. 62)

Both Carr and Lashof justify violent actions of their female characters by highlighting their pain from the loss of people to whom they were sincerely attached. However, while Hester turns to violence as a result of a complex inner struggle and the failure to gain victory in this struggle, in Lashof's play Medusa is deprived of any choice. Hester is turned into a destructive person under the impact of life circumstances and people surrounding her, but Medusa is turned into a violent creature by the will of gods and she is neither able to suppress her violent nature nor to avoid death from the hand of Perseus. In this regard, Carr and Lashof approach the ancient mythological figures from slightly different perspectives. Lashof's Medusa is destroyed by those who have power, while Carr's Hester is destroyed by her inability to cope with her own demons. Despite the fact that Perseus hesitates whether to kill Medusa after her life story,

he finally slays her to conform his fame as a hero, and Medusa's infamy as a monster: "I must kill you. Or else I am nothing" (*Medusa's Tale*, I, 282).

Hence, in their retellings of Greek myths, Lashof and Carr endow their female characters with weakness and vulnerability. Neither Medusa nor Hester is able to defend herself and save her own life. Both female characters know their destinies and accept them. Lashof's Medusa is aware of Perseus's arrival and passively waits for him. With regard to Hester, she is passive in waiting for her mother for many years and is reluctant to admit her loss and lead a normal life. As such, while in Ovid's and Euripides's myths the female characters demonstrate "the traits of both genders to an extreme" (Griffiths, 2006, p. 75), in Lashof's and Carr's retellings the female characters reveal more feminine traits than masculine traits. As a result of these modern transformations, Lashof's and Carr's female characters are not as strong and powerful as their ancient counterparts. Euripides's Medea flees to Athens after her revenge, and Carr's Hester dies after killing her daughter. Hence, in contrast to Euripides's myth in which Medea triumphs, the modern version depicts the destruction of a woman who commits a crime against her daughter. Moreover, Euripides's Medea kills her sons as if avenging all men for the betrayal of her husband (Hall, 2017). In this regard, Medea's killing of sons is highly symbolic. Carr changes sons for a daughter in her retelling of a Greek myth, thus implying that Hester has other motives behind the filicide.

Delving deeper into Carr's adaptation of the Greek myth, it becomes apparent that by killing her daughter and by committing a suicide, Hester makes an attempt to preserve "the mother-daughter relationship in the Other World, as a reaction to being pressured to leave her daughter to the father and his new bride and give up all her rights for the property and the child (O'Brien & David Fellow, 2012). By contrast, in Euripides's myth, Medea's killing of sons signifies the destruction of ties between the father and sons. The disruption of the ties between mother and child is also evident in Lashof's refashioning of Medusa's myth:

> Medusa: I never knew my mother. She died when I was born.
> Poseidon: You're old enough to be a mother yourself.
> Medusa: I don't want children. That's why I follow Athena". (*Medusa's Tale*, I, p. 278)

In this regard, both Lashof's and Carr's female characters suffer from the disrupted relationships with their mothers. Hester is abandoned by her mother at the age of seven, and later gives birth to a girl, unlike Medusa who does not want to be a mother. Hence, despite similar traumas received in childhood, Lashof's and Carr's characters have different understanding of the roles of a woman. Even before the rape and her transformation into an ugly monster, Medusa intends to dedicate her life to worshipping Athena. She does not aspire to be a mother or wife, and keeps her chastity for Athena:

> Athena: The dark one is Medusa… She's been conducting a faithful pilgrimage to all my temples. She blesses me for protecting her chastity, the wellspring of her freedom.
> Poseidon: Chastity! The emptiest of all empty virtues.
> Athena: She loves me with a girl's pure virtuous love.
> Poseidon: Ah, but if she knew the love of a real god…
> Athena: She would spurn you. And your brutish love". (*Medusa's Tale*, I, p. 276)

Conversely, Hester wants to have a husband and a daughter, and she puts much effort into defending her right to be a wife and mother. Hester is so closely tied to her mother that she cannot destroy these ties even though people who knew her mother warned Hester of vain hopes to reunite with her. As one of the characters tells Hester, "Ya were lucky she left ya. Just forget about her and lave this place now or you never will" (*By the Bog of Cats*, I, iii, p. 24). Despite the fact that, as the play progresses, Hester becomes aware of the negative recollections of people about her mother, she is unable to betray her as she did, although she is not ready to justify her abandonment of her. However, the following words vividly illustrate a strange attitude of the mother to the daughter: "Sure the night ya were born she took ya over to the black swan's lair, auld Black Wing ya've just buried there, and laid ya in the nest alongside her" (*By the Bog of Cats*, I, iii, p. 23).

In this regard, the attitude of Hester's mother to her resembles the attitude of Athena to Medusa in Lashof's play. Neither Hester's mother nor Athena is capable of love, yet Athena expects her priestess to love her and be loyal to her under all circumstances. This desire to be loved by others is expressed in Athena's dialogue with Poseidon:

> Athena: You're jealous of the love these mortals bear for me.
> Poseidon: Love! You're far too icy-hearted to know anything about love". (*Medusa's Tale*, I, p. 276)

It is their lack of love for others that makes Hester's mother and Athena turn away from Medusa and Hester. Furthermore, Athena not only allows Perseus to behead Medusa, but also endows him with knowledge of how to destroy Medusa and become a hero. However, while Lashof's Medusa realises Athena's betrayal of her and has a negative image of the goddess, Hester does not want to accept the negative image of her mother and continues to wait for her lost mother. This inability to accept the truth about her mother significantly aggravates the inner conflicts of Hester, unlike her mythological counterpart Medea. Despite the fact that both Carr and Lashof depict that Hester's and Medusa's behaviors and actions are influenced by the figures of those to whom they are psychologically attached, Carr's female character differs from Lashof's female character in that Hester is unable to substitute her image of an ideal mother for the real images. However, this image of an ideal mother helps Hester to become a caring and loving mother herself. When the ghost comes to Hester and hints at her death, she cries: "Come back! – I can't die – I have a

daughter" (*By the Bog of Cats*, I, I, p. 15). As is evident from these words, Hester's initial thought is about her daughter. She is so afraid of leaving her that she pleads the ghost to return to somehow prevent her death. Yet, as the play progresses, Hester understands that she has to kill her daughter to save her. Hester's daughter is of the same age as Hester was when her mother left her, and she greatly resembles her mother:

>Hester: Ya have her eyes.
>Josie: Whose eyes – whose eyes, Mam?
>Hester: Josie Swane's me mother.
>Josie: Did ya like her, Josie Swane?
>Hester: More than anythin' in this cold white world. (*By the Bog of Cats*, I, vi, p. 42)

Hester names her daughter after her mother, but nevertheless she cannot find solace in her daughter and forget her own mother's abandonment. As a victim of her mother's betrayal, Hester decides to do everything to prevent her own child from becoming similarly abandoned. Unquestionably, the motives for infanticide in Carr's adaptation differ from the motives of Euripides's Medea for killing her children. This difference is especially vivid in the final dialogue between Hester and her daughter:

>Hester: Would ya let go!
>Josie: No, Mam. Please!
>Hester: Alright, alright! Shhh! It's alright, I'll take ya with me, I won't have ya as I was, waitin' a lifetime for some wan to return, because they don't, Josie, the don't. It's alright. Close your eyes.
>*Josie closes her eyes.*
>Hester: Are they closed?
>Josie: Yes. *(By the Bog of Cats*, III, pp. 76-77)
>*Hester cuts Josie's throat in one savage moment.*

IV. MODERN RETELLINGS OF CLASSICAL MYTH

As is evident from the above section, Lashof's and Carr's retellings of Greek myths expose the attempts of the female playwrights to carry out "self-conscious investigations" and destroy the conventional categorizations of mythical characters (Sanders, 2007, p. 65). By deviating from the negative stereotypes on women shared in ancient Greece, Lashof and Carr produce images of women who, despite their violence, fury or aggression, cannot be perceived as threatening or frightening. Hence, in contrast to Ovid's and Euripides's versions of myths, which bring to the fore a rather restricted stance on Medea and Medusa, the modern playwrights reinterpret the myths in such a way as to provide more complete stories of the characters' tragedies. Through their adjustments, Lashof and Carr attribute new meanings to the characters' feelings and actions, and thus challenge oversimplification of the female psyche. Simultaneously, the refashioned myths bring about a shift of focus, from narrating male dominance and male betrayal, to highlighting the issues and consequences of female victimization.

In Ovid's myth, Medusa is killed to assert male dominance over a woman. In this regard, the transformation and beheading of Medusa signify the attempts of the ancient Greeks to deny the woman's power. What Ovid's myth clearly demonstrates is that Medusa's head may become dangerous and powerful only in the hands of Perseus. In Lashof's version of the myth, Medusa is killed to provide the male character with an opportunity to fulfil his destiny as a hero. In Euripides's myth, Medea turns to murder to avenge her husband for betrayal, whilst in Carr's version of the myth the betrayal of the lover is closely intertwined with the childhood trauma of abandonment and separation from the mother.

Hence, in the process of refashioning Greek myths, Carr and Lashof deviate from the Greeks' dehumanization of women, and instead explore women's anger and violence as part of their feminine nature. Yet this re-envisioning does not simplify Carr's and Lashof's female characters. They remain as complex as ancient Medea and Medusa, using diverse forms of resistance to injustice inflicted on them by people and gods (O'Brien & David Fellow, 2012). Lashof's Medusa questions and opposes the gods' unjust actions towards a weak and powerless woman; in the case of Hester, her resistance reflects the long history of Ireland's cultural conflicts, on the one hand, and the inability to come to terms with inner demons, on the other hand. Hester's suicide can be viewed as the character's attempt to resolve cultural and personal conflicts, but also as the desire to stay forever in the place where she has spent her life and where she has lived with her lover and daughter. This desire is vividly illustrated in the following words:

Ya won't forget me now, Carthage, and when all this is over or half remembered and ya think ya've almost forgotten me again, take a walk along the Bog of Cats and wait for a purlin' wind through your hair or a soft breath be your ear or a rustle behind ya. That's l; be me and Josie ghostin' ya (*By the Bog of Cats*, III, p. 78).

What these particular words demonstrate is that, in the modern retelling of the myth, the female protagonist escapes this world to reunite with the daughter in a realm which is free from the patriarchal system, social and cultural stereotypes, male betrayal, and injustice. In this regard, Carr's version significantly differs from Euripides's version: mythological Medea opposes patriarchal authority without destroying herself. Unlike Hester's escape into the Other World, Medea's escape into Athens after the revenge implies that the female character does not view herself primarily as a wife and mother. She continues to live even after the loss of her husband and sons. As is implied in Lashof's refashioning of the Greek myth, Medusa will continue to experience male subjugation after her beheading. Yet, in their adaptations, both Carr and Lashof firmly reject the notion that women should be blamed for being raped or for being

betrayed by men. While Euripides's and Ovid's myth address controversial questions as to whether the female characters' aggression and violence may be justified, without providing definite answers, Carr and Lashoff resolve the moral dilemma and justify Hester's and Medusa's behaviours and actions. By bringing to light the conflict between an individual and patriarchal society, between the dominant and subordinate, the playwrights give an insight into injustice with which women collide and into their ways to resist injustice and oppression.

In this respect, through the refashioning of the Greek myths, Carr and Lashof succeed in exposing certain social and cultural concerns with regard to the place of a woman in society. In observing the parallels between Carr's and Lashof's plays, it becomes obvious that women occupy inferior positions to men in both the Irish and Greek realms. Yet, while Ovid and Euripides tend to distance themselves from penetrating too deep into the conditions and experiences of their female characters, Carr and Lashof view the characters' traumas and subjugation as a personal concern. As such, adaptations of the Greek myths by Carr and Lashof represent the desire of the playwrights to intentionally dramatize inner and social conflicts with of women since ancient times, and to bring the attention of the audience to the inability of a woman to be simultaneously in peace with her inner self and the world which surrounds her. Richard Buxton, a distinguished figure in the field of Classics in his work "Imaginary Greece: The Contexts of Mythology" (1994) argues that while many Greek myths touch upon conflicts and tensions, they often lack the intricate exploration of these conflicts, especially in terms of their potential resolution by female characters. Moreover, Greek myths avoid "assigning unqualified approval or condemnation" (Anderson, 2005, p. 124) of their characters' behaviors and actions. By contrast, in their adaptations of the Greek myths, Carr and Lashof express their support and their understanding of the characters' violence. Moreover, both playwrights tend to privilege these complex and subjugated female characters over the characters who fully conform to the social and cultural norms of patriarchal societies.

Neither Hester nor Lashof's Medusa wants to accept these norms. While in Ovid's and Euripides's myths the female characters turn to violence to hurt men, in Carr's and Lashof's refashioning of the myths the female characters hurt themselves more than male characters (Salis, 2010). In the playwrights' adaptations, Medusa and Hester are so fractured and so weak, on the one hand, and are so rebellious and so reluctant to conform to the imposed patriarchal norms, on the other hand, that they cannot but destroy themselves. The only difference is that Hester commits suicide, while Medusa allows the man to behead her. In light of this re-envisioning of female characters, Carr's Hester and Lashof's Medusa are not the embodiment of something that men should fear. They are tragic heroines who are guided by their powerful passions and inner conflicts instead of rational thinking, and who suffer because of their traumas and distorted identities. Their tragic end is the result of their failure to reconcile their inner turmoil with the socially acceptable behaviors. Existing in male-dominated realms, Lashof's Medusa and Carr's Hester engage in the struggle with the patriarchy and with their own demons, but do not win in this struggle. Far from being obedient women, Hester and Medusa struggle as long as they can and finally choose deaths for the possibility of changing their conditions and positions in after-life. By the end of the plays, both Hester and Medusa realize that their efforts to protect themselves from pressures and unjust actions of people and gods are vain.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As the paper reveals, Carr and Lashof refashion famous Greek myths of Medusa and Medea to oppose the preconceived vision on famous mythical figures and make the audience look at them through new angles and modern stances. By choosing well-recognized mythical characters for their plays, Carr and Lashof reshape the myths in such a way as to bring to the fore the age-old issues and concerns which have been neglected in prior readings of Greek myths, on the one hand, and which reflect the contemporary realm, on the other hand. Although the playwrights use different approaches to adapting myths in their dramas, they share the view that Medusa and Medea should not be perceived as evil and monsters, but as victims of circumstances, people, gods, and inner demons. However, these victims do not keep silence; instead, they are presented by Carr and Lashof as female characters with distinct voices. Although changed from victims into victimizers as the narration progresses, both Medusa and Hester invoke sympathy in the audience due to their complex identities and inner sufferings. Moreover, by substituting the male perspective for the female perspective, the playwrights shine important light on the consequences of subjugating a woman and on the reasons of her transformation into a fierce and violent creature.

Yet the evidence acquired in the present analysis suggests that there are some contrasts in Carr's and Lashof's adaptations of myths in dramas. Carr uses a free manner to adapt the classical myth and Lashof tends to be closer to Euripides's tragedy. While Lashof's female character is positioned within the familiar ancient realm, Carr's female character is placed within the modern Irish realm. By adding unique cultural elements into the play, Carr juxtaposes ancient and modern and thus dramatizes the reality in which her female character exists. The socio-cultural perspective taken by Carr also provides the playwright with an opportunity to uncover the position of a woman in a contemporary society. The playwright uses implicit parallels with ancient Medea and endows her character with complex cultural and personal problems which she fails to resolve. The aspect that is unique to Carr's adaptation is the bond between the mother and daughter. As is clearly shown in the play, the destruction of this bond reinforces the destruction of the female character and finally brings about her death. Yet it is in death that Carr's female character acquires freedom and re-unity with her daughter. Lashof's Medusa is deprived of the opportunity to find freedom after Perseus's beheading of her.

What, however, is common to Lashof's and Carr's plays is the prevalence of gender tensions within the depicted cultures. While these tensions are evident in the myths of Ovid and Euripides, Lashof and Carr go further by dramatizing the vain attempts of female characters to resist oppressive and unjust forces. On the other hand, as the received evidence demonstrates, with their re-envisioning of the myths, the playwrights succeed in undermining the misogynist vision on Medusa and Medea. Simultaneously, acting as revisionists, Lashof and Carr do not confine their female characters to the binary classification of good/bad. Both Medusa and Hester are presented as characters who have dark sides, but they cannot be classified as femme fatale who destroy others to satisfy their ego. Rather, the playwrights create characters who express rage and anger in response to injustice or abuse, and defend themselves by specifying the details of their destruction. In this regard, Lashof's and Carr's refashioning of myths makes female characters more humane in contrast to their ancient counterparts. By accentuating the motives behind the characters' violence, Lashof and Carr aver that female characters' violent and aggressive behavior may be at least understood, if not approved or viewed as morally right. As such, the questions which Ovid and Euripides raise in their myths find resolution in the adaptations of Carr and Lashof.

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Zena D. Mohammed was born on April 17, in Baghdad, Iraq. She got her Bachelor of Arts degree in English Language from the College of Languages, University of Baghdad in 2002; subsequently, she pursued and achieved a Master of Arts in English Literature in 2014. Presently, she contributes her expertise to the English department at the University of Karbala. Her areas of specialization and passion encompass Comparative Literature, American Drama, and Literary Criticism.

Dheyaa K. Nayel was born on January 25, 1972, in Babylon, Iraq. The Teachers' Training Institute of Karbala granted him a diploma in English in 1991. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English language from the University of Baghdad in 1995, and a Master of Arts degree in English literature in 1998. Presently, he has the position of instructor within the English language program at the University of Karbala. He has authored numerous articles for scholarly publications. Ecofeminism and postcolonialism are among the several subjects that are discussed.

The Building Blocks of Language and Creativity: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Toy Advertisements

Bandita Santikul

Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University Sriracha Campus, Chonburi, Thailand

Abstract—This research aims to explore the verbal and visual resources and cultural aspects used in online toy advertisements. The data comprises 142 advertisements sourced from the official international Lego Facebook page. Three analytical frameworks were employed in the study. First, Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics was used to analyze verbal resources. Second, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotics was used to examine visual resources. Third, Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions were applied to the aspects of culture. The investigation of verbal resources reveals three main ideational metafunctions: material, relational, and mental. Also, declarative mood and unmarked topical themes dominantly occurred in the clauses. For the visual analysis, the advertisements tend to use conceptual symbolic images with vibrant and contrasting colors to make the brand memorable and convey positive values. The positions of participants (RP) also reveal the significance of the brand. There is interconnectedness between visual resources and verbal resources for the advertisements to be cohesive. Remarkably, all six cultural dimensions were found aligned with the American cultural aspects, except for masculinity and long-term orientation. This suggests Lego's commitment to promoting equality, unity, and the attempt to construct more effective worldwide marketing.

Index Terms—multimodal critical discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, multimodality, advertisements

I. INTRODUCTION

In the world of trade and business, advertisements have become extremely crucial and competitive in recent years. To grab customers' attention, effective advertisements require creative and playful linguistic and non-linguistic features. In addition to employing persuasive strategies to influence intended viewers, advertisements, as noted by Cook (2001) and Danesi (2015), can also reflect people's attitudes, social positions, and ideological viewpoints.

As stated by Presbrey (2009), the most significant developments in the global advertising industry occurred in the 20th century. That is, there have been increasing innovations and technological advancements in the field of advertising. The rise in the use of social media and computer-mediated interactions has become popular in several societies around the world. Due to this reason, the forms of communication found in media and advertisements have changed from being one-dimensional and highly text-based to becoming significantly more multimodal.

Consequently, the term 'multimodality' has emerged. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), multimodality refers to the combination of multiple sensory and various communicative modes, such as print, image, text, graphics, animation, and so on, that create meaning in any message. Beach and Castek (2016) also stated that multimodality is the use of visual, auditory, textual, and image-based ways of representation for the purposes of communicating with and engaging customers.

Although there are many different advertising platforms, including those for newspapers, magazines, television, and social media, it should be noted that social media has become the most influential recently since it is considered the best way to reach targeted customers (Gibson, 2018). Facebook is considered a popular platform with around 2.9 billion monthly active users as of the first quarter of 2022, and it can be used for online communication. Additionally, it is an effective social media marketing tool for businesses because the content is available for everyone to access and share (Weber, 2007). One of the most common types of Facebook advertising is image advertising, which usually combines creative images with persuasive texts in order to attract viewers. Therefore, in this study, the researcher examines the discourse of online toy advertisements presented on a Facebook page.

As far as we know, many researchers have conducted studies in the field of multimodal discourse analysis of advertisements for various products, including cars, food, drinks, and beauty products (Kenalemang, 2022; Kuswandini, 2018; Suphaborwornrat, 2022). However, far too little attention has been paid to toy advertisements. Therefore, Lego was chosen as the data for this study. This is due to the fact that when people think of toys, Lego is the brand that typically comes to their mind. Lego specializes in designing sets that connect with its customers, employing creative marketing strategies. Hence, it appears that Lego Brick Play is accessible to customers of all genders and ages.

In recent years, the context of marketing has been significantly impacted by the coronavirus (Covid-19). The impact of this pandemic is very obvious and noticeable because of the social distancing regulations and the broad lockdown. Surprisingly, according to Lego Group's full-year report of 2021 from www.lego.com, Lego continues to achieve strong

growth in consumer sales and profit. Moreover, it won 7 Toy of the Year (TOTY) awards from the Toy Association and honors the year's best product launches. It is noteworthy to examine the company's strategy embedded in its online advertising images.

This study aims to investigate verbal and visual resources employed in online social media of toy advertisements to identify the metafunctions of language, the social semiotic perspectives, and the embedded cultural aspects presented in the data. These findings enhance our understanding of business marketing and education. First, they offer a better understanding of the discourse of advertising that persuades the intended customers. Second, they inspire advertisers to create interesting and creative online advertisements. Third, they provide guidelines for those in the field of education, including, teachers, students, and researchers.

There are three objectives in this study as follows:

1. To examine verbal and visual resources employed in online social media of toy advertisements.

2. To describe the metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics and social semiotics presented in online social media of toy advertisements.

3. To seek embedded cultural aspects in online social media of toy advertisements.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Advertising

Advertising is a form of communication intended to promote products, services, brands, or organizations to viewers. Apart from this main target of advertising, advertisements are the key factors influencing people's lifestyles in different contexts. Also, they are crucial in capturing both the new and the old cultural meanings as they offer an area for experimentation, creativity, and play to create new cultural meanings and restructure and redefine current ones (Cook, 2001).

There are many different forms of advertising, including print ads, television commercials, online banner ads, sponsored content, and social media ads. The choice of these advertising forms depends on the target audience, the product, or the service being promoted. Nowadays, the use of online advertising especially social media ads is continually increasing (Appel et al., 2020). It has become one of the largest and fastest-growing parts of the online advertising market. According to industry reports such as GWI and Hootsuite, social media advertising accounted for 33% of all digital advertising spending in 2022, making it the second-largest market.

One of the most popular advertising platforms is Facebook because it is the most used social platform worldwide and provides a wide range of targeting choices, including demographics, interests, behaviors, and locations. In addition, Facebook is used by the vast majority of people who use the Internet (Greenwood et al., 2016). This present study thus chose Facebook as a platform for data selection. The most common and simplest type of Facebook advertising, image advertising, is being studied. To understand the effective and economical communication languages and symbols that play a crucial role in advertising, the present study focuses on Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis, which is presented in the next section.

B. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) is based on the ideas of CDA, which examines how social power is constructed and maintained through the ways the language is used. MCDA, on the other hand, expands on this by analyzing the use of many modes of communication such as language, images, and gestures. Therefore, compared to CDA, MCDA is an approach that provides a more comprehensive understanding of how power functions and how it can be maintained, and challenged in society.

Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) stated that MCDA is the study of how the use of multiple communication modes contributes to the construction of meaning in social interaction. In agreement with this viewpoint, several researchers (Jewitt, 2009; O'Halloran et al., 2011; Van Leeuwen, 2005) provided a more precise description of MCDA, which involves the relationship between various semiotic resources, such as language, image, gesture, movement, gazes, sound, and camera angles.

MCDA has been used in many fields including, media, advertising, politics, and education. In media discourse analysis, it has been used to investigate the depiction of multimodal nature of advertising, social groups, political ideologies, and power relations to understand how they work together to create persuasive messages and consumer identities (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Therefore, this study employed the MCDA approach. Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics was used to analyze the verbal resources, and social semiotics proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) was used to analyze the visual resources. Additionally, Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions were employed to analyze cultural aspects found in the advertisements.

C. Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL), also known as systemic functional grammar, Hallidayan linguistics, systemic linguistics, and critical linguistics (Fairclough, 1992; Pennycook, 2001), is a school of thought that perceives language as a social semiotic system. Consequently, it explains the connection between language and its uses in social contexts (Halliday, 1994). In addition, it is oriented at functions and semantics rather than formal and syntactic structures.

In 1978, Michael Halliday proposed his book, Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning. He introduced three systems considered components of language: the phonological system, the lexico-grammatical system, and the semantic system. The core system among the three is the semantic one, which includes three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday, 1994). To understand clauses' structure, these metafunctions combine various elements and systems that present different aspects of the world and constitute different modes of the meaning of those clauses.

(a). Ideational Metafunction

In the ideational metafunction, language focuses on creating and maintaining experiences. It involves both the experiential function and the logical function. Thompson (2013) supported the idea that this ideational metafunction is concerned with how we use language to describe events, states, and entities that exist in the world as we perceive it, including the worlds in our thoughts. In this metafunction, each clause is analyzed into processes, participants, and circumstances, with various participant types for different process types. It has been noted that transitivity is used to conceptualize our experiences in terms of processes (Halliday, 1994). There are six different process types based on the types of verbs: Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioral, and Existential. Table 1 illustrates types of processes and participants.

TABLE 1
TYPES OF PROCESSES AND PARTICIPANTS

Process Type	Category Meaning	Participants
1. Material	V. of doing	Actor, Goal
2. Mental	V. of sensing	Senser, Phenomenon
3. Relational	V. of being or having	Carrier, Attribute Token, Value
4. Verbal	V. of saying	Sayer, Verbiage
5. Behavioral	V. of behaving	Behaver, Matter
6. Existential	V. of existing	Existent

(b). Interpersonal Metafunction

The second metafunction is interpersonal. This metafunction covers the interaction between the producer and the perceiver because it is based on the belief that a speaker does not only talk about something but also to and with other people (Halliday, 2003). In other words, the interpersonal metafunction involves the interpersonal features of communication, such as expressing and negotiating social connections, conveying attitudes, and engaging in social activities. The interpersonal meanings are expressed lexico-grammatically through mood and modality systems. This system serves as the main resource for establishing interactions between interactants by making assumptions and allocating speech roles. As shown in Table 2, a clause is analyzed into mood and residue that are further examined in terms of subject and finite.

TABLE 2
MOOD AND RESIDUE ANALYSIS

The letters	are	delivered	last week.
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct
Mood		Residue	

Mood is a grammatical device that reflects the speaker's or writer's intention to communicate with the audience or readers. Thus, mood tells whether the clause is declarative, interrogative, or imperative. The following clauses are examples of each mood. Mood can be analyzed through grammatical structures, particularly through the usage of mood elements in the clause, such as the use of finite verb forms. The examples of the three main moods in SFL are as follows.
- The sky is beautiful. (declarative)
- Is the sky beautiful? (interrogative)
- Look at the sky. (imperative)

To conclude, the mood element consists of two parts: the subject, which is realized by a nominal group, and the finite element, which is normally the verbal group. The remainder of each clause is then considered the residue, which typically contains elements such as predicators, complements, or adjuncts.

In terms of modality, it refers to the expression of the speaker's opinion of the clause's content and speech pattern. Also, to express ability, permission, probability, necessity, and obligation, modal verbs (shall, should, can, could, must, may, might, will, would, etc.) are employed in a clause. The following are some examples of modality.
- Alan <u>can</u> play piano. (ability)
- You <u>cannot</u> sit here. (permission)
- She <u>might</u> be in her room. (probability)
- You <u>must</u> do some work. (necessity and obligation)

(c). Textual Metafunction

Lastly, the textual metafunction, according to Halliday (1994), has the purpose of constructing a message. That means it helps organize the resources we employ to create consistency and flow in a text. "theme" and "rheme" are the fundamental forms of the arrangement of the clause. As for the theme, it is defined as "the point of departure" which refers to the beginning part of the clause where the speaker or writer introduces the topic of the remaining clause. The rheme is defined as "the remainder of the message" which typically includes a predicate (verbal process and additional information). The example of theme and rheme analysis is displayed in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3
THEME AND RHEME ANALYSIS

The letters	are delivered last week.
Theme	Rheme

D. Social Semiotics

Social semiotics is an area of semiotics that studies how people make meaning in certain social and cultural contexts and aims to explain meaning-making as a social practice. The word "semiotics" is derived from the Greek word "semeion," which means "sign," the smallest unit in meaning-making. According to Saussure (1974), this word has been defined as the science of the life of signs in society. Thus, the term "social semiotics" involves all the signs and modes of communication employed within a culture (Hodge & Kress, 1988).

As mentioned previously, Halliday is the first to propose three metafunctions in systemic functional linguistics which focuses only on written language excluding the use of other semiotic sources. On the contrary, several researchers (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) believe that the term "multimodality" refers to various forms of human communication, including written, oral, visual, auditory, and spatial. Nevertheless, these resources help fulfill the metafunctions of the experiential world's depiction. Therefore, they extend the three metafunctions proposed by Halliday to all available semiotic resources in a context to comprehend how all modes create meanings. As a result, Hodge and Kress in Social Semiotics (1998) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) are considered the pioneers in developing a framework used to analyze both verbal and visual semiotic resources. The social semiotics framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen is, therefore, widely accepted by many researchers that it is the most comprehensive framework for multimodal discourse analysis (Jewitt & Oyama, 2001).

The components of Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotics consist of three main metafunctions: representational, interactive, and compositional. Each function consists of various visual resources as shown in Table 4, Resources of Metafunctions, adapted from Harrison (2008).

TABLE 4
RESOURCES OF METAFUNCTIONS

Metafunction	Resource		
Representational	Structure Narrative: The viewers create a story about the RPs by themselves	**Process**	
		-	Action: The story is based on the RPs' actions
		-	Reactional: The story is created amongst RPs, from eyelines
	Conceptual: The viewers make assumptions on what or who the RPs represent	-	Classificatory: RPs are viewed as group members
		-	Analytical: RPs are considered as parts of the whole concept
		-	Symbolic: RPs represent themselves and some ideas.
Interactive	Feature Contact: Gazing	**Process**	
		-	Demand: the RPs look at the viewers directly
		-	Offer: the RPs do not look at the viewers
	Distance: An amount of space between RPs and the viewers	-	Intimate: Head only
		-	Close personal: Head and shoulders
		-	Far personal: Upper half of the body
		-	Close social: Whole body
		-	Far social: Whole body with space around
		-	Public distance: Several people
	Subjectivity: Perspectives Horizontal perspective	-	Front: The RP is a part of the viewers' group
		-	Oblique: The RP does not belong to the viewers' group
	Vertical perspective	-	High: The RP looks small and are viewed from above - more power
		-	Medium: The RP is at the same eye level
		-	Low: The RP are awesome and viewed from the low angle – less power
Compositional	System Information value: Placements indicate various information roles.	**Element**	
		-	Given: The RPs are on the left half of the image
		-	New: The RPs are on the right half of the image
		-	Ideal: The RPs are on the top half of the image
		-	Real: The RPs are on the bottom half of the image
		-	Center: The RPs in the middle of the image are crucial
		-	Margin: The RPs at the margin of the image are subordinate
	Salience: The strategy employed by RPs to catch viewers' attention	-	Size: The big RPs present greater salience
		-	Focus sharpness: The focused RPs show higher salience
		-	Tonal contrast: High tonal contrast implies greater salience
		-	Color contrast: Strong saturated colors show greater salience
		-	Foreground/Background: The RPs in the foreground indicate more salience
	Framing: The connections between RPs	-	Framelines: The framelines in the image show connections between the RPs.
		-	Pictorial framing devices: The existence of pictorial framing devices RPs means the RPs are connected
		-	Empty space: The emptier the spaces are, the more separated the RPs are
		-	Colors: More continuity in colors suggests stronger connections between the RPs
		-	Visual shapes More continuity in shapes indicates stronger connections between the RPs

E. Cultural Dimensions

Cultural dimensions are ways of describing how different cultural groups are regarding psychological aspects including values, beliefs, personality, personality, and behaviors (Smith & Bond, 2020). Its main objective is to discover differences and similarities between different cultural perspectives (Hofstede et al., 2010).

A pioneering study about cultural dimensions was introduced by Geert Hofstede, a Dutch professor and researcher, in the book entitled Culture's Consequences in 1980. In order to understand cultural differences, he studied cultural dimensions in many countries, including over 100,000 employees from a multinational computer manufacturing company (IBM) in 50 countries and 3 regions around the world. He employed two surveys in four years, and his survey consisted of 126 questions. Consequently, he initially proposed a framework of four dimensions: individualism vs. Collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity vs. femininity.

Later, an independent study conducted by Michael Harris Bond, a Chinese sociologist in Hong Kong, discovered a fifth dimension, long-term orientation with an attempt to address aspects of values that were not covered in the original framework (Bond, 1991). Finally, in 2010, a replication of Hofstede's study, *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*, confirmed the presence of the fifth dimension and introduced a sixth dimension. Therefore, the six dimensions are as follows: the power distance index (PDI), individualism vs. collectivism (IDV), uncertainty avoidance index (UAI), masculinity vs. femininity (MAS), long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO), and indulgence vs. restraint (IND). Table 5 provides an explanation of the interpretation of each dimension's index (Hofstede et al., 2010).

TABLE 5
CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Low Index	←	Dimension	→	High Index
Egalitarian	←	1. Power Distance	→	Hierarchical
Collectivist	←	2. Individualism vs. Collectivism	→	Individualist
Open to change	←	3. Uncertainty Avoidance Index	→	Prefer Routines
Nurture	←	4. Masculinity vs. Femininity	→	Power
Traditional	←	5. Long-term Orientation vs. Short-term Orientation	→	Futuristic
Normative repression	←	6. Indulgence vs. Restraint	→	Free satisfaction

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

In this study, the researcher adopted a qualitative research approach, a case study research design, to explore research questions and achieve the purposes of the study. A case study focuses on the uniqueness of individual situations, experiences, characteristics, and processes (Creswell, 2007). Thus, it is the most appropriate research design for this study due to its ability to provide an in-depth understanding and analysis of multimodality in toy advertisements.

B. Data

The data of this study were 142 online Lego advertisements purposively selected using criterion sampling from the official international Lego Facebook page (https://web.facebook.com/LEGO) from January 2020 - September 2022. Although there are many Lego's social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, the Lego Facebook page was chosen since it is liked and followed by over 14 million people worldwide. Lego was chosen because it is the world's most popular toy ever manufactured compared to other toy brands, and it keeps growing in a saturated market according to surveys by Firebox and Toyology, the online retailers that provide many different products including toys and gifts.

Based on the sampling method, the data were collected based on the following criteria. First, only still images with both linguistic and non-linguistic features were selected. It should be noted that videos or other moving images were excluded. This is due to a lack of video resources available on the page. Moreover, the frameworks used in the present study are only appropriate for still-image analysis. Second, the selected images include all types of images considered marketing images, such as product images, store announcements, and memes. Other types of images that are not directly related to marketing were excluded. Lastly, as the researcher started conducting this study in 2022, and the study required the most recent advertisements, the selected data were published on the official international Lego Facebook page from January 2020 - September 2022.

C. Research Instrument

To investigate the multimodality in the online social media of toy advertisements, the researcher adopted three analytical frameworks. First, to analyze verbal resources, Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics was used. Second, to analyze visual resources, Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) social semiotics was employed. Third, as for the cultural dimensions, Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions were used.

D. Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedures are as follows. First, the researcher gathered the advertising images published on the official international Lego Facebook page from January 2020 - September 2022. Second, selected images were separately codified (1-142) according to the year they were published for identification. Third, the verbal resources found in each image were analyzed using Halliday's (1994) systemic functional linguistics. Then, the analysis was recorded in the table adopted from Matthiessen and Halliday (1997). Table 6 illustrates the simultaneous metafunctions in the structure of the clause.

TABLE 6
SIMULTANEOUS METAFUNCTIONS IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE CLAUSE

Metafunction:	System:	Sarah	liked	her birthday present.
ideational	**Transitivity**	Sensor	Process	Phenomenon
interpersonal	**Mood**	Subject	Finite	Object
textual	**Theme**	Theme	Rheme	

The verbal resources were divided and analyzed in text segments which consist of two types of structures: clauses and phrases. The clauses are groups of words that contain subjects and verbs or imperative verbs without a subject. The clauses were analyzed to identify all three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. On the other hand, the phrases, groups of words that do not contain subjects and verbs, were analyzed to investigate only textual metafunction. Fourth, the visual resources were coded based on the social semiotics framework proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). The coding system is shown in Table 7 as follows.

TABLE 7
SOCIAL SEMIOTICS CODES

Metafunction	Resource	Code			
Representational	Structure Narrative	**Process**			
		-	Action	-	NA
		-	Reactional	-	NR
	Conceptual	-	Classificatory	-	CC
		-	Analytical	-	CA
		-	Symbolic	-	CS
Interactive	Feature Contact	**Process**			
		-	Demand	-	CD
		-	Offer	-	CO
	Distance	-	Intimate	-	DI
		-	Close personal	-	DCP
		-	Far personal	-	DFP
		-	Close social	-	DCS
		-	Far social	-	DFS
		-	Public distance	-	DP
	Attitude Horizontal perspective	-	Front	-	HF
		-	Oblique	-	HO
	Vertical perspective	-	High	-	VH
		-	Medium	-	VM
		-	Low	-	VL
Compositional	System Information value	**Element**			
		-	Given	-	IG
		-	New	-	IN
		-	Ideal	-	ID
		-	Real	-	IR
		-	Center	-	IC
		-	Margin	-	IM
	Salience	-	Size		
		-	Focus sharpness		
		-	Tonal contrast		
		-	Color contrast		
		-	Foreground/Background		
	Framing	-	Framelines		
		-	Pictorial framing devices		
		-	Empty space		
		-	Colors		
		-	Visual shapes		

Fifth, Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions were employed to enhance the interpretation. As mentioned earlier, the data for this study were obtained from the official international Lego Facebook page, which is managed by the headquarters in the United States. Therefore, it can be implied that the majority of advertisements on the page reflect American culture. Accordingly, for the cultural aspects, six indicators introduced in Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions were used to present a good overview of the fundamental factors of American culture found in the selected data (as seen in Figure 3). Contradictions imply an attempt to culturally adapt to each country's unique history to develop stronger marketing strategies globally.
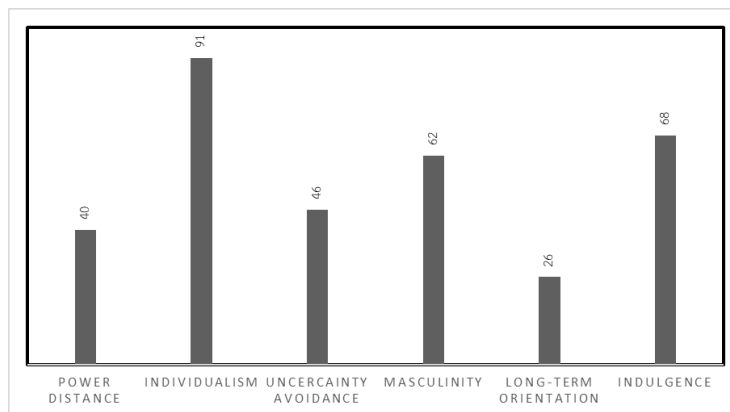

Figure 1. The United States Cultural Dimensions

IV. RESULTS

A. Verbal and Visual Resources

To answer the first research question of the study and achieve the purpose which was to examine verbal and visual resources employed in online social media of toy advertisements. First, the researcher investigated the number of samples of the study posted each year. The results were drawn from 142 online social media toy advertisements posted on Lego's Facebook page from January 2020 - September 2022. These advertisements contained both verbal and visual resources. Table 8 illustrates the number of advertisements employing both verbal and visual resources posted each year respectively.

TABLE 8
THE NUMBER OF ADVERTISEMENTS EMPLOYING VERBAL AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Years	Advertisements employing verbal and visual resources
2020	35 (24.65%)
2021	50 (35.21%)
2022	57 (40.14%)
Total	142

As shown in Table 5, the year with the highest number of advertisements containing verbal and visual resources was 2022. There were 57 advertisements posted, accounted for 40.14% of the total selected advertisements, although it was the shortest data collection with a nine-month duration. The year with the second highest of advertisements containing verbal and visual resources was 2021. There were 50 advertisements, accounted for 35.21%. Lastly, the year with the least number of advertisements containing verbal and visual resources was 2020.

Second, in terms of verbal resources, both phrases and clauses were presented in the selected samples. Table 9 presents types of sentence structures found in the online social media of toy advertisements.

TABLE 9
TYPES OF SENTENCE STRUCTURES PRESENTED IN THE DATA

Sentence Structure	Frequency
Clause	148 (67.58%)
Phrase	71 (32.42%)
Total	219

The results show that the total number of all sentence structures was 219. The highest percentage of sentence structures found was clauses (67.58%), followed by phrases (32.42%). In terms of visual resources, various types of social media marketing images were discovered, including product images, store announcements, seasonal images, quote-oriented images, quiz images, and marketing memes.

In order to answer the second research question and describe the metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics and social semiotics presented in online social media of toy advertisements. Based on the analysis, the researcher's classification of metafunctions of systemic functional linguistics and social semiotics is described in the next section.

B. Systemic Functional Linguistics

As stated in the previous section, there were 148 clauses and 71 phrases appearing in the samples. Therefore, the analysis of systemic functional linguistics is separated into two parts: clauses and phrases. The first part involves ideational, interpersonal, and textual metafunctions, and the latter involves only textual metafunctions as shown in Table 10 and Table 11 respectively.

TABLE 10
FREQUENCY OF METAFUNTIONS FOUND IN CLAUSES

Systemic Functional Linguistics (clauses)		
Metafunction	Type	Frequency (n=148)
Ideational	• Material	99 (66.89%) ***
	• Mental	9 (6.08%) *
	• Relational	34 (22.97%) **
	• Verbal	1 (0.68%)
	• Behavioral	3 (2.03%)
	• Existential	2 (1.35%)
Interpersonal	• Declarative	78 (52.70%)
	• Interrogative	2 (1.35%)
	• Imperative	68 (45.95%)
Textual	• Topical	133 (89.86%)
	• Textual	12 (8.11%)
	• Interpersonal	3 (2.03%)
Some clauses contained more than one types of themes, but only the first unit of each clause was counted.		

Concerning the ideational metafunction, Table 10 presents the three most frequently used metafunctions in clauses. The most frequently used metafunction in the clauses was the material metafunction, which occurred in 99 clauses and

accounted for 66.89%. The second frequently used metafunction was relational metafunction. It was found in 34 clauses which accounted for 22.97%. Finally, the third frequently used metafunction was mental metafunction. It occurred in 9 clauses with a frequency of 6.08%.

In terms of interpersonal metafunction, the results showed that the most presented mood was declarative. It was presented in 78 clauses, which was 52.70%. The second most presented mood was imperative, which occurred in 68 clauses and accounted for 45.95%. The least presented mood was interrogative. It is only displayed in two clauses and was considered 1.35% of all the clauses.

Lastly, the analysis of textual metafunction showed that the most frequently occurring theme in the clauses was topical. It occurred in 133 clauses and accounted for 89.86%. The second most frequently occurring theme was textual. The occurrences were 12 and accounted for 8.11%. The least frequently occurred theme was interpersonal, which occurred only in 3 clauses and accounted for 2.03%.

TABLE 11
FREQUENCY OF TEXTUAL METAFUNTION FOUND IN PHRASES

Systemic Functional Linguistics (phrases)		
Metafunction	Type	Frequency (n=71)
Textual	• Topical	71 (100%)
	• Textual	0
	• Interpersonal	0

For the analysis of phrases, the only type of metafunction involved was textual metafunction. As shown in Table 11, the only type of theme found was topical, accounted for 100% of the data.

C. Social Semiotics

Regarding the visual analysis, social semiotics involving the RPs' actions, colors, perspectives, or additional components of the advertising images was applied in order to examine the meaning conveyed through visual clues in images. The findings are presented in Table 12 below.

TABLE 12
FREQUENCY OF METAFUNTIONS FOUND IN IMAGES

Social Semiotics (images)		
Metafunction	Type	Frequency (n=142)
Representational	Narrative	
	• Action	2 (1.41%)
	• Reactional	30 (21.13%) *
	Conceptual	
	• Classificatory	10 (7.04%)
	• Analytical	38 (26.76%) **
	• Symbolic	62 (43.66%) ***
Interactive	Contact	
	• Demand	39 (27.46%)
	• Offer	103 (72.54%)
	Distance	
	• Intimate	2 (1.41%)
	• Close personal	1 (0.70%)
	• Far personal	11 (7.75%)
	• Close social	24 (16.90%) *
	• Far social	53 (37.32%) ***
	• Public distance	51 (35.92%) **
	Horizontal perspective	
	• Front	85 (59.86%)
	• Oblique	57 (40.14%)
	Vertical perspective	
	• High	27 (19.01%)
	• Medium	114 (80.28%)
	• Low	1 (0.70%)
Compositional (only RPs)	Information value	
	• Given	6 (4.23%)
	• New	7 (4.93%) *
	• Ideal	4 (2.82%)
	• Real	10 (7.04%) **
	• Center	98 (69.01%) ***
	• Margin	4 (2.82%)
	• Given & Ideal	2 (1.41%)
	• Given & Real	7 (4.93%) *
	• New & Ideal	0 (0.00%)
	• New & Real	4 (2.82%)

As shown in Table 12, the three most dominant representational metafunctions were conceptual symbolic (43.66%), conceptual analytical (26.76%), and narrative reactional (21.13%) respectively. For the interactive metafunction analysis, The RPs primarily employed offering gaze, accounted for 72.54%. Additionally, the three most dominant social distances were far social (37.32%), public distance (35.92%), and close social (16.90%) respectively. The majority of the images employed front horizontal perspective (59.86%) and medium vertical perspective (80.28%). Lastly, in terms of compositional metafunction, the RPs were mostly placed at the center of the image, accounted for 69.01%.

D. Examples of Verbal and Visual Resource Analysis

Example 1

https://www.facebook.com/LEGO/photos/a.10150175674793403/10159307519288403/?type=3&mibextid=l2hJJHjNVOBSwHk4

For the verbal resource analysis, example 1 shows the clause "Save the date". To analyze the ideational metafunction, the clause contains the verb "save" which is a verb of doing indicating material process. As the clause begins with a predicator, it adopts an imperative mood and a marked topical theme.

For the visual resource analysis, the image displays same-sex marriage and portrays various wedding decorations made from Lego bricks, including a wedding cake, a bouquet of flowers, rings, and bow ties. As a result, it can be categorized as a conceptual symbolic image. The RPs are 2 brides showing an offering gaze and public distance because there are a lot of things in the frame. The use of oblique angles suggests a separation between the RPs and the viewers, signifying distinct perspectives. In addition, the high vertical perspective between the RPs and the viewers indicates that the RPs have more power than the viewers and are considering them as wedding guests.

Considering the compositional metafunction, the use of colors in the image is generally pastel, which creates a feeling of warmth and tenderness. Thus, it can be assumed that the advertisement aims to evoke emotions of warmth and affection in the viewers as if they attended an actual wedding ceremony. The overall RPs are in the middle of a frame, indicating their significance. It can be noticed that this image demonstrates a correspondence between the verbal and visual resources as they present the wedding atmosphere.

Example 2

https://web.facebook.com/LEGO/photos/a.10150175674793403/10158518459053403/?type=3&mibextid=xfxF2i

In terms of the verbal resource analysis, example 2 presents the word "pride" which is classified as a phrase. The word appears in the position of an unmarked topical theme, indicating that it is the main topic of the advertisement. Also, it is capitalized to emphasize its importance. Also, it aims to present the concept of the image "LGBTQ pride" which represents the advocacy and celebration of the self-affirmation, equal rights, dignity, and greater visibility of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.

In terms of the visual resource analysis, the image portrays a pride parade created from Lego bricks symbolizing an outdoor event that celebrates LGBTQ social and self-acceptance, achievements, legal rights, and pride. The main RPs

are several crossdressers (represented by Lego minifigures) standing on the parade float. This creates a conceptual symbolic image as the RPs represent themselves as a broader concept as previously mentioned. In terms of the representational metafunction, the results can be revealed through the RPs' gaze, distance, and perspectives. As shown in example 2, the RPs offer an offering gaze by not looking directly at the viewers. The public distance, portraying several people, indicates a spatial gap between the RPs and the viewers. The oblique angle suggests that the RPs are distinct from the viewers. Additionally, the high vertical perspective conveys the RPs' superiority over the viewers.

Concerning the compositional metafunction, the RPs are focused and placed in the middle of the image, which indicates their crucial role. The image employs vibrant and highly contrasting colors, featuring rainbow-themed alphabets and an LED flag. The rainbow colors, typically consisting of six colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet), symbolize LGBTQ pride and reflect the diversity of the LGBTQ community. Furthermore, the use of these intensely saturated colors enhances the image's visual impact.

Example 3

https://www.facebook.com/LEGO/photos/a.10150175674793403/10159052251168403/?type=3&mibextid=l2hJJHjNVOBSwHk4

Example 3 displays two phrases, "90s music" and "Buckets of hair gel,". Additionally, there is a clause: "It is not a phrase, Mom!". Thus, the analysis of these verbal resources is divided into three systems. The two phrases at the top of the image function as unmarked topical themes as they are topics of the sub-images above. The clause below contains the finite verb "is not", which indicates the relational process in the ideational metafunction. The clause employs a declarative mood, following the basic sentence structure: subject followed by predicate.

Regarding the visual resource analysis, the two frames above highlight two main RPs: the green and the blue Lego bricks. The green one represents 90s music, and the blue one refers to Buckets of hair gel. The larger frame below displays the result when they are put together. This combination of teenagers' lifestyle or fashion choices then represents the expression, "It is not a phrase mom!". This example presents a conceptual symbolic image, with each Lego brick symbolizing a different concept. Considering the RPs' gaze, distance, and perspective, they offer an inviting gaze. The close social distance suggests an intimate relationship between the RPs and viewers. The front horizontal and middle vertical perspectives imply a lack of power disparity.

To analyze the compositional metafunction, there are three colors used in the image: green, blue, and yellow. These colors are vibrant and highly contrasting, as green, blue, and purple are complementary to yellow. This enhances the salience of the RPs.

E. Cultural Dimensions

As mentioned in the literature review, the findings were assumed to be based on Hofstede's American cultural aspects because the advertisements examined in this study were sourced from the official international Lego Facebook page, managed by the headquarter in the United States. The United States exhibits low scores on power distance (40), uncertainty avoidance (46), and long-term orientation (26). It demonstrates high levels of individualism (91), masculinity (62), and indulgence (68). Surprisingly, the findings of this study reveal that most of the advertisements supported the idea of Hofstede's American cultural aspects in power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and indulgence. However, some of them did not support the United States' scores on masculinity and long-term orientation. The examples of cultures illustrated in Examples 1-3 were described using Hofstede et al.'s (2010) cultural dimensions.

Regarding both verbal and visual resources, Example 1 shows individualism through the emphasis on a same-sex wedding celebration and the uniqueness of each couple's love. It clearly shows femininity through the themes of weddings, warmth, and tenderness. Also, challenging traditional gender roles symbolizes a willingness to embrace uncertainty and change and a lower power distance. Concerning the concept of marriage, it is related to commitment, family, and tradition. This aligns with long-term orientation. Furthermore, the advertisement aims to evoke happiness, affection, and positive feelings, which aligns with indulgence.

In Example 2, all cultural aspects are embedded in both verbal and visual resources. The emphasis on LGBTQ individuals' identity and values reflects individualism. Also, the use of a high vertical perspective may be related to power distance. This dimension deals with the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect

unequal distribution of power. The dimension of masculinity and femininity can be seen through the celebration of self-affirmation and dignity, as well as the depiction of multiple genders within the LGBTQ community. In other words, the values beyond traditional gender roles are highlighted. This could also be seen as challenging social norms and embracing uncertainty, implying a low degree of uncertainty avoidance. The concept of celebration helps encourage values that extend beyond short-term advantages, suggesting long-term orientation. Lastly, the vibrant and colorful depiction of the parade is related to indulgence, encouraging enjoyment and happiness.

Concerning Example 3, the verbal resource "It is not a phrase, Mom!" could be implied as a challenge to traditional authority, such as parental influence. This indicates a lower power distance, where younger people feel more comfortable expressing their opinions to their parents or other adults. In addition, the advertisement depicts individualism by reflecting individual preferences or interests and implying an individualistic attitude. The phrases "90s music" and "Buckets of hair gel" indicate a unique style and a willingness to try new things. This represents a lower uncertainty avoidance. Finally, the use of vibrant and contrasting colors (green, blue, and yellow) suggests indulgence in the expression of creativity and a celebration of uniqueness.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

To conclude, the findings revealed the semiotic resources including both verbal and visual resources. The verbal resources were phrases and clauses used in advertisements, and the visual resources were diverse social media marketing images including product announcements, seasonal visuals, quotes, quizzes, and memes. Concerning systemic functional linguistics, the three main ideational metafunctions in clauses were material, relational, and mental respectively. The greatest appearance of material metafunction is supported by numerous researchers (Aisha, 2017; Amatullah et al., 2019; Pratiwy & Wulan, 2018). A possible explanation for this might be the material process serves to convince the audience to purchase the product. In other words, the audience can easily picture what is portrayed in the advertisement and be more persuaded about the products since action verbs are used in the advertising. However, this finding is contrary to previous studies by Pardi et al. (2018) and Sari (2021). Pardi et al. (2018) suggested that attributive, verbal, mental, and material metafunctions occurred the most frequently. Another interesting finding is the study of Sari (2021), which found that mental and relational metafunctions were the most dominant metafunction in the study.

For interpersonal metafunction, the most dominant mood was declarative. In textual metafunction, the most dominant theme was the unmarked topical theme. These findings in interpersonal and textual metafunctions reflect those of Amatullah et al. (2019), Pardi et al. (2018), and Sari (2021) who also found that declarative mood and unmarked topical theme occurred dominantly. For phrases, only textual metafunction was presented with the unmarked topical theme as the most prominent theme. The result suggests that using declarative sentences is the most common way to provide clear and correct information. Also, the audience can easily understand the messages in the advertisement when they are presented through the clauses.

In terms of social semiotics involving the RPs' actions, colors, perspectives, or additional components of the advertising images, the three most dominant representational metafunctions were conceptual symbolic, conceptual analytical, and narrative reactional respectively. This finding was also reported by Ly and Jung (2015). It can be implied that symbolism is a powerful tool in marketing. It helps people from different cultures connect the product with something familiar, attributing the symbol's qualities to the product. Using symbols is also crucial for sending a message and creating meaning that can grab the audience's attention (Guang et al., 2019). For interactive metafunction, the RPs mostly employed offering gaze. The three most presented distances were far social, public distance, and close social respectively. Most of the images employed a front horizontal perspective and a medium vertical perspective. Concerning compositional metafunction, the RPs were mostly placed at the center of the image. Lastly, the advertisements tend to employ a variety of vibrant and contrasting colors to make the brand memorable and convey positive values such as fun, happiness, creativity, and playfulness.

Furthermore, various cultural aspects based on American culture were found in the advertising images. However, it is somewhat surprising that a few dimensions including masculinity vs. Femininity and long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation do not support the expectation. The study found that Lego has been using its advertisements to enhance the brand's positive image by addressing social concerns such as gender equality and promoting harmonious relationships. Thus, a key factor that may explain Lego's success is that the brand promotes self-expression, inspiring people to be creative without worrying about societal norms. It also creates values that are different from traditional cultures that promote openness and greater acceptance of differences.

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Bandita Santikul was born in Chonburi, Thailand on the 28th of October, 1994. She graduated with a B.A. in English from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Burapha University, Chonburi, Thailand, in 2016, and was awarded First-class Honors. She then received a merit scholarship from the faculty and continued her studies in English for Communication, earning her M.A. in 2019.

After her graduation, she was an English teacher at a school in her hometown. Currently, she is a full-time lecturer at Kasetsart University Sriracha Campus, Chonburi, Thailand. Her research interest areas include critical discourse analysis, applied linguistics, and English for specific purposes.

Creating Culture of Thinking in Language Classrooms: An Interpretive Inquiry Into Saudi University EFL Instructors' Beliefs and Practices

Safaa M. Abdelhalim[*]
College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), P.O. Box 5701
Othman Ibn Affan St, Riyadh 11432, Saudi Arabia

Ashwaq A. Aldaghri
College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), P.O. Box 5701
Othman Ibn Affan St, Riyadh 11432, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Guided by sociocultural theory (SCT) perspectives, this mixed-methods study investigated Saudi university EFL instructors' beliefs and teaching practices regarding the creation of culture of thinking (CoT) in language skills classrooms, and the factors affecting this process. Research data were gathered from 169 EFL university instructors through a self-report questionnaire. Among the participants, 12 instructors participated in a semi-structured interview. Additionally, classroom observations were conducted in seven classrooms. Questionnaire data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics while interview and classroom observation data were analyzed qualitatively. Instructors' beliefs were examined in terms of their conceptions of thinking skills, and their perceptions of the importance of creating and sustaining a CoT in EFL classrooms. Their beliefs and reported practices were then compared to their actual classroom practices. Data analysis revealed several key findings. Firstly, there was an obvious incongruence between instructors' stated beliefs, reported practices, and actual classroom teaching practices. Though most instructors were favorable toward the CoT, they did not apply it to their classrooms. Secondly, several factors were identified to have mediated instructors' beliefs and practices pertaining to the CoT. These factors were related to cultural values (e.g., individual thinking, obedience, and respect for adults) as well as institutional and classroom contexts (e.g., workload, examination system, students' thinking habits, and language proficiency). Finally, instructors lacked the strategies necessary to effectively implement CoT. Based on these findings, pedagogical implications and future research studies are proposed.

Index Terms—Culture of Thinking, teacher beliefs, Teaching practices, sociocultural theory, university EFL instructors

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's technical society, there is a need for students who are curious, inquisitive, responsible, and capable of thinking critically. Therefore, promoting students' thinking skills has become an integral goal of higher education worldwide, as these skills are considered critical for both professional and personal success (Li, 2016; Wilson, 2016). This requires instructors to have a sense of curiosity and be active, reflective, and knowledgeable about thinking-provoking practices. Scholars and researchers differ in their definitions of thinking skills, but most focus on central aspects such as mental processes, knowledge, dispositions, cognition, and metacognition (Ashman & Conway, 1993). For Moseley et al. (2004), thinking skills represent proficiency, facility, and practicality in thinking processes, including remembering, reasoning, forming concepts, planning, questioning, making decisions and judgments, and creating new perspectives. In the field of language teaching, there is an established close interrelationship between language development and thinking, as language proficiency incorporates both linguistic and cognitive constituents (Chamot, 1995; Li, 2016). Cognitive aspects of thinking, such as analysing, questioning, and reasoning, are essential for understanding content in the language classroom and enhancing students' learning autonomy (Dong, 2006; Zhang, 2020). Therefore, integrating thinking skills in language classrooms has become one of EFL instructors' main responsibilities (Li, 2016; Ritchhart, 2015).

Richarthart (2002) introduced culture of thinking (CoT) as a teaching approach to incorporate thinking skills into classroom teaching and learning. It means "a place where a group's collective and individual thinking is valued, visible, and actively promoted as part of the regular, day-to-day experience of all group members" (Ritchhart et al., 2011, p. 219). According to Ritchhart and Perkins (2005, p. 775), effective integration of thinking skills into classroom practice necessitates instructors asking themselves some key questions, including "Why do we want students to think?", "When is it useful?" And what objectives does it serve?" Over the past decade, many western educational contexts have given

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[*] Corresponding Author.

considerable attention to CoT. Moreover, it has been the subject of many textbooks to support its role and value in classroom instruction (e.g., Ritchhart, 2015; Richhart et al., 2011), as elaborated in section 2.4.

Despite the significant role of thinking skills in EFL learning, little is known about the actual classroom practices of integrating these skills into the teaching and learning process (Li, 2016; Tabačkováa, 2015). In the Saudi context, for example, though developing students' thinking skills is among the learning outcomes (ILOs) of university study programs, there are no salient guidelines that support instructors' practices in this area. As a result, promoting thinking skills in Saudi university EFL classes is largely dependent on instructors' personal conceptions of thinking, previous educational backgrounds, and experiences (Al Zahrani & Elyas, 2017; Al-Seghayer, 2014).

Educational research, over the last three decades, has highlighted the effect of instructors' beliefs on their instructional decisions and practices (Borg, 2001, 2011) as well as their acceptance and adoption of novel teaching approaches (Barbier et al., 2022; Li, 2020; Li & Walsh, 2011). Teacher beliefs incorporate instructors' thoughts, knowledge, and beliefs regarding diverse issues influencing teaching and learning as well as instructors' and learners' identities and roles, and "serve as a guide to thought and behaviors" (Borg, 2001, p. 186). According to numerous studies, instructors' beliefs and classroom practices are reciprocal, with beliefs shaping practices and practices shaping beliefs (Yang & Gao, 2013; Zheng, 2013). Sociocultural theory (SCT) acknowledges the role of societal and cultural contexts in shaping teacher cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). Taking a sociocultural perspective on cognition and social activity, Lantolf and Johnson (2007, p. 878) argued that social activity not only affects cognition but also acts as "the process through which human cognition is formed." In essence, instructors' practices can serve as a manifestation of both their intentional strategies and purposefully chosen methods, as well as their professed beliefs that may have been shaped by their prior experiences. Li (2020) illustrated the social nature of instructors' beliefs at two main levels: first, how cultural heritage influences instructors' beliefs and practices. Second, instructors construct knowledge, concepts, and understandings of accepted practices based on their professional interactions. In this regard, understanding the congruence or incongruence between instructors' mental constructs and classroom teaching practices is crucial. Through a comprehensive investigation of what instructors know, believe, and think, we can gain valuable insight into their cognitive processes, which can ultimately inform strategies for improving teaching effectiveness.

However, there is a shortage of empirical research on EFL instructors' beliefs about thinking skills and to what extent they are integrating them into their instructional practices (Li & Walsh, 2011; Li, 2016) compared to empirical studies on the development of thinking skills among students in general (Dong, 2006; Hung, 2019) or certain thinking skills as critical thinking (Al Zahrani & Elyas, 2017; Tabačkováa, 2015). Moreover, most studies in this area focused on investigating instructors' beliefs based on self-report instruments to collect instructors' reflections and descriptions (Barbier et al., 2022; Hong et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020) rather than exploring their actual classroom practices in depth, which may not always align with their reported beliefs. According to Oranje and Smith (2018, p. 313), though this gives a deeper perception of instructors' own interpretations and elucidations of their previous experiences with their distinct context, individual instructors may not necessarily impute equal significance to their beliefs, and beliefs may regulate practice in an inconsistent way.

Guided by sociocultural theory, the present study aimed to investigate Saudi university EFL instructors' beliefs and teaching practices concerning the creation of CoT in their language skills classrooms, and the factors contributing to this process. Despite being a study of Saudi university EFL instructors, the findings of this study may be relevant to other similar contexts and disciplines since CoT is a foundational element of effective teaching (Ritchhart et al., 2011). By exploring the extent to which university instructors perceive and practice CoT in their teaching, this study could help to bridge the gap between desired learning outcomes and actual teaching practices in EFL contexts more broadly. Additionally, the study's findings shed light on how sociocultural factors, such as cultural values and norms, as well as classroom and institutional contexts, impact CoT implementation. These insights could inform the design of teacher education and professional development programs aimed at supporting EFL instructors in promoting CoT in their classrooms, thereby improving students' learning outcomes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Culture of Thinking (CoT) and Language Teaching and Learning

With the increased awareness of the significant role of classroom culture in shaping learning, over the past two decades, teaching thinking using programmed strategy instruction that targets students as individuals has been replaced with broad-based approaches that attempt to create classroom cultures that support the active social creation of knowledge in groups, such as developing thinking patterns (González et al., 2001), fostering a community of learners (Brown & Campione, 1994), and group knowledge building (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 2014). CoT as a teaching approach was introduced by Ritchhart (2002). Pohl (2011) stated that CoT is "a supportive environment in which specific factors work together in a synergetic fashion to bring about and reinforce the enterprise of productive thinking in a critical, creative, and caring sense" (p. 8). Ritchhart et al. (2011, p. 221) highlighted that CoT definitions are meant to provide educators with a goal to strive for rather than a state that will ever be "perfectly achieved".

In a comprehensive study of CoT, Ritchhart (2015) identified eight cultural forces at play in classrooms that aid the process of enculturation in thinking or what is known as CoT. He defined these forces as "the shapers of classroom

cultures" (p. 6). These forces include instructors' expectations for their students, the language of the classroom, management of teaching time, modeling (teacher modelling of thinking and dispositions), opportunities created for deep and meaningful learning, thinking routines (routines and structures for thinking), interactions (interactions and relationships that are supportive of thinking) and classroom environment (messages from the physical and emotional environment about thinking). These cultural factors serve as both direct and indirect teaching tools (Ritchhart & Perkins, 2005). For example, by implementing "thinking routines," instructors give students highly transferable thinking tools that they can pick up in one context and use in a variety of other contexts over time (Ritchhart, 2002). On the other hand, using the language of thinking with its four constructs, process (questioning, analysing, and justifying), product (summation, presumption), stance (concur, challenge), and state (intrigued, confused), represents an indirect method of fostering thinking by providing students with language for discussing thoughts. Moreover, CoT is constructed and sustained by connecting both the direct forces (routine, opportunities) and the indirect forces (expectations, interactions, modelling, time, language, and environment). In the present study, classroom observations and interviews with instructors were analyzed using these eight forces.

Although several studies have examined the CoT approach in language classrooms (e.g., Dajani, 2016; Hooper, 2016), there appears to be a gap in the literature devoted to investigating instructors' beliefs and classroom practices in this context from a sociocultural lens. Existing studies have primarily focused on the impact of this approach on students' engagement and language skills rather than how instructors' beliefs and practices can affect its implementation. There is a need for further research into the sociocultural factors that influence instructors' beliefs and practices regarding the CoT approach, and how these factors affect the adoption of the approach in language classrooms, which is the focus of the present study.

The present study maintained a relativistic perspective, believing everything to be interdependent and inseparable, along with the sociocultural perspective in discussing the study's main findings.

B. Questions of the Study

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

RQ1 What are the beliefs of EFL instructors about CoT in terms of their conceptions of thinking skills and their perceptions of the usefulness of establishing and sustaining CoT in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia?

RQ2 How do EFL instructors incorporate CoT into their classrooms, and what teaching practices do they use to develop students' thinking skills?

RQ3 To what extent are Saudi university EFL instructors' beliefs and self-reported CoT practices align with their actual classroom practices?

RQ4 What are the factors that mediate the implementation of CoT in EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia, and how do instructors deal with them in their teaching practices?

III. METHOD

A. Design of the Study

This study used a mixed methods approach to reach a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research topic by examining multiple aspects and utilizing different data sources to triangulate the findings. The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently, and both types were analyzed simultaneously. This design allowed us to integrate both types of data to gain a more complete understanding of EFL instructors' beliefs and practices related to the establishment of CoT in language skills classrooms, and the factors mediating this process.

B. Participants

Based on the purposive sampling technique, 169 EFL university instructors (36 Male-133 Female) from four Saudi universities voluntarily completed the study questionnaire (see Table 1 for Participants' demographic information). Recruitment criteria for this study included being a full-time staff member at a Saudi public university, having at least 3-year teaching experience, and availability to take part in the study. Seeking voluntary participation, emails/WhatsApp messages were sent to the participants, explaining the aim, significance, and procedures of the study along with CoT definition and main forces. Then, 12 instructors were randomly selected from the main research group to participate in a semi-structured interview. In stage three, seven instructors from the 12 who participated in the interview participated in the classroom observation.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Variables	Categories	Number	%
Gender	Male	36	21%
	Female	133	79%
Teaching experience	5 years and less	27	16%
	More than 5 and less than 15	76	45%
	More than 15 years	66	39%
Professional title	Teaching Assistant	11	7%
	Lecturer	51	30%
	Assistant Professor	85	50%
	Associate Professor	16	9%
	Professor	6	4%
Academic degree	BA	3	2%
	MA	54	32%
	PhD	112	66%

C. Data Collection Instruments

(a). The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of four sections: Section One included eight items about the participants' demographic information, Section Two included 12 items about their conceptions of thinking skills, Section Three included 11 items about their perceptions of the usefulness of practicing CoT in EFL skills classrooms, and Section Four included 14 items about their practices of CoT. For sections two and three a 5-point Likert-attitudinal scale was used: "1" strongly disagree, to "5" strongly agree. In section four a 5-point Likert scale was used with frequency categorizations as follows: "1" never to "5" always.

To ensure the face validity of the questionnaire, it was submitted to three jury members; based on their comments some items were rephrased to make the meaning clear for the reader. Afterward, the researchers piloted the questionnaire with a group of 15 instructors who shared similar characteristics to the main study participants. The four sections of the questionnaire had high internal consistency at .0.90, 0,92, and 0.92.

(b). Semi-Structured Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted following a guide that included some open-ended questions and probes that covered four specific domains. The interview was conducted in English according to the participants' preferences. However, to ensure a meaningful exchange of ideas regarding the research topic, they were allowed to switch to their L1 (Arabic) whenever they wished. The interview lasted 30 to 45 minutes. Audios of the individual interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked by the interviewees to ensure their views had not been misunderstood.

(c). Classroom Observation

Seven classes (2 listening and speaking, 2 reading, and 3 writing) were observed to gain a deeper understanding of how CoT was practiced. The observation allowed us to experience and see what takes place in the classroom. For effective observation, a predetermined observation scheme was used based on Ritchhart's (2015) eight cultural forces of CoT along with audio recordings to back up the field notes.

D. Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistical analysis through SPSS (Version 28.0). Analysis of the data was primarily designed to locate general trends and "summarize findings by describing general tendencies in the data and the overall distribution of scores" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 213). Variables with normally distributed numerical values were expressed as means and standard deviations (SDs), while qualitative variables were expressed as frequencies and percentages.

The interview and classroom observation data were analyzed quantitatively using a structural coding method (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to facilitate fast access to data and generate emerging themes. Ritchhart's (2015) eight cultural forces of CoT served as a basis for developing a coding scheme to categorize participants' CoT practices. Data were coded manually in three phases: descriptive coding (preparing and describing the data), pattern coding (reducing the data, arranging modes into hierarchical categories, and refining coding decisions), and theorizing (interpreting the data). The coding process involved multiple cycles to ensure accurate identification and description of participants' perceptions and practices. Members verified transcripts and interpretations of data for accuracy and authenticity. The data were read and analyzed by the two researchers to identify initial codes; general themes were identified subsequently. Further discussions between the two researchers were conducted to attain "inter-coder agreement" (r= 89) and thus enhance the credibility of the findings (Nunan & Bailey, 2009, p. 428).

IV. RESULTS

A. *The Questionnaire Results*

(a). Participants' Conceptions of Thinking Skills

To answer the first research question regarding participants' conceptions of thinking skills, the questionnaire second-section data were analysed using descriptive statistics, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PARTICIPANTS' CONCEPTIONS OF THINKING SKILLS

No	Items	M	SD	%
4	Thinking skills are reasoning (combining and utilizing available knowledge to address unfamiliar situations)	4.12	0.85	82%
5	Thinking skills are being critical (comparing and contrasting knowledge gained from different perspectives)	4.11	0.91	82%
8	Thinking skills are problem-solving	4.05	1.03	81%
12	Thinking skills are being creative	4.04	0.91	81%
3	Thinking skills are logics (processing existing knowledge)	4.02	0.91	80%
7	Thinking skills are making appropriate argument	3.89	0.95	78%
11	Thinking skills are Open-mindedness and flexibility to accept new ideas and different perspectives	3.89	1.00	78%
6	Thinking skills are being aware of one's learning process	3.79	0.91	76%
9	Thinking skills are changing perspectives	3.75	0.94	75%
10	Thinking skills are learning to learn together	3.61	0.98	72%
1	Thinking skills are co-construction of knowledge	3.47	1.11	69%
2	Thinking skills are memorization skills	2.68	1.11	54%

Table 2 shows that the means for all items, except Item No. 2, are over 3.00, which indicates that the participants had clear conceptions of thinking skills. The mean scores also show that none of the conceptions were universally held by all the participants. Interestingly, the highest means were found for Items Four (M = 4.11), Five (M = 4.11), and Eight (M = 4.05), which suggests that participants held a 'cognitivist' view of thinking. Another significant finding was the lowest mean for Item No. 2 (M = 2.68), with the majority choosing "uncertain".

(b). Participants' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Practicing CoT

The results revealed that most participants (79%) supported integrating CoT into Language classrooms (M = 3.93, SD = 0.76). As shown in Table 3, the strongest sentiments were expressed about Items Five (M = 4.20, SD = 0.99) and Four (M = 4.18, SD = 0.95), with participants strongly agreeing that practicing CoT in EFL classrooms is especially important in developing students' personalities, and that English textbooks should include activities for practicing thinking. Items One and Ten also produced relatively strong responses, with respondents agreeing with the notion that it is necessary to integrate language competence with thinking skills in the EFL curriculum (M = 4.11, SD = 0.95) and that it is essential to provide EFL students with various opportunities to practice their thinking skills (M = 4.11, SD = 0.89). However, only a slight majority agreed that university EFL instructors are responsible for teaching thinking skills (M = 3.58, SD = 1.10). On the other hand, most of the participants (67%) were uncertain whether students with a high language proficiency level would benefit more from CoT (M = 3.37, SD = 1.13).

TABLE 3
PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE USEFULNESS OF PRACTICING CoT

No	Items	M	SD	%
5	CoT is important in developing students' personalities (e.g., having an inquisitive open mind, self-efficacy)	4.20	0.99	84%
4	English textbooks should include activities for practicing CoT	4.18	0.95	84%
1	It is necessary to integrate language competence with thinking skills in university EFL curriculum	4.11	0.95	82%
10	EFL students should be given a variety of opportunities to practice their thinking skills	4.11	0.89	82%
8	Developing thinking skills for university EFL students should start from the first study levels	4.05	1.05	81%
6	CoT helps students get involved in complex and interactive experiences, solving real problems, and considering new ideas	4.03	0.88	81%
7	CoT establishes the social and cultural contexts of collaborative learning	3.98	0.91	80%
3	CoT is essential for mastering English language skills	3.86	0.93	77%
9	Thinking skills can be developed for all students	3.73	1.08	75%
2	It is the responsibility of university EFL instructors to teach thinking skills in their classrooms	3.58	1.10	72%
11	Students with high language proficiency level benefit more from CoT	3.37	1.13	67%

(c). Participants' Reported Practices of CoT

Table 4 shows that the most frequently reported practices were encouraging students to actively participate in various thinking-provoking and collaborative problem-solving activities (M = 3.97, SD = 1.00), using critical thinking language (M = 3.93, SD = 1.03), varying question types (M = 3.91, SD = 0.97), and using supportive language (M = 3.88, SD = 0.98). However, only 67% of the participants expressed confidence in rearranging classroom physical settings to foster meaningful collaboration (M = 3.34, SD = 1.20).

TABLE 4
PARTICIPANTS' REPORTED PRACTICES OF CoT

No	Items	M	SD	%
10	I encourage my students to actively participate in various thinking provoking and collaborative problem-solving activities.	3.97	1.00	79%
4	I use critical thinking language (e.g., open questions- higher order questions) to engage and motivate students to think beyond the surface.	3.93	1.03	79%
11	I vary my question types to encourage unexpected responses and maximize learning opportunities.	3.91	0.97	78%
7	I use supportive language to help students value the benefits of the topic discussed	3.88	0.98	78%
1	I consciously train my students' thinking skills	3.77	1.07	75%
3	Knowledge and comprehension questions are dominant types in my class	3.73	1.00	75%
5	I use strategy-based instruction to raise students' awareness of cognitive learning strategies	3.73	0.99	75%
6	I assign enough class time for in-depth discussions and interactions	3.67	1.07	73%
2	I spend much of class time fostering students' linguistic knowledge	3.63	1.12	73%
8	I effectively use wait-time technique to cultivate deep and meaningful learning	3.62	1.02	72%
9	Interactive, reflective, and collaborative teaching techniques are essential part of my class routine	3.60	1.12	72%
12	I arrange class seats for meaningful collaboration and interaction	3.34	1.20	67%

B. The Interview Results

(a). Participants' Perceptions of the Usefulness of CoT

Qualitative analysis of participants' responses to questions about their beliefs regarding the expected benefits of integrating CoT into EFL skills classrooms resulted in several themes. The most frequent theme was "promoting deep

and meaningful learning," with all participants using various terms that refer to it, including "true and meaningful learning" (n = 12), "deep understanding" (n = 8), and "deep learning" (n = 6). One participant stated, "This classroom culture helps students think deeply about the topic they are reading or writing about," while another added that "students will be able to put what they have learned into practice through interactive activities and in-depth study". The second most frequent theme (n = 10) was coded by the term "engaging students in the learning process." Participants believed that CoT might promote students to be more engaged in learning by stimulating their cognitive and affective abilities, with references to this theme including "cognitively engaged," "get involved," and "more enthusiastic". One participant commented that "students will become more committed; they will learn beyond the ILOs," while another added that "as long as students feel that their thinking is visible and valued, they will try to express their ideas and arguments convincingly and clearly". The third frequent theme was "improving students' cognitive abilities," with participants (n = 7) agreeing that CoT would promote students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and reasoning skills. According to one participant, "it would help students be open-minded," while another stated that "CoT-based classrooms would be mental gymnastics for students!".

The fourth common theme was "enhancing students' educational achievement" (n = 6), with terms such as "achieving the intended objectives," "developing the targeted skills," and "boosting their learning outcomes" introduced as part of this theme. A participant commented that "the inherent practices of CoT can help raise students' achievement levels if sufficient practice is provided". One final theme was "building students' character" (n = 3), with references to this theme including "self-esteem," "having a voice," and "confidence". Participants believed that CoT can positively impact students' lives over time, allowing them to develop the character traits necessary to succeed "not only in their studies but also in their lives," according to one participant. Another participant opined, "In such an environment, self-esteem can be created by making students tap into their past experiences; that's how it really helps.

(b). Participants' Practices of CoT

The analysis of the participants' reported classroom practices resulted in eight themes. The most frequently reported theme was instructors' expectations for students, with most participants (n=8) highlighting their efforts to prepare students as active learners who "participate" and "interact" with what they learn. They believed that such an interactive role should be represented in the form of producing knowledge rather than just consuming it. According to a participant, "Students have to do something, produce something in each lecture". However, four participants reported following only the syllabus's ILOs without setting expectations for students, suggesting a misunderstanding of how instructors contribute to learning by challenging students and holding them accountable.

The second theme was class time distribution, which represents how instructors allocate time for group and/or individual thinking. All participants reported spending most of the class time practicing the targeted language skill, providing feedback mostly on comprehension and language rather than learning strategies. Six participants prioritized individual work in their classrooms over group work so that students could practice on their own. They also pointed out that time limitations force them to concentrate only on the basics in their presentations, so they maintain an informative tone and do not usually include open discussion or higher-order thinking questions.

The third theme was language of the classroom, with most participants (n=8) reporting employing informative language the most. They believed that by using informative language, they could help students understand concepts and assignments more easily. Two participants reported using more than one language type in the same class (e.g., thinking, community, initiative, and feedback). They believed that using a variety of languages would help establish a safe and comfortable classroom environment, with one participant emphasizing that this would "help students feel more comfortable and build rapport".

As part of the fourth theme, engaging and meaningful learning opportunities, some participants (n=5) reported integrating discussion, group/pair work, examples, and reflection activities into their teaching practices. However, most of the participants stated that they do not depend much on group work since it takes a lot of time and is not fair to everyone. Additionally, they reported that it can be difficult to monitor student participation in group work, making it difficult to ensure that all students are engaged and learning.

The fifth theme was routines for stimulating thought, with most of the participants (n=9) mentioning they employed open discussion (n=7) and questioning (n=6). Only one participant reported using "group discussions" in her writing classes as a pre-and post-writing activity. The sixth theme was interaction patterns, with the most frequent pattern among all participants being teacher-student dialogue in both directions. Most participants (n=10) viewed that students benefit the most when actively engaged in "a back-and-forth dialogue". However, two participants reported using a one-way interaction pattern (from the teacher to the students) most of the time, agreeing that this pattern was more efficient at getting students to focus on the task and controlling the classroom environment.

The seventh theme was classroom environment, with most of the participants (n=9) reporting that they rarely ask students to alter their places for certain tasks. They instruct them to work with their elbows if there is group or peer work, doing so to save time and avoid distracting students as they change places or move. Meanwhile, all participants reported setting a safe and supportive learning environment in their classes by accepting students' ideas and using encouraging language. A participant stated that "I welcome their ideas, answers, and arguments without judgment. I keep repeating, we are here to learn from one another".

(c). Contributing Factors to Participants' Beliefs and Practices of CoT

Participants' beliefs and practices regarding CoT establishment in their classrooms were mediated by six factors: first, 'lack of experience'; although participants recognized the significance of CoT in promoting learning, they expressed difficulty in implementing it in their classrooms. They attributed this to their schooling and university education, which were dominated by structure-based classroom settings and absolute obedience and respect for adults as cultural values. One participant stated, "Unfortunately, we couldn't dare question either the content we studied or instructors' explanations... The textbook used to be sanctified as well." Participants believed that teaching is primarily a matter of experience, and they identified "fear of failure" as a barrier to trying something totally different. They viewed it as risky to try something new without knowing how it would turn out, and most participants (n=10) reported not attending any professional training on integrating thinking into EFL classrooms or engaging students cognitively. They believed that such training programs are theoretically based and lack classroom practice. The second factor was 'workload', with all participants feeling they did not have enough time to explore and experiment with novel pedagogical approaches. One participant stated, "Time is the problem! Designing and implementing CoT activities in class is time-consuming." The third factor was 'students' inadequate thinking habits', represented by their passive attitudes towards practicing their thinking skills. Participants attributed this to students' school education, which is teacher centered. One participant stated, "The majority of students tend to follow others' viewpoints instead of sharing theirs".

The fourth factor was the 'dominance of traditional lecturing styles and exam-oriented education systems'. Participants believed that this educational style limits creativity and independent thinking in students and makes them less confident in expressing their opinions. The fifth factor was the 'power dynamic between instructors and students,' raised by some participants (n=6). They noted that the hierarchical relationship between instructors and students discouraged students from asking questions and thinking critically. Additionally, they suggested that students' perception of their role in the learning process is affected by the position of power and authority associated with the traditional lecture format. According to them, teacher-student rapport increases student motivation and encourages them to practice thinking skills. Finally, 'students' low language proficiency and large classes' were mentioned by four participants. They reported that these two factors made it difficult to provide individual feedback and guidance, which could hinder students' development of thinking skills.

C. Classroom Observations Results

The overall results of the observation indicated that instruction in most classes primarily focused on completing the content, rather than promoting and challenging students' cognitive abilities. An in-depth analysis of the data based on the observation scheme showed that, in terms of teaching approach and style, most of the observed classrooms (n=4) were teacher-centered, with the teacher setting goals and instructions for achieving them. Only three participants appeared more willing to try a student-centered approach by encouraging students to inquire beyond textbook questions and practice group/pair brainstorming as a prewriting/speaking activity. Moreover, in most classes (n=5), instructors adopted the demonstrator teaching style, focusing on what they wanted their students to do to complete the given exercise. Instructors repeatedly asked, "Do you understand these instructions?" (T2, observation) and "Are these steps clear?" (T5, observation). The facilitator teaching style was prevalent in only one class, where some genuine questions and a case study were used to stimulate inquiry-based learning.

In terms of classroom interaction patterns, initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) sequences were the most common pattern in almost all classes (n = 6), with students' role limited to responding to instructors' display questions. Regarding classroom organization, most classes (n = 4) utilized individual activities. Guided group work activities were used in some classes (n = 3), while interactive group work was implemented in only one class. In that class, students worked in small groups to prepare and deliver a presentation on an assigned part of a reading text, including main and sub-ideas and the meaning of keywords. Each presentation included a Q&A section, allowing groups to respond to the teacher's and classmates' clarifications and comments.

The most frequently used classroom language types were informing and feedback. Examples included "That's to the point, just try to support it with an example" (T1) and "Amazing, I really liked your detailed and expressive description" (T3). The second most prevalent language type was community language (n=5), such as "Let's share our ideas on the topic first" (T7) and "That's what we have to elaborate on" (T5). Thinking language appeared in only two classes, with examples including "think over this point", "categorize these ideas", and "monitor your reading comprehension". While some techniques were used to promote deep and meaningful learning, most of the class time was devoted to introducing linguistic features and testing comprehension. Active engagement and meaningful interaction were not given adequate time. To create a safe and motivating learning environment, most instructors (n=6) used students' names. Additionally, some instructors (n=4) repeatedly emphasized that there was no right or wrong answer. Others (n=2) prioritized general feedback rather than highlighting each student's mistakes. Comprehension questions were frequently used in most classes to stimulate students' thinking, although many assessed only literal comprehension. In only three classes, outlines, charts, or visual cues (such as images in the reading textbook) with prompts were used to make students' thinking visible.

The promotion of deep and meaningful learning was practiced through some techniques, with the most common being questioning students' prior knowledge by revising previous lessons (n=6) and asking display questions about the

topic of the lesson (n=5). For example, T6 began her reading class by asking her students, "What is VR?" However, this reflected a strictness rather than openness in the expected answer. Only three participants used intriguing questions and conditional language to encourage students to share their thoughts and build on their ideas. Another technique observed in only two classes was the use of various educational resources, including audio-visual aids, images, and written texts. Wait time was observed in only one classroom (T6, reading), where T6 paused for 3-5 seconds before asking a question and soliciting an answer.

V. DISCUSSION

Guided by the sociocultural perspectives, the findings of the study are presented by comparing and contrasting the participants' beliefs and pedagogical practices of CoT, along with the contributing factors in their working context in an attempt to identify the actual beliefs and practices of CoT within the Saudi universities' context.

Results about the participants' conceptions of thinking skills and perceptions of the usefulness of practicing CoT in EFL classrooms (RQ 1), revealed that most participants hold a cognitivist-based conception of thinking; they believed that students' thinking skills are mental constructs that are represented in individual perceptual and cognitive experiences rather than group and collaborative activity; the items that represented this social aspect of thinking received less agreement among the participants. This conception of thinking was reflected in the participants' pedagogical practices, as observed in the classroom. Most instructors used literal comprehension questions and informing language, suggesting that they perceived language teaching as a process of transforming information and providing corrective feedback. Additionally, some instructors detached language skills from their contexts as social practices by focusing primarily on the product, namely linguistic knowledge. This finding may be mediated by the dominant individual thinking style and cognitive learning in the participants' cultural context, which may have influenced their teaching philosophy (Alrabai, 2014; Fareh, 2010; Hamouda, 2013). Additionally, in Saudi EFL English classrooms, instructors emphasize knowledge transmission rather than teaching skills, which is a major obstacle to English education in Saudi Arabia (Al-Seghayer, 2014).

Regarding the participants' reported CoT practices (RQ 2), several practices were mentioned. These included engaging and motivating students through various thinking-provoking, collaborative problem-solving activities, using varying question types to encourage unexpected responses, and employing supportive language. Almost all the responses (from the interview and questionnaire) indicated that participants focused on establishing a safe and supportive classroom learning environment. They did this by accepting students' ideas and encouraging them to share their answers without judgment. However, participants were unsure about rearranging classrooms to foster meaningful collaboration. From a sociocultural perspective, these reported practices reflect the participants' cultural and societal context. The Saudi culture places a strong emphasis on the value of collaborative learning, which is evident in the participants' reported practices that involve active participation, group work, and varied question types that encourage unexpected responses. Furthermore, the reported use of supportive language reflects the Saudi Arabian culture's emphasis on politeness and respect.

It is noteworthy that, while using collaborative learning activities and allocating sufficient class time for in-depth discussions and interactions were frequent practices according to questionnaire responses, half of the interview participants reported prioritizing individual work and avoiding group discussions and high-order thinking questions due to time constraints. This highlights the impact of contextual factors on instructors' beliefs, as the Saudi educational context places a strong emphasis on content completion and exam-oriented instruction (Al-Seghayer, 2014).

Regarding the congruence or incongruence between participants' reported CoT practices and their actual classroom practices (RQ3), it was evident that despite acknowledging the importance of thinking skills, having positive perceptions of CoT usefulness, and reporting multiple CoT practices, the actual classroom practices reflected only a few of these beliefs and practices. For example, while encouraging students to actively participate in various thinking-provoking and collaborative problem-solving activities, utilizing various questions and language types, and discussions were the most frequent endorsed practices, observation results revealed that most classes were teacher-centered with a prevailing demonstrator teaching style and only feedback and informing languages were the most frequent types. Again, while strategy-based instruction was among the reported CoT practices in the questionnaire results, this type of practice was missed in all the observed classrooms. Finally, while most participants reported using wait time to cultivate deep and meaningful learning, this technique was barely observed in only one class.

This finding is consistent with sociocultural theory's emphasis on the role of social and cultural contexts in shaping individual beliefs and behaviors. The prevalence of teacher-centered and demonstrator teaching styles in most classes suggests that the participants' teaching practices reflect their beliefs about the roles of the teacher and the student in the learning process, which are also shaped by their cultural and social context. In this context, instructors have significant control over the classroom environment and use authoritarian communication styles.

A significant finding is how the participants internalized the cultural and societal elements in their context, shaping their beliefs and guiding their practices. STC concepts of internalization and the role of language in shaping one's cognition and behavior are relevant here. This was evident in the language they used to describe their learning experiences, including keywords such as "dare", "fear of failure", and "comfort zone", which may explain their limited CoT practices. These keywords suggest a reluctance to break away from the status quo and low self-confidence.

Research has shown that Saudi university instructors find integrating thinking skills into EFL classrooms challenging (Alrabai, 2016; Al Zahrani & Elyas, 2017). This indicates that efforts need to be made to foster an educational environment where failure is seen as an opportunity for growth.

This limited practice of CoT can be attributed to the inadequate educational and professional background among Saudi EFL university instructors. The interview results revealed that participants did not have the opportunity to experience CoT in their school and university education due to the prevalence of rote learning, structure-based classroom settings, and cultural values that emphasize absolute obedience and respect for adults. Some researchers (e.g., Atkinson, 1997; Fox, 1994) have suggested that practicing thinking is culturally bounded. In other words, individuals whose cultures advocate a particular type of thinking are more likely to practice that type of thinking. According to Fareh (2010), the traditional teaching philosophy in the Saudi context involves providing lesson plans and materials to instructors to present in class, with the expectation that students will memorize the information without deeply thinking about it. As a result, students are often unaccustomed to pursuing knowledge for themselves (Al-Seghayer, 2014).

Several institutional and classroom factors influenced participants' beliefs and practices regarding CoT integration in Saudi EFL classrooms (RQ 4), and these factors elicited different responses from the instructors. Based on the observation results, participants attempted to incorporate their beliefs about integrating thinking into language classrooms. However, their practices were more closely guided by local contextual factors and the classroom context. For example, while some instructors tried to integrate cognitive engagement activities, they did so in a simplified and controlled way, with students simply responding to prompts and questions in a teacher-centered classroom. This was an attempt to adapt to local contextual challenges, such as students' linear thinking style, large class sizes, heavy workloads, the power dynamic between instructors and students, and the pressure of examinations.

The majority of participants also reported a lack of strategies needed to implement CoT effectively, as well as a need for practical training rather than just theoretical training. This suggests that professional training is less effective at changing instructors' beliefs and practices if it fails to acknowledge their prior beliefs (Borg, 2001).

VI. CONCLUSION

This study explored the dynamic and sophisticated relationship between Saudi university EFL instructors' beliefs and classroom practices of CoT by comparing their reported beliefs and practices with their actual classroom practices. It was found that Saudi Arabian EFL instructors hold a cognitivist view of thinking and consider CoT an appropriate approach in language skills classrooms. However, participants reported CoT practices were not consistent with their classroom practices owing to some cultural and contextual mediating factors.

Some practical implications for incorporating CoT into university EFL classrooms can be derived from these findings: First, the study indicates that Saudi Arabian EFL instructors perceive CoT as an effective approach in language skills classrooms for various reasons. However, they lack the professional skills and experience to implement it in the classroom. Accordingly, there should be professional development programs that focus on developing instructors' knowledge and skills regarding the creation of CoT in EFL classrooms. Through such training, EFL instructors can change their own conception of thinking, as a collaborative activity rather than an individual cognitive ability. They can also develop and use CoT practices to promote interactive and thought-provoking teaching and learning environments. Creating CoT could also be incorporated into the curriculum of EFL preservice teacher education as well as reinforced during their practicum so that it becomes part of their preparation. Second, the study shows that cultural and societal norms shape EFL instructors' beliefs and practices of CoT. Therefore, it is imperative to consider these norms when designing and implementing CoT in Saudi EFL classrooms. Finally, the study identifies some institutional and classroom challenges EFL instructors in Saudi Arabia may encounter when applying CoT. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort among EFL instructors, department administrators, and policymakers to provide the necessary support and resources for effective CoT implementation.

The study has two main limitations: first, it was conducted in a specific context (Saudi Arabia) and with a specific group of participants (EFL university instructors), which limits its generalizability. Second, only seven classrooms were observed, which may limit the generalizability of the findings and the representativeness of the observed practices. Follow-up interviews could have been conducted to provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching and clarify any unclear information found in the classroom observations. This study could be replicated in different cultural and institutional contexts to further investigate the factors that impact EFL instructors' beliefs and practices regarding CoT integration into their classrooms.

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Safaa M. Abdelhalim - Professor of Applied Linguistics/TESOL, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University. Her areas of expertise include TESOL, second language acquisition and assessment, computer-assisted language learning, teaching effectiveness, and teacher education. Her research interests lie in L2 writing, language assessment, the use of corpus linguistics in language learning & teaching, and teacher cognition.

Ashwaq A. Aldaghri– assistant professor of applied linguistics, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University. Her areas of expertise include second language acquisition and assessment, computer-assisted language learning. Her research interests lie in the areas of second language teaching and learning, language assessment, and teacher cognition.

Effects of Using the Jolly Phonics Programme in Teaching English Literacy and Its Influence on Reading Motivation

Adawiya Taleb Shawaqfeh

English Language and Literature Department, Jadara University, Jordan

Abstract—This research investigated whether Jolly Phonics enhances pupils' literacy and communication abilities. Thus, the principal objective was to determine how Jolly Phonics improves students' speaking, English proficiency and literacy ability, phonemic awareness, and reading motivation. This study of English competence and reading ability is limited to Jolly Phonics. A qualitative study design was used, and data were sourced through secondary sources. The findings of the study support previous conclusions that Jolly Phonics is crucial to children's literacy development. This article's lack of a statistical evaluation of the strategy was a drawback, even when the results demonstrated that the tactics worked. Notwithstanding these limitations, children's interactions and accomplishments in learning Jolly Phonics' functionality, as explained previously in this article, showed that they are indeed growing and improving their English language proficiency, as they grew up knowing many alphabet sounds, remember many complicated utterances, combined utterances on their own, learned and started writing independently, etc. The fourth technique wrap-up English is the worldwide language of communication. Therefore, children should learn to read and write in it early on. Due to reading's complexity, teaching kids to read took time. The five Jolly Phonics skills, given in various ways as proposed in this study, have been shown to increase young learners' English ability. Teachers must prepare for each student's needs and ability level to succeed.

Index Terms—English literacy, reading motivation, Jolly Phonics, learning English as foreign language, classroom interaction

I. INTRODUCTION

This investigation aims to comprehensively examine how the Jolly Phonics Program has affected how children are taught to read and write (literacy) and how they learn to do so. It is sufficient to say that literacy and writing abilities affect children's performance in numerous areas of their growth. In every educational setting, one's success and performance are essentially contingent on their capacity to read correctly (Attah, 2017). As a result of the vast experience gained in creating vocabulary, words, phrases, and even the presentation of ideas, a voracious reader will inevitably become a good writer. Every pupil should graduate from elementary school knowledgeable and capable of effectively communicating. Functionally literate people can read with understanding and apply what they learn to solve problems in their daily lives (Ayo, 2000).

The considerable skills that are expected of children as they progress throughout the phonological representations are their ability to pronounce it correctly (generating the alphabet), write it (formation), mix it with different letters to learn new vocabularies (merging), and listening for it in phrases to help to learn to spell (segmenting) (Afangideh et al., 2007). For children to succeed in both educational and interpersonal activities, it is now believed that they must have a strong foundation in English proficiency. One of the most acceptable ways to improve young children's reading and understanding skills is through the use of Jolly Phonics. Children begin learning to read early since literacy is so critical (Dunn, 2022). The earlier they start reading, the more knowledge they have to enable them to thrive in schooling and public interactions (Hu, 2016; Stuart, 1999).

It might be challenging to develop an excellent yet original strategy to create and expand children's English proficiency. Most toddlers enter having minimal or zero literacy preparations and no idea when to spell the sounds of the English alphabet. Early integration in language acquisition, primarily as English is a foreign language, prompts several children to struggle with word recognition (McLaughlin et al., 2022). Jolly Phonics is one of the most important strategies that may be used in this circumstance to enhance children's training and advancement in literacy and communication abilities. In making learning enjoyable and uncomplicated, the Jolly Phonics curriculum develops songs, stories, and actions for each letter sound. This approach to instructing both writing and reading places a strong emphasis on letter-sound relationships (Jolly, 2014).

Meaningful teaching and excellent communication go hand in hand. One must assimilate new ideas and relate new experiences to past knowledge to learn efficiently. Development of interpretation, being taught how to understand, being given what to know and understand, and involvement in a society that produces information are four diverse learning strategies that can all result in successful learning (Piaget, 2022). Everything is reliant on efficient instruction.

Students become reliant when excellent Education occurs in the format of guidance; they get engaged as it assumes the form of orientation; they become involved if it accepts the arrangement of encouragement, and they start to self-direct personal studying as it considers the format of conversation (Bridges, 2017).

The study's primary purpose was to examine how teaching Jolly Phonics affects students' literacy and language skills. Therefore, the main goal is to find out how the Jolly Phonics technique boosts kids' pronunciation and their basic literacy and reading skills in English, as well as their capacity to recognize letters, read, and be motivated to read (Malik & Marwaha, 2021). This investigation of the acquisition of English proficiency and whether it affects reading enthusiasm is restricted to the usage of the Jolly Phonics programme. Regarding restrictions, it is also apparent that not all students attend classes daily throughout the academic year. Some of the pupils had lower or more excellent attendance rates, which impacts the study's findings. Thus, this study makes a general projection on the impacts of using Jolly Phonics to teach English literacy and reading motivation worldwide.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature evaluation offers details on the books, journals, and other sources the investigator utilized to accomplish the study. The Jolly Phonics method, which is particularly efficient in helping students learn English properly, is used to teach English literacy to young students and impacts their reading. The investigator gathered various papers to understand the subject better and adequately address the study's difficulties.

A. Jolly Phonics Programme

Jolly Learning Ltd. developed a brand-new synthetic education program called Jolly Phonics in the U.K. By connecting letters with sounds, learners commonly create English spelling sequences, Jolly Phonics, similar to various phonemic awareness approaches, methodically encourages writing and reading. It lists letter sounds in order of increasing complexity, starting with the most frequent alphabet and sounds, moving on to phonetic symbols (that integrate two letters of the alphabet), and finishing with the last single-letter alphabet sounds. Being part of the phonological awareness system, infants are introduced to the correlations between letters and sounds and how to practise word processing and decoding. Effective learning teachers have covered phonics development and teaching in-depth (Taghizadeh & Zahra, 2020). While some argued that all children need to acquire reading skills using an explicit phonics approach, they supported its role in phonics instruction. Synthetic Phonics is used to implement a fundamental shift in instructional methods. Reading comprehension is enhanced, accuracy and fluency are increased, and oral reading is encouraged via the synthetic phonics approach. It gives kids the chance to use their phonics and word identification skills (Mitchell et al., 2019).

The word "Jolly" often refers to "joy," but the term "phonics" suggests letter groupings used in reading. Play-based reading is known as jolly Phonics. For teaching children to read and write, the Jolly Phonics teaching approach provides a thorough and progressive phonics programme. Synthetic Phonics is used in Jolly Phonics, a child-centred approach to teaching reading (Roehr-Brackin, 2018). This multi-sensory approach, which contains exercises for every one of a language's letter sounds, is very inspiring for kids and teachers since they can see their students develop. The sounds are introduced within a specific arrangement. This system enables kids to begin making phrases as soon as possible. Children learn the five fundamental reading and writing skills using Jolly Phonics (Okon & Archibong, 2015).

Educational specialists have noticed a lot of interest in the synthetic phonics system in recent decades after a remark was made about implementing it. Education through Phonics, whether artificial or analytical, has been a contentious issue throughout history. Administrators may now choose from a broader range of leading synthesized phonics program operators for bilingual kids or English language beginners needing simultaneous improvement (Oyibe & Nnamani, 2016).

For children to succeed throughout social and educational situations, it is now universally acknowledged that they must have a strong foundation in English proficiency. One of the best ways to help young people become better readers and writers is to use Jolly Phonics. The strategy is extensively employed and effective, but it is currently not utilized due to instructor ignorance.

B. English Literacy

According to Nhung (2016), acquiring English proficiency is crucial for everybody and requires practising at a tender age for growth. Since most information and technologies are currently explained using English as a communicative tool, English literacy has emerged as the most crucial component of all teaching. Children can utilize it in their daily lives in addition to using it for educational purposes. The early learners may enroll in a variety of English learning initiatives. According to Oliver and Azkarai (2017), language learning enables individuals to interact with various people and easily convey their opinions. The beginner has to concentrate more on the area of English proficiency to connect with a wide society around the globe since it becomes the foreign language which provides the citizens with a successful advantage in any place. They furthermore incorporated that the optimal moment to study English seems to be when individuals are young because it gives them a superior advantage to advance in the long term (Petrides, 2018; Yusuf, 2019).

Additionally, Ozfidan and Burlbaw (2019) assert that enthusiastic people may effortlessly achieve their goals even if they do not speak English or perhaps another language proficiently. In the literature, this viewpoint is projected in opposition. Some academics contend that acquiring a second language involves more than just a desire; it demands intense and committed effort. Reasoning, learning a foreign language satisfactorily requires commitment, rigorous concentration, and deliberate memorization of the foreign language's grammatical rules. According to James (2003), amongst many other crucial variables, learning a foreign language in a classroom setting, often known as T.F.L. (Teaching Foreign or second language), requires strong motivation, deliberate initiatives, an appropriate instructional context, and skilled instructors. Foreign language acquisition and learning seem to be a collaborative procedure that necessitates the participation of educators and learners for efficient Education. Maleke (2014), on the contrary, suggests that it is improper to state that an FL (Foreign Language Learner) could strive to obtain a native-like competency in a foreign language while it is predominantly taught in a classroom situation.

C. Development Principles in Younger Learners

Language, the most vital interaction channel, is the foundation of contemporary civilization. A language is a tool people use to express their thoughts, feelings, and desires. Even young toddlers use a variety of motions and sign language to communicate their hunger, unhappiness, and concerns. It is also used to exchange preferences from the past and present. There is little question that learning a language may increase the chances for people to improve or deepen personal encounters. The diagram below culled McGuire (2015) directly summarizes the nature of child language development.
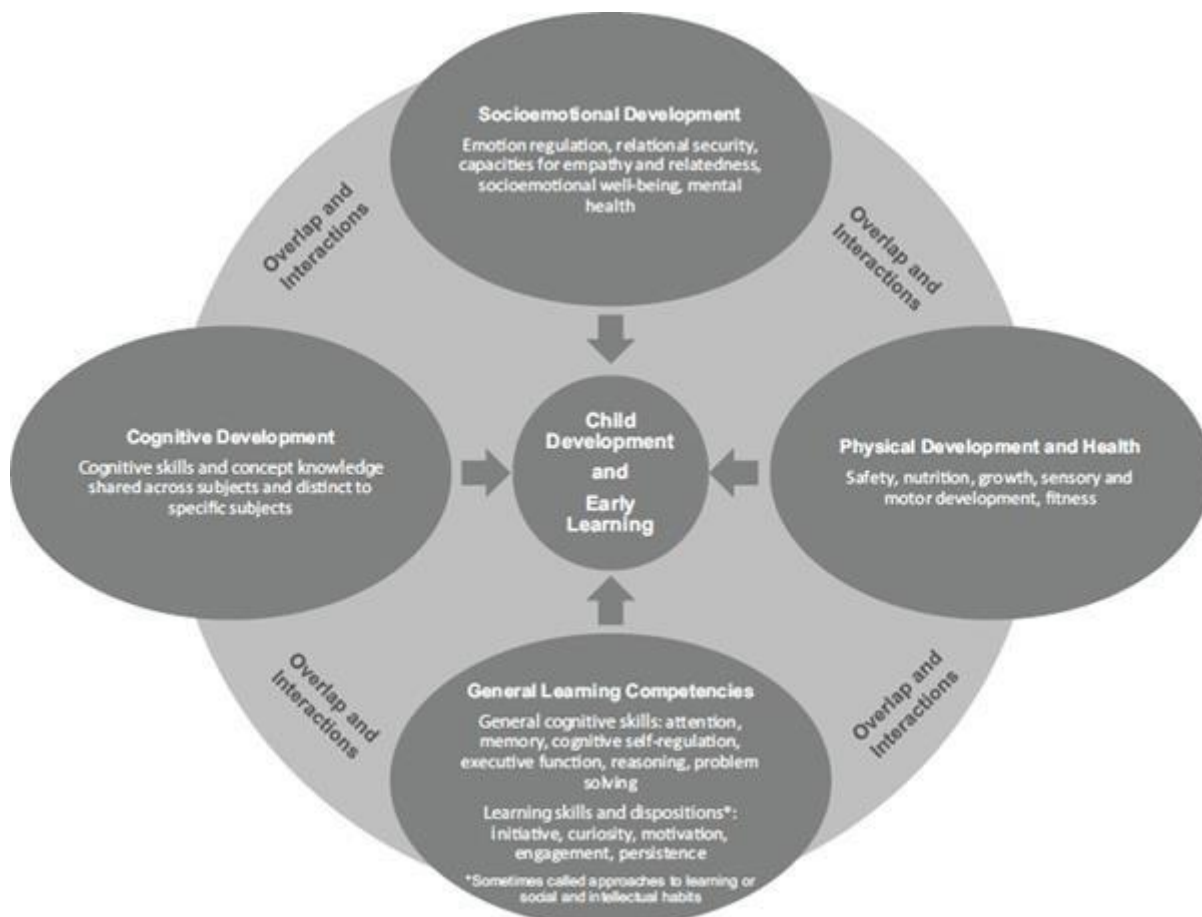
(Culled From McGuire, 2015, p. 28)

The picture above shows that children's growth occurs in a series of stages, mainly the components of physical improvement in terms of fitness and body, Socio-emotional advancement, language comprehension abilities, and intellectual abilities. The system of Education known as cognitive growth aids young learners in acquiring a variety of things, such as intellectual capacities, linguistic proficiency, knowledge acquisition, and perceptive abilities for psychosocial improvement. According to Oroji and Ghane (2014), language psychology is highly beneficial for young learners as they pick up new information as they go along. This is an essential tactic to practice to gain further understanding and achieve more effectiveness in the workplace. McGuire (2015) disagreed with this viewpoint and asserted that the process of learning seems to be quite time-consuming, making it inappropriate for children to learn

multiple skills at once because they must concentrate on their school studies, while the other segment is exceptionally complicated to continue, which is something the survey and the youngsters can do.

III. METHODOLOGY

For this analysis, a qualitative research methodology was adopted. The explanatory research design aims to give a textual review and thematic analysis of how the Jolly Phonics Program facilitates students to learn English as a foreign language. The technique enables gathering a wide range of comments and discussions on the intended principles of studying and teaching English as a communication skill. Secondary sources were used to obtain the data, including famous journal articles on using the Jolly Phonics Program in teaching English as a foreign language. Great concentration is placed on the interpersonal communication processes, their outcomes, and how using Jolly Phonics in the classroom has improved students' ability to learn English as a foreign language. Descriptive interpretation is employed.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Using the guidelines for impactful literacy training stated by Roskos, Christie, and Richgels, Jolly Phonics was accomplished at arrays of schools, as seen in many pieces of literature. During this time, the instructor successfully engaged in a rich verbal exchange with the schoolchildren via tale learning and communicated reading strategies. Classroom instructors use Jolly Phonics to assist students in developing their reading skills in English. In this instance, the instructors imaginatively and appealingly explain Jolly Phonics' abilities depending on the student's goals and circumstances, allowing them to interact with it readily. Additionally, it was developed and presented methodically, going from the basic to the most challenging alphabet groupings and techniques.

Nonetheless, the results of this study did not support Lloyd's (2015) recommendation to administer one stimulus daily. Due to the children's multilingual linguistic heritage, instructors might extend the curriculum; thus, the portion for the presentation of sounds must be optimized by presenting approximately one to three sounds each week. The instructor teaches English literacy using the six different Jolly Phonics abilities through adopting preceding strategies.

A. Teaching the Alphabet Sounds

Children studying English proficiency with Jolly Phonics must have a solid understanding of alphabet sounds as their first communication ability. The 42 English phonemes were broken down into seven categories of sounds, each group consisting of Six alphabets, including "s, a, t, I p, n" and others. Based on the results, the instructors usually add one to three pounds per week, continually reviewing and reinforcing them. The children are taught alphabet letters using various methods, including storybook readings, dance and gesture, and exercises. The instructor might offer the students Jolly Phonics puzzles, as these are software game types. The engaging activities were, however, created so that kids may individually practise those five (5) Jolly Phonics fundamentals. For illustration, students may study while they perform using the alphabet sounds as well as the image it stands for, also including I for "Inky", the mouse, "s" for "snake," etc. Children will indeed be equipped to develop their independence by choosing beforehand things to study and whatever to do, thanks to the system's straightforward instructions, which might lead children throughout the exercises.

B. Studying How to Form Letters

Children need knowledge of both alphabet pronunciation and alphabet structure simultaneously. First, the instructor would sing or use flashcards to demonstrate the alphabet, and then he would write the illustration letter on the boards. Afterwards, the instructor would wave a hand in the air to indicate the correct alphabet arrangement as he instructed the class. For the alphabet /l/, for example, the instructor may require the class to "commence at the base, downwards, and crossover" and then demonstrate the proper configuration while facing the class in a reflection. The instructor may then give the students a "sound sheet" to fill out, which had illustrations depicting the targeted phoneme, lines for tracing and writing the alphabet, and other images for which the students had to identify the first letter. To finish, students were instructed to choose the most successful letter formation and circle it.

C. Merging Concepts for Reading Comprehension

Once the students have mastered the pronunciation of the initial six alphabets, the instructor may introduce the concept of merging. This ability requires consistent practice, during which the student needs to concentrate only on the alphabet, utter the pronunciation, and listen to the words. In this circumstance, the instructor commenced by planning sequences of terms the students would mix together to make the lesson more approachable. The primary medium that the instructor made employed as a mnemonic device. At the beginning of class, the instructor would perform some assessments by reviewing the sounds of the alphabet. Many methods were used, such as gathering the youngsters together within a very close clique and providing one game card so that their memories might be combined. This must have been accomplished to have students take some obligation towards themselves initially, and when they identified any hurdles in merging the words, the instructor would solve it with the class. Such must have been accomplished to

enable students to care for others. As seen in the following examples, the instructor also employed a tiny whiteboard and mono flashcards as a different method.

(Culled From Ariati et al., 2017, p. 5)

The illustration of a whiteboard mix that includes a CVC syllable may be seen in Image 1 earlier in this section. In reality, the word "yab" that was used as an illustration above does not have any significance; however, if the youngsters learned the majority of the alphabet sounds, they should be able to mix the alphabet appropriately. The instructor presented the youngsters with individual letters that needed to be listened to and combined. This method was deemed appealing since it was taught gradually but thoroughly, and it encouraged students to gaze at the alphabet, play out the letter one step at a time, and listen to the phrase until they eventually utter the word themselves. The instructors usually implemented a home literacy program as a follow-up engagement. In this programme, the students were required to practise their merging and literacy development at their homes with respective caregivers, and school teachers kept track of the student's growth throughout the literacy notes. Those programmes connected to strategies for boosting student involvement were postulated by Padmadewi (2003). These mechanisms suggested that supplying a plethora of literature and facilitating early literacy comprehension skills via reciting logs or reading registers may help in motivating and spur one another to be active participants in the learning, which was highly advantageous not just in the current moment, in addition to the child's future.

D. Identification of Sounds in Expressions for Writing Ability

The high schooler also needs to possess word recognition to master how to write. This indicated that students were required to be able to pay heed to uttered sounds, recognize those expressions' sounds, and then write those sounds down. Beginning with replicating, or modelling during which the instructor would gently brush the inscriptions on the whiteboard and urge the students to attempt to draw them according to their moving on to other strategies, the instructor used a wide range of teaching methods. And lastly, the instructors may provide the learners with the opportunity to write on their own, either by telling a tale, producing a news article or just writing freely, as is evident in the examples beneath.

(Culled From Aruiati et al., 2017, p. 9)

The image above shows the creative challenges that students may use for their writing process. They were allowed to write about whatever they wanted, including their friends, toys, favourite foods, etc. Since these things may be challenging to write, the instructor at this school made sure to constantly supply the alphabet and essential words for writing, such as a, and, an, and brother, just in case the students missed where to write them. The instructors may give the students time to draw as they pondered the assignments that required them to write. After the instructors had completed sketching, they began writing by listening to the sounds made by phrases. According to the data shown in the preceding illustration, one might say that the infant in question has been in the process of becoming ready to write on their own. The instructor conveyed the point of view via writing to make it accessible and comprehensible to others. The instructor should be aware of why they liked her partner, and the instructor should explain it in detail. The instructor wanted to concentrate on listening to the sounds of phrases more attentively and recall some of the more difficult words, such as "friends," "into," and "mine," among others. The students might get used to handwriting or be prepared to compose on their own if they regularly participated in this exercise.

V. CONCLUSIONS

It's common knowledge that mastering the four basic language skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening is crucial. First, native learners try to perfect their language of origin by using the many helpful learning choices available. There has been much study into the best practices for improving foreign language acquisition, mainly English as an l2 motivation. Many researchers have studied the many methods that teachers and students employ to facilitate second language learning. Using a wide range of theoretical frameworks and experimental methods, researchers have investigated the efficacy of interaction as a foreign language acquisition technique for teaching and understanding English in the classroom.

Despite being a foundational principle in Education, the education level in English is now on the decline. No child can successfully read the text because they cannot yet combine sounds to make words. Given the English language's role in acquiring new knowledge, this circumstance will eventually lead to students' underachievement in other areas of study. Teachers' stress levels might grow when students don't perform to expectations. Since this is the case, it is essential to investigate how Jolly Phonics affects students' performance in English classes.

In addition, educators needed preparation, proficiency, and ability to deliver literacy in English to aid students throughout the foundation phase in developing their reading comprehension skills. When a language other than the student's native tongue is used as the teaching medium, such as English, the student often has difficulties developing early reading abilities. Further, English is not presented as linguistic but instead as a subject. Instructors need to be well-versed in reading instruction to instruct big classes of students effectively. The target audience for this project is the students at the designated school who will be using Jolly to learn to read with the aid of the synthetic phonics approach. The results of this research will benefit teachers of English as a foreign language and other educators who interact in English. The outcomes of experimental studies on how the Jolly Phonics approach may facilitate English language learning will be shared with them. This will affect the students' sociability inside and beyond the classroom. Language curriculum designers may also benefit from the information and resources provided. The research will better understand why improving English literacy is so important.

This report outlined the methods employed by the instructors to instruct Jolly Phonics-based English language learners. Although the kid's results showed that the strategies were effective, it is essential to note that this article's lack of a statistical treatment of the approach was a weakness. Despite these restrictions, children's responses and performances in studying Jolly Phonics' capabilities, as discussed earlier in this article, indicated that individuals are indeed growing and improving their English language proficiency; in which they grew up knowing many alphabet sounds, remembered many complicated utterances, combined utterances on their own, learn and started writing individually, etc. The five Jolly Phonics abilities, presented in various methods as suggested in this research, are effective strategies to foster the growth and improvement of young learners' proficiency in English. Teacher preparation that considers each student's requirements and skill level is essential for success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Adawiya T. Ahmed. Shawaqfeh is an associate professor at Jadara University, Jordan. She holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction of English Language Teaching, Yarmouk University, 2011-2012 and a Master degree in English – Applied linguistics, JUST University-Jordan, 2009. She worked in different positions including the Vice-Dean of Arts and Languages Faculty 2020\2021- 2021\2022, the head of the languages center 2021 – until now, the head of English language &Literature\ Translation Department (Summer Semester 2020-2021), and the head of History Department 2021 – 2022.

She also participated in several committees such as the head of the department's testing committee, academic Advisor for Graduate Students, member in Graduate's Courses Description Committee, member in the Scientific Research Committee, and member in deletion and addition of courses Committee. Member of the editorial board of the Anbar Journal of Humanities.

Digital Short Story Literacy and the Character of Environmentally Concerned Students

Juanda Juanda*
Department of Indonesian Language and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar Makassar, Indonesia

Iswan Afandi
Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Universitas Timor, Indonesia

Andi Fatimah Yunus
Department of Indonesian Language and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia

Abstract—The research aims to explore the influence of digital short story literacy on environmental care character through moderation of reading interest. It is a quantitative study that measures the influence of digital short story literacy on environmental care character. The study involved 270 participants as a sample using a purposive sampling technique. The data collection technique for this research was a Google Forms questionnaire. Data analysis used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 27. The results show that digital short story literacy has a significant influence on environmental care character. The effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character is significant in statistics. However, reading interest does not present a moderately successful influence of digital short story literacy on the environmental care character. This research contributes to designing curriculum education with special attention paid to the inclusive aspects of digital literacy and environmental short stories to create a conscious and responsible generation's answer to environmental preservation. More studies need to be conducted about this subject including the additional amount of higher education needed in the regions where natural disasters happen more frequently, as well as more engagement originating from participants who are studying social sciences. In the industrial sector, it is recommended to collaborate with students to make documentaries from digital short stories to promote environmental preservation.

Index Terms—digital literature, environmental care character, reading interest, short story literacy

I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental education and awareness is becoming an increasingly important topic today, and literary work has become one medium for forming the character of caring for the environment through digital short story literacy skills with an environmental theme for students in a tertiary environment. Moreover, the use of digital media is an essential part of the everyday life of children, adolescents, and young adults, especially those who are students in tertiary institutions. As a result, digital short stories, messages, and environmental values can be conveyed through exciting and interactive narratives. It is vital, therefore, to take advantage of the potential of digital media as a tool to shape the character of caring for the environment (Aguilera, 2023).

It has only been in the past couple of years that researchers such as Arafah et al. (2021), Dobroć et al. (2023), Duggan and Peeren (2020), and Zhang et al. (2023) have started to study the effects of digital short story literacy on environmental care. For example, Dobroć et al. (2023) illustrate how intermediary organizations use narratives to develop inclusiveness strategies in Sweden's urban innovation programs. Furthermore, research reveals that human and non-human entities combine to influence the implementation of various approaches to critical literacy and understanding of meaning in students in a global context (Zhang et al., 2023). Through a close reading of the 2018 special issue of the famous British magazine *Country Life* (edited by Prince Charles), research reveals the continued urgency to critique narratives, especially when they appear in popular outlets such as *Country Life* that directly show how rural politics can be (Duggan & Peeren, 2020).

Further research explores the relationship between humans and nature such as that found in Colin Thiele's novel *February Dragon* and outlines environmental lessons found within the book (Arafah et al., 2021). As the characters in the novel protect animals and the environment from the dangers of forest fires, this depiction of the human relationship with nature reveals several environmental values readers can learn such as respect, responsibility, and empathy for living things.

Based on several previous studies, short story literacy can influence the development of environmental care characters. However, this research has yet to focus explicitly on digital short stories and their effects on students at

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* Corresponding Author. Email: juanda@unm.ac.id

various universities throughout Indonesia. The novelty of this study is the research method used by taking the population and samples on a larger scale using ecocritical short story literacy. Thus, the study sets out to answer the following questions:

1.   Is there an effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care characters?
2.   Does reading interest moderate the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character?

Additionally, the research hypotheses are:

H_{0a}: There is no effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.

H_1: There is an effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.

H_{0b}: Reading interest does not moderate the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.

H_2: Reading interest moderates the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.

This study aims to fill in this knowledge gap by looking at the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character through the moderation of reading interest among university students in Indonesia. This study aims to examine the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character which is moderated by the reading interest variable.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Digital Short Story Literacy

Digital short story literacy is a person's ability to understand, analyze, and use digital short stories properly and effectively; moreover, it contains various dimensions, including content, procedural, and contextual (Aguilera, 2023). Digital text short stories can be found on websites, applications, or social media platforms (Indah et al., 2022, p. 215). Students who have digital short story literacy can navigate and utilize various online short story sources as well as understand story elements (Indah & Rohmah, 2022; Kebede, 2023; List & Lin, 2023; Ridell & Walldén, 2023). With good digital short story literacy, students hone their creative writing skills and improve the quality of their work in the digital world through an awareness of the structure and features of the genre, which involve cognitive processes (Darvin, 2023; Dobroć et al., 2023; Z. Zhang, 2023). They use various digital features, such as hyperlinks, images, videos, and sound, to enrich their stories (Sibagariang & S. Pandia, 2021; Ulu-Aslan & Baş, 2023).

B. Environmental Care Character

The character of caring for the environment in students is very important in ensuring environmental sustainability in the future. It is related to non-human natural components, natural legitimacy, responsibility to nature, and natural dynamics (Buell, 2005). The character of caring for the environment encourages students to be involved in social activities and environmental campaigns (Dai et al., 2023; Salceda et al., 2022). Depictions of human relationships with nature reveal some of the values of environmental education that are learned by readers (Arafah et al., 2021). One educational system that can play an active role in identifying and addressing environmental problems is Education 4.0 - a new experience-based educational system which aims to transform education through automation and cutting-edge technology (Robert Selvam et al., 2023; Mukul & Büyüközkan, 2023).

C. Reading Interest

Reading is a skill that includes decoding graphic symbols and understanding written messages (Aurpa et al., 2023; Franchi et al., 2023; Mastrothanasis et al., 2023). Interest in reading includes several dimensions: individual interest, situational interest, selecting texts with interest-enhancing elements, and interest self-regulation strategies (Springer et al., 2017). Reading is related to attention and correlated with behavior (Hingstman et al., 2023, p. 1; Lee et al., 2023, p. 1). The family environment plays an essential role in shaping reading interest which influences the function of reading production and forms what is known in literature as a home literacy environment and encouraging the provision of reading materials (Kucirkova et al., 2023, p. 1; Ndijuye & Benguye, 2023). If students feel the benefits of reading such as increasing understanding and critical thinking skills, they tend to have a high interest in reading. Conversely, if they experience negative experiences, their interest in reading decreases (Snell et al., 2023, p. 2). Knowledge of the reading process is interesting because of its systematicity which imposes more weight on cognitive components than others (Snell et al., 2023; J. Zhang et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023). Reading fluency is a complex and multifaceted construct that depends on word recognition accuracy, automaticity, and prosody (Karageorgos et al., 2023; Suggate et al., 2023, p. 2; Visapää et al., 2023).

An environment with a complete library, internet access, or other reading facilities can provide students with opportunities to choose reading materials according to their interests (Borgonovi et al., 2023; Diprossimo et al., 2023; Lui et al., 2023; Steel, 2023). Based on cognitive load theory, presentation differences between screen and paper affect cognitive load during reading comprehension tests (Anggia & Habók, 2023; Brüggemann et al., 2023; Chyl et al., 2023; Firudin et al., 2023; Schurer et al., 2023; Tanaka et al., 2023). Reading goals such as achieving academic achievement affect students' reading interest related to language development through biological, psychological, and sociocultural interactions (Mizowaki et al., 2023, p. 2; Nepomuceno et al., 2023, p. 2). This type of pedagogy improves reading skills,

but the overuse of digital media reduces interest in reading due to distraction or reliance on social media or other digital entertainment.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

Quantitative research was used in this study to measure the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character. Additionally, the researcher used the reading interest variable as a moderator variable to measure how much influence it has to strengthen the influence of digital short story literacy on environmental care character. This research was conducted by providing a digital short story titled "Tragedi Asap" (The Tragedy of Smoke) (https://ruangsastra.com/18674/tragedi-asap/).

B. Population and Sample

The study population (N = 2998) consisted of all undergraduate students of Indonesian Language and Literature Education from six universities in Indonesia, namely Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Universitas Timor, Univesitas Negeri Makassar, Universitas Puangrimaggalatung, Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo, and Universitas Tadulako. From this population, n=270 was taken as a sample using a purposive sampling technique, as presented in the table below.

TABLE 1
STATISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Demographics		frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	42	15.6
	Female	228	84.4
Universities	Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar	60	22.2
	Universitas Timor	60	22.2
	Universitas Negeri Makassar	60	22.2
	Universitas Puangrimaggalatung	30	11.1
	Universitas Cokroaminoto Palopo	30	11.1
	Universitas Tadulako	30	11.1

This study has a sample of 42 male students and 228 female students. In addition, Makassar State University, Timor University, and Makassar State University took a sample of 60 students. At the same time, Puangrimaggalatung University, Cokroaminoto Palopo University, and Tadulako University took a sample of 30 students.

C. Data Collecting and Instruments

The data collection technique for this research was a questionnaire created using the Google Form from the https://docs.google.com/forms page. The research instrument was a questionnaire comprising 23 items. The questionnaire is used to measure the effect of digital short story literature on environmental care characters, with reading interest as a moderating variable. This study uses a Likert scale. Before the participants filled out the questionnaire, the researcher gave them a digital short story entitled "The Tragedy of Smoke" by Gigih Suroso, which was downloaded from the Ruang Sastra page https://ruangsastra.com/18674/tragedi-asap/.

D. Validity and Reliability of Instrument

Testing the validity of the instrument was carried out using the correlation probability value Sig (2-tailed) and the Pearson Correlation coefficient with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software program. The validity test was performed to measure the validity of the questionnaire as a research measurement tool. The validity test is shown in the following table.

TABLE 2
INSTRUMENT VALIDITY TESTING

Item No.	Sig	Pearson Correlation	Item No.	Sig	Pearson Correlation	Item No.	Sig	Pearson Correlation
1	0.000	0.712**	9	0.000	0.594**	17	0.000	0.747**
2	0.000	0.744**	10	0.000	0.679**	18	0.000	0.727**
3	0.000	0.761**	11	0.000	0.719**	19	0.000	0.680**
4	0.000	0.732**	12	0.000	0.751**	20	0.000	0.689**
5	0.000	0.717**	13	0.000	0.602**	21	0.000	0.724**
6	0.000	0.760**	14	0.000	0.744**	22	0.000	0.624**
7	0.000	0.674**	15	0.000	0.735**	23	0.000	0.743**
8	0.000	0.667**	16	0.000	0.761**			

** statistically significant at the level (0.01)

The table above shows that all item correlation coefficient values are satisfactory and statistically significant at the 0.01 level with values ranging from 0.594 to 0.761, which is more significant than 0.1565. Thus, this instrument is valid. In addition, the value of Sig (2-tailed) is at 0.000 (p <0.05), so this questionnaire is valid as a research measurement tool.

TABLE 3
RESEARCH INSTRUMENT RELIABILITY TEST

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
Digital Short Story Literacy	0.831	reliable
Environmental Care Character	0.856	reliable
Reading Interest	0.860	reliable

The table above shows that the Cronbach's Alpha value for the Digital Short Story Literacy variable is 0.831 and Environmental Care Character is 0.856 while Reading interest is 0.860. These three variables show a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.70 to declare the questionnaire reliable.

E. Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software program version 27. A Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to evaluate the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character through moderation of reading interest with a significance level of 5% (0.05). Before carrying out the regression analysis, the data that was collected had to pass prerequisite tests, namely the normality test, heteroscedasticity test, and multicollinearity test. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test method tested the normality of data distribution, and the data is usually distributed with an Asymp value Sig 0.200 (p>0.05). Heteroscedasticity symptoms were detected with the Spearman Rho test with a significant value of 0.527 on the digital short store literacy variable and 0.179 on the reading interest variable so that the data did not show symptoms of heteroscedasticity (p>0.05). Symptoms of multicollinearity were detected by looking at the tolerance and VIF values. The results of the multicollinearity test show that the digital short story literacy and reading interest variables have a tolerance value of 0.800 (tolerance>0.10). In contrast, the VIF value shows 1.250 (VIF<10), so multicollinearity does not occur.

IV. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive data on digital short story literacy, environmental care character, and reading interest variables were analyzed using SPSS version 27 to see each item's response frequency, sum, mean, standard deviation, and cumulative percentage. This is presented in the following table.

TABLE 4
STUDENT RESPONSE TOWARDS DIGITAL SHORT STORY LITERACY

Digital Short Story Literacy Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Sum	Means	SD	Cumulative Percentage (%)
I understand that the protagonist Siti Hajar cares about the forest in the digital short story "Tragedi Asap".	6 (2.2)	5 (1.9)	53 (19.6)	124 (45.9)	82 (30.4)	1081	4.00	0.881	76.3
I understand the meaning and ecological context of the digital short story "Tragedi Asap", namely, maintaining forests that have been converted into oil palm plantations.	6 (2.2)	12 (4.4)	55 (20.4)	133 (49.3)	64 (23.7)	1047	3.88	0898	73
I understand the language and terms used in the digital short story "Tragedi Asap".	3 (1.1)	7 (2.6)	80 (29.6)	121 (44.8)	59 (21.9)	1036	3.84	0.833	66.7
I had no problems reading a digital short story entitled "Tragedi Asap".	7 (2.6)	15 (5.6)	59 (21.9)	119 (44.1)	70 (25.9)	1040	3.85	0.956	70
The social and environmental impact of the forest as experienced by the protagonist Siti Hajar in the digital short story "Tragedi Asap".	3 (1.1)	9 (3.3)	66 (24.4)	134 (49.6)	58 (21.5)	1045	3.87	0.824	71.1
I understand the author's ideology against acts of environmental destruction by elements.	4 (1.5)	8 (3.0)	59 (21.9)	125 (46.3)	74 (27.4)	1067	3.95	0.863	73.7

The table above shows responses to items related to digital short story literacy. As much as 76.3% of students agree they understand the character of the protagonist Siti Hajar who cares about the forest in the digital short story "Tragedi Asap" (mean score = 4.00). Furthermore, 73% admit they understand the meaning and ecological context of the digital short story "Tragedi Asap" (mean score = 3.88). As many as 66.7% confirmed that they understood the language and terms used in the digital short story as well (mean score = 3.84). Moreover, 70% did not experience any problems when reading the digital short story "Tragedi Asap" (mean score = 3.85). Additionally, 71.1% of the students feel the social and environmental impacts of the forest as experienced by the protagonist Siti Hajar in the digital short story "Tragedi Asap" (mean score = 3.87). Finally, 73.7% of students can understand the author's ideology against acts of environmental destruction by unscrupulous persons (mean score = 3.95).

TABLE 5
RESPONSE STUDENT TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL CARE CHARACTER

Environmental Care Character Items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	often	Always	Sum	Means	SD	Cumulative Percentage (%)
As the protagonist Siti Hajar did for forest animals, I care for animals and plants in the surrounding environment.	6 (2.2)	18 (6.7)	82 (30.4)	108 (40.0)	56 (20.7)	1000	3.70	0.945	60.7
I protect the ecosystem and physical environment by not littering like the protagonist Siti Hajar did.	3 (1.1)	12 (4.4)	56 (20.7)	99 (36.7)	100 (37.0)	1091	4.04	0.926	73.7
I apply the value of religiosity or local wisdom that nature has a Creator or Guardian, as did the protagonist Siti Hajar, who considers the forbidden forest sacred.	9 (3.3)	14 (5.2)	62 (23.0)	117 (43.3)	68 (25.2)	1031	3.82	0.980	68.5
I carry out the principles of education and environmental ethics by preserving and keeping the environment clean as the protagonist Siti Hajar who keeps the forest green.	1 (0.4)	2 (0.7)	65 (24.1)	108 (40.0)	94 (34.8)	1102	4.08	0.805	74.8
I care about and actively participate in social service activities when fires, floods, and other natural disasters occur through donations much like the characters Siti and Ani who help each other during a forest fire.	7 (2.6)	14 (5.2)	100 (37.0)	90 (33.3)	59 (21.9)	990	3.67	0.960	55.2
I participate in social activities by cooperating with the characters Siti and Ani, who join with volunteers to extinguish forest fires.	9 (3.3)	20 (7.4)	86 (31.9)	94 (34.8)	61 (22.6)	988	3.66	1014	57.4
I pay attention to the life of animals in the wild (e.g., forest) by not engaging in poaching like the protagonist Siti Hajar did to forest animals.	17 (6.3)	19 (7.0)	51 (18.9)	100 (37.0)	83 (30.7)	1023	3.79	1.142	67.7
I try to prevent environmental degradation such as forest fires or other activities like the protagonist Siti Hajar who prevents people from logging forests.	12 (4.4)	32 (11.9)	75 (27.8)	95 (35.2)	56 (20.7)	961	3.56	1,081	55.9
I follow local environmental regulations or policies to deal with environmental degradation like the protagonist Siti Hajar who can survive forest fire disasters.	13 (4.8)	24 (8.9)	85 (31.5)	94 (34.8)	54 (20.0)	962	3.56	1,057	54.8

The table above shows responses to items related to environmental care character. It begins with 60.7% of the students stating that they often look after and care for animals and plants in the surrounding environment as the

protagonist Siti Hajar did for forest animals (mean score = 3.70). Furthermore, 73.7% of them often protect the ecosystem and physical environment by not littering like the protagonist Siti Hajar (mean score = 4.04). As many as 68.5% often apply religious values or local wisdom that nature has a Creator or Guardian (mean score = 3.82). Moreover, 74.8% of the students often carry out environmental education and ethics principles by maintaining environmental sustainability and cleanliness (average score = 4.08), and as many as 55.2% of them often participate in social service activities when disasters occur, such as fires, floods, and others, partly through donations such as the figures Siti and Ani who help each other when a forest fire occurs (mean score = 3.67). Up to 57.4% of the students often participate in social activities by cooperating with others much like the figures Siti and Ani who volunteer to extinguish forest fires (mean score = 3.66). As many as 67.7% often pay attention to animal life in the wild (for example, forests) by not poaching like the protagonist Siti Hajar did to forest animals (mean score = 3.79). Up to 55.9% often try to prevent environmental degradation such as forest fires or other activities similar to the protagonist Siti Hajar who prevents individuals from logging forests (mean score = 3.56). Finally, 54.8% of students often follow local environmental regulations or policies to deal with environmental degradation (mean score = 3.56).

TABLE 6
RESPONSE STUDENT TOWARDS READING INTEREST

Reading Interest Items	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	often	Always	sum	Means	SD	Cumulative percentage (%)
I took the time to read because I have an interest or hobby related to literacy, such as short stories by Gigih Suroso.	4 (1.5)	19 (7.0)	83 (30.7)	105 (38.9)	59 (21.9)	1006	3.73	0.932	60.8
I choose reading materials such as short stories by Gigih Suroso that suit my interests.	10 (3.7)	36 (13.3)	83 (30.7)	101 (37.4)	40 (14.8)	935	3.46	1.019	52.2
I create a comfortable atmosphere or climate so that there are no distractions while reading, especially the short stories by Gigih Suroso.	9 (3.3)	19 (7.0)	59 (21.9)	116 (43.0)	67 (24.8)	1023	3.79	1,004	67.8
I finished reading the short story by Gigih Suroso to completion.	12 (4.4)	16 (5.9)	47 (17.4)	94 (34.8)	101 (37.4)	1066	3.95	1,089	72.2
I choose short stories that are neatly structured or not wordy and have interesting details to understand the storyline well, such as short stories by Gigih Suroso.	3 (1.1)	14 (5.2)	53 (19.6)	121 (44.8)	79 (29.3)	1069	3.96	0893	74.1
I chose short stories relevant to my needs and life experiences, such as stories with environmental themes related to disaster mitigation.	11 (4.1)	11 (4.1)	76 (28.1)	109 (40.4)	63 (23.3)	1012	3.75	0.992	63.7
I regularly read literary works, one of which is short stories.	2 (0.7)	18 (6.7)	98 (36.3)	98 (36.3)	54 (20.0)	994	3.68	0893	56.3
I explore new topics through other authors' environmental-themed short stories.	9 (3.3)	25 (9.3)	96 (35.6)	85 (31.5)	55 (20.4)	962	3.56	1021	51.9

Table 6 shows the responses to reading interest items. It begins with 60.8% of students stating that they often spend time reading because they have interests or hobbies related to literacy (mean score = 3.73). Furthermore, 52.2% of them chose reading materials, such as short stories by Gigih Suroso, that matched their interests (mean score = 3.46). As many as 67.8% of the students often create a comfortable atmosphere or climate so that there are no distractions while reading concise stories by Gigih Suroso (mean score = 3.79). Up to 72.2% of the students finished reading Gigih Suroso's short stories to completion (average score = 3.95). Moreover, 74.1% of them prefer short stories that are neatly structured or not long-winded and have interesting details to understand the storyline well (mean score = 3.96). As many as 63.7% of the students often choose short stories relevant to their needs and life experiences, such as stories on environmental themes related to disaster mitigation (mean score = 3.75), and as many as 56.3% regularly read literary works, one of which is short stories (mean score = 3.68). Up to 51.9% of the students often explore new topics through

other authors' short stories with environmental themes (mean score = 3.56). Finally, the accumulated responses related to these three variables are presented below in Figure 1.
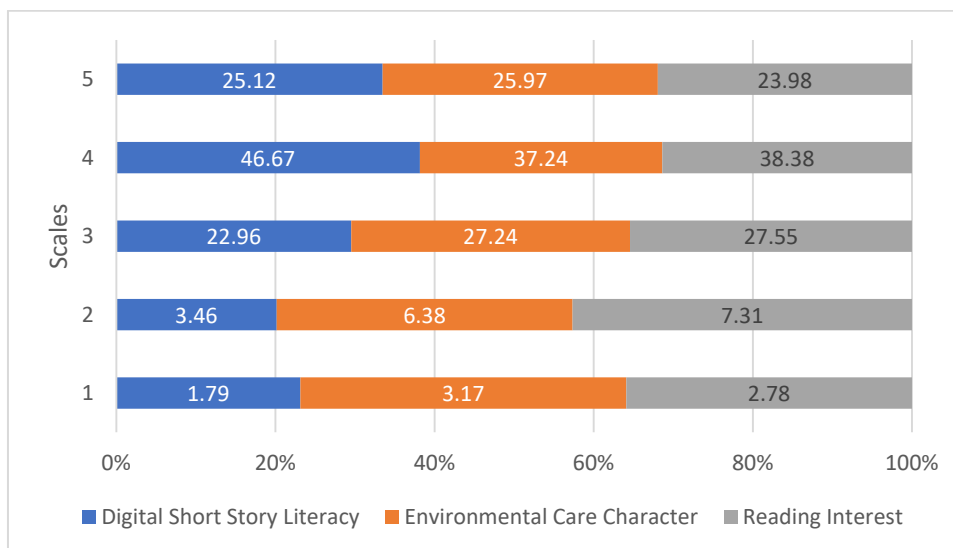

Figure 1. Frequency of Responses Based on Variables

Based on Figure 1, it can be seen that there are variations in the percentage of frequency of responses for each scale from 1 to 5 for each variable. In the digital short story literacy variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Strongly Disagree* is 1.79%, while *Disagree* is 3.46%, *Neutral* is 22.96%, *Agree* is 46.67%, and *Strongly Agree* is 25.12%. In the environmental care character variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Never* is 3.17%, while *Rarely* is 6.38%, *Sometimes* is 27.24%, *Often* is 37.24%, and *Always* is 25.97 %. In the reading interest variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Never* is 2.78%, *Rarely*, 7.31%, *Sometimes* is 27.55%, *Often* is 38.38% and for *Always* it is 23.98%. However, to understand the relationship between these variables, it is necessary to carry out further statistical analysis such as linear regression. This graph alone cannot draw definite conclusions about the interactions between these variables.

B. The Effect of Digital Short Story Literacy on Environmental Care Characters

In this study, researchers used simple linear regression to examine the effect of one predictor variable (independent) – digital short story literacy – on environmental care character (the dependent variable). Simple linear regression analysis produces regression equations for predictions. A simple linear regression model statistical test was carried out regarding the slope (α) of the regression line to assess the suitability of the data. The hypothesis is as follows:

H_{0a}: r = 0 (There is no influence of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.)

H_1: r $\neq$ 0 (There is an effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.)

TABLE 7
HYPOTHESIS TESTING OF THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL SHORT STORY LITERACY ON ENVIRONMENTAL CARE CHARACTERS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	std. Error	Betas		
(Constant)	16.217	2001		8.104	0.000
Digital Short Story Literacy	0.755	0.084	0.480	8,947	0.000

The table above is the result of a regression in the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character. In the table, two types of coefficients are given: unstandardized coefficients (B) and standardized coefficients (β). Unstandardized coefficients (B) describe the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. In contrast, standardized coefficients (β) describe the relative effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable after controlling for variability between the independent variables. In this model, the constant has a value of 16.217, which indicates that if all independent variables are set to zero, then the environmental care character value will have a constant value of 16.217. Digital short story literacy has an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.755, indicating that every one-unit increase in digital short story literacy will correlate with an increase of 0.755 in environmental care character. The t-statistic value for digital short story literacy is 8.947, and the corresponding p-value is 0.000 (p<0.05). This shows that the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character is statistically significant. In terms of standardized coefficients (Beta), digital short story literacy has a value of 0.480. This value indicates that every one-unit increase in digital short story literacy will be correlated with an increase of 0.480 standard deviations in environmental care character after controlling for variability between the independent variables. Overall, this table

presents the regression results, showing that digital short story literacy significantly positively affects environmental care character. The following figure visualizes this influence:
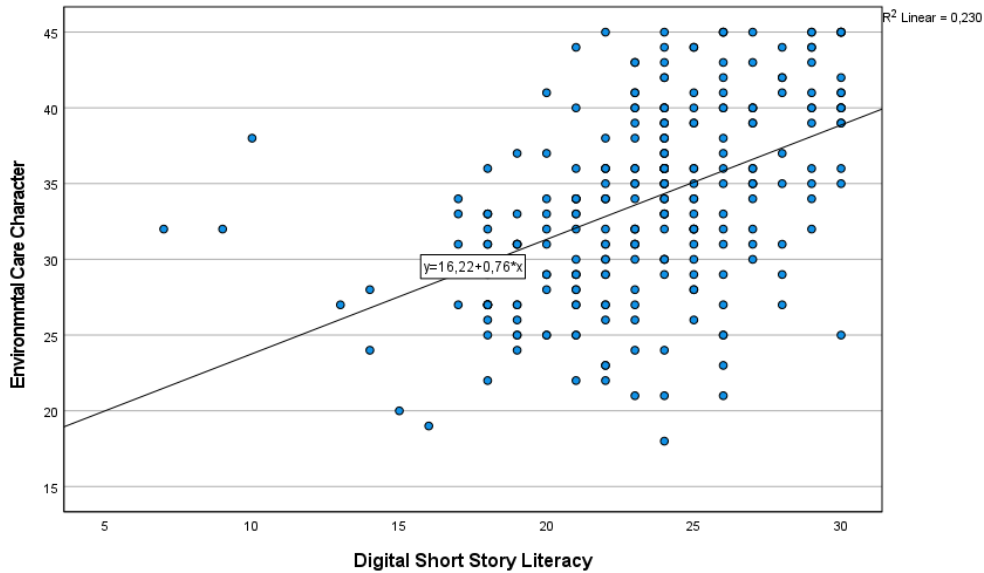

Figure 2. Graph of the Effect of Digital Short Story Literacy on Environmental Care Characters

C. The Effect of Digital Short Story Literacy on Environmental Care Character Through Reading Interest Moderation

A Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to test the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character through moderation of reading interest. The predictions used for this analysis produce a regression equation. The statistical test performed on the slope (α) of the regression line evaluates how well a data set fits the regression model. The hypothesis is as follows:

H_{0b}: r = 0 (Reading interest does not moderate the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.)

H_2: r ≠ 0 (Reading interest moderates the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.)

TABLE 8
HYPOTHESIS TESTING OF THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL SHORT STORY LITERACY ON ENVIRONMENTAL CARE CHARACTERS THROUGH READING INTEREST MODERATION

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	std. Error	Betas		
(Constant)	13,927	7,634		1824	0.069
Digital Short Story Literacy	0.138	0.336	0.088	0.413	0.680
Reading Interest	0.357	0.253	0.327	1,410	0.160
Digital Short Story Literacy* Reading Interest	0.009	0.011	0.296	0.798	0.426

The table above shows the regression results, which analyze the effect of digital short story literacy on the character of environmental care by considering the moderating effect of reading interest. The regression results provide information about the relationship between these variables and measure the strength and significance of the effect. The regression results show several relevant coefficients. First, unstandardized coefficients indicate changes in the expected environmental treatment characteristics due to changes in predictor variables. In this case, the constant has an unstandardized coefficient of 13,927 which indicates the value of the environmental care character in baseline conditions or when there is no predictor variable.

The digital short story literacy variable has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.138. This shows that every one-unit increase in digital short story literacy is followed by an increase of 0.138 units in environmental care character. However, this coefficient is not statistically significant (Sig = 0.413), which means that the effect of individual digital short story literacy on the character of environmental care cannot be considered significant. Furthermore, the reading interest variable has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.357 indicating that every one-unit increase in reading interest is followed by an increase of 0.357 units in environmental care character. However, this coefficient is also not statistically significant (Sig = 0.160).

Furthermore, the interaction between digital short story literacy and reading interest is shown by an unstandardized coefficient of 0.009. This shows that for every one-unit increase in the interaction between digital short story literacy

and reading interest, it is followed by a 0.009-unit increase in environmental care characteristics. However, like the previous variables, this coefficient is also not statistically significant (Sig = 0.426). Based on these results, digital short story literacy, reading interest, and interactions between the two do not significantly affect environmental care characters individually or in combination. This means that other factors may play a role in shaping the environmental care character, which is not captured in this regression model.
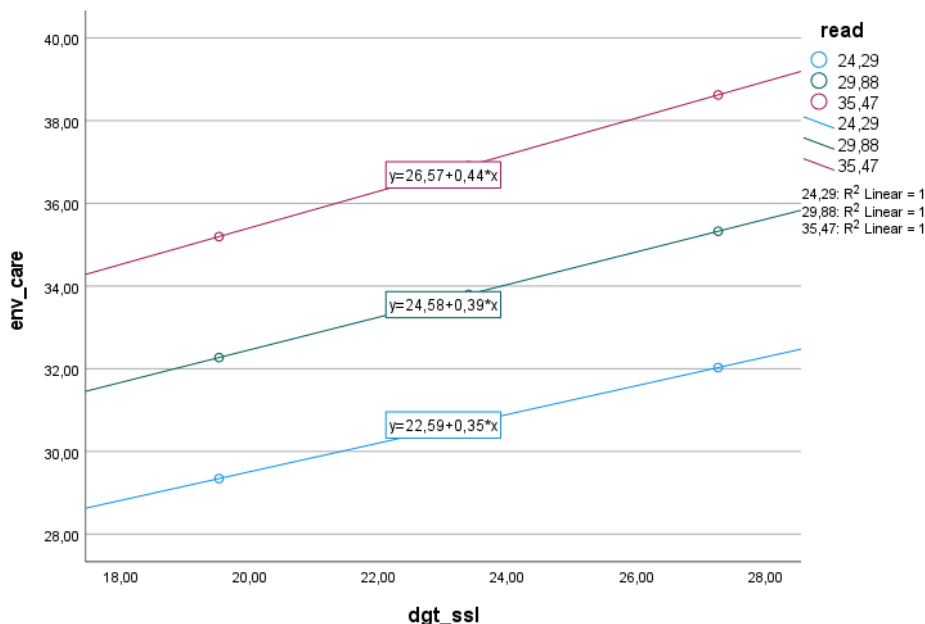

Figure 3. Moderated Regression Analysis Graph

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the statistical description, students are more dominant in Response 4 (*Agree*) on each variable. This proves that, as a whole, students understand the meaning and context of the digital short story. What is more, they apply environmental care behavior in various forms, namely through social participation and donations, protecting animals and ecosystems, and applying local wisdom or religious values. In the digital short story literacy variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Strongly Disagree* is 1.79%, *Disagree* is 3.46%, *Neutral* is 22.96%, *Agree* is 46.67%, and *Strongly Agree is* 25.12%. In the environmental care character variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Never* is 3.17%. For *Rarely* it is 6.38%, *Sometimes* is 27.24%, *Often* is 37.24%; and finally, *Always* is 25.97%. In the reading interest variable, the percentage of response frequency for *Never* is 2.78%, *Rarely* is 7.31%, *Sometimes* is 27.55%, *Often* is 38.38%, and *Always* is 23.98%. Technological and media literacy are online sources of information for analysis and criticism (Qi, 2023). In this digital era, short stories are often found in digital text whether on websites, applications, or social media platforms (Indah et al., 2022). Students who have good digital short story literacy can easily navigate and utilize various online short story sources and also understand the story elements contained therein (Indah & Rohmah, 2022; Kebede, 2023; List & Lin, 2023; Ridell & Walldén, 2023).

The regression results show that digital short story literacy significantly influences environmental care character. The t-statistic value for digital short story literacy is 8.947, and the corresponding p-value is 0.000 (p<0.05). This shows that the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character is statistically significant. This environmental character also encourages students to be involved in social activities and environmental campaigns, such as planting trees, cleaning beaches, or donating time and energy to projects that focus on nature conservation (Dai et al., 2023; Salceda et al., 2022). The depiction of human relations with nature reveals some environmental educational values that can be learned by both child and adult readers (Arafah et al., 2021; Kusá et al., 2014). In particular, there have been no experimental studies of the impact of fiction on attitudes toward animals over time and no experimental studies of the impact of fiction on behavior on behalf of animals (Małecki et al., 2018, p. 54).

Meanwhile, based on moderated regression analysis, digital short story literacy, reading interest, and interactions between the two do not significantly affect environmental care characters individually or in combination. The digital short story literacy variable has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.138. This shows that every one-unit increase in digital short story literacy is followed by an increase of 0.138 units in environmental care character. However, this coefficient is not statistically significant (Sig = 0.413), which means that the effect of individual digital short story literacy on the character of environmental care cannot be considered significant. Furthermore, the reading interest variable has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.357, indicating that every one-unit increase in reading interest is

followed by an increase of 0.357 units in environmental care character. This coefficient is also not statistically significant (Sig = 0.160).

Furthermore, the interaction between digital short story literacy and reading interest is shown by an unstandardized coefficient of 0.009. This shows that for every one-unit increase in the interaction between digital short story literacy and reading interest, there is a 0.009-unit increase in environmental care characteristics. However, like the previous variables, this coefficient is also not statistically significant (Sig = 0.426). This means that other factors may play a role in shaping the environmental care character, which is not captured in this regression model. Therefore, reading interest is not successful in moderating the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character. This is in line with research which found that excessive use of digital media reduces interest in reading due to distraction or dependence on social media or other digital entertainment (Bakermans et al., 2022; Tanaka et al., 2023). Reading is a skill that includes two main components: decoding graphic symbols and understanding written messages (Aurpa et al., 2023; Franchi et al., 2023; Mastrothanasis et al., 2023). Interest in reading includes the following dimensions: individual interest, situational interest, selecting texts with interest-enhancing elements, and interest self-regulation strategies (Springer et al., 2017). Digital texts provide new opportunities to improve reading comprehension (Diprossimo et al., 2023). If students experience direct benefits from reading such as increased comprehension and critical thinking skills, they tend to have a higher interest in reading. Conversely, if they experience negative experiences such as difficulty understanding texts or feeling bored, their interest in reading decreases (Snell et al., 2023). Knowledge of the reading process is not only of practical importance but of fundamental interest because of its systematicity, the load placed on various cognitive components (visual perception, attentional selection, memory, oculomotor planning) may be heavier than others, and these components evolve (Snell et al., 2023; J. Zhang et al., 2023; Zhou et al., 2023).

VI. CONCLUSION

Students are more dominant in *Agree* on each variable. This proves that, as a whole, students understand the meaning and context of the digital short story. They apply environmental care behavior in various forms: social participation and donations, protecting animals and ecosystems, and applying local wisdom or religious values. Digital short story literacy significantly influences environmental care character. The effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character is statistically significant. Based on the moderated regression analysis, digital short story literacy, reading interest, and interactions between the two do not significantly affect environmental care characters individually or in combination. The effect of individual digital short story literacy on the character of environmental preservation cannot be considered significant. Furthermore, the reading interest is also not statistically significant. This means that other factors may play a role in shaping the environmental care character, which is not captured in this regression model. Therefore, reading interest is not successful in moderating the effect of digital short story literacy on environmental care character.

This research contributes to educational institutions by adding learning material on literary and environmental/ecocritical subjects in literacy skills in tertiary institutions as a step towards designing an inclusive education curriculum that considers aspects of digital and environmental short story literacy. Suggestions for this research, especially for academics, include further research being carried out to provide practical solutions related to the problem of students' interest in digital literacy and in general, such as the factor of decreased productivity due to the impact of digital media so that it will affect students' interest in digital reading. In the industrial sector, it is recommended to collaborate with students to make documentaries from digital short stories to promote environmental preservation.

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Juanda is an alumnus of the Doctoral Program of the Universitas Negeri Jakarta Postgraduate Program, and the Language Education Study Program. He is a lecturer in the Faculty of Language and Literature at Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia. He has published an international Scopus journal articles entitled Student Mental Health Euphemisms (XLinguage, volume 16, issue 1, 2023). Contact me directly to e-mail juanda@unm.ac.id.

Iswan Afandi is a lecturer at the Universitas Timor. He teaches at the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, Faculty of Education, Universitas Timor in the border region of Indonesia - RDTL Timor Leste.

Andi Fatimah Yunus is a lecturer at Univesitas Negeri Makassar. She has written several books, including Bugis Language Syntax, Bugis Language Morphology, Language Error Analysis, and Bugis Language Sentence Formation. She also actively conducts research and performs community service, both of which are done alongside her colleagues. The author teaches at the Regional Language and Literature Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar.

Challenges and Drawbacks of Smartphone-Based Language Learning for Vietnamese EFL Learners in Higher Education Settings: Perspectives on Mobile Apps and Curriculum Design

Tran Tin Nghi[*]
Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Nguyen Tat Thang
Da Lat University, Da Lat City, Vietnam

Abstract—**This study explored the opinions of Vietnamese EFL learners on m-learning challenges and drawbacks in Vietnamese higher education settings. The study also investigated the uses of mobile apps and curriculum design for English language learning and their impacts on students' learning experiences. The author used an exploratory design which included a 12-question survey and semi-structured interviews with 185 EFL students from a public university in Vietnam. The results revealed that while smartphones were perceived as a convenient and useful tool for learning English, there were several shortcomings associated with their use. These negative factors were technical issues, distractions, lack of motivation, and difficulty in finding suitable English learning apps. The results also highlighted the importance of integrating mobile apps into the curriculum design, and university management should provide training for students and teachers on using mobile apps for learning English as one of the necessary handbooks. The findings of this study may be beneficial to EFL teachers, curriculum designers, and policymakers in Vietnam and other similar contexts where mobile apps are becoming increasingly prevalent as a language learning tool.**

Index Terms—**mobile apps, language learning, learning autonomy, motivation, curriculum design**

I. INTRODUCTION

Smartphones have become an indispensable part of our daily life, and their widespread use has also changed the field of education as well. Huzairin (2020) has pointed out that language learning is one area where the use of smartphones has gained increasing attention, particularly in higher education settings. However, using smartphones for language learning also involves challenges and drawbacks, especially in non-native English-speaking countries such as Vietnam. In recent years, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training has invested a large amount of funds in English language education, and smartphones have been introduced as a potential tool to enhance language learning (My et al., 2020). Little research has been conducted to investigate Vietnamese EFL learners' perspectives on using smartphones for language learning so far.

The primary goal of this study is to examine the impact of mobile app use and curriculum design on EFL students' language learning, and, from these, to give some guidelines for applying it in language education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are more and more studies focusing on the integration of smartphones in teaching and learning English as a foreign language, showing the great positive impact of smartphones on foreign language teaching and learning, especially with smartphone apps (Kukulska-Hulme, 2009). In this section, the author focuses on discussing some of the key challenges and limitations of m- learning and their integration into curricula for Vietnamese EFL learners at the tertiary level.

Many previous studies have highlighted the potential applications of m- learning in language education (Huzairin et al., 2020; Liu, 2009). Two of those studies demonstrated that mobile devices could enhance language learning by providing a variety of personalized, flexible, and context-aware learning experiences (Burston, 2014; Kukulska-Hulme, 2009). Mobile apps can also provide instant feedback, foster peer-to-peer collaboration, and facilitate access to authentic language resources (Garc á Botero et al., 2022; Stockwell & Hubbard, 2013).

While using smartphones for language learning has its benefits, it is not without its challenges and drawbacks. One area of concern is the effectiveness and quality of language learning apps currently available. According to experts such

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[*] Corresponding Author. Email: nghitt@huit.edu.vn

as Blake (2016) and Kabilan et al. (2023), many apps lack sound pedagogical principles and rely too much on gamification and entertainment. This does not align with evidence-based language learning strategies, as noted by Kirschner et al. (2006) and van den Branden (2006). The scarcity of apps that cater to the linguistic and cultural context of Vietnamese EFL learners has the potential to worsen this situation, as pointed out by Nguyen (2016).

When attempting to learn a foreign language through smartphones, many EFL learners face a new set of hurdles. One such obstacle is the danger of being distracted and experiencing limited cognitive engagement, as noted by Pham et al. (2022). This is due in part to the fact that learners, according to Chen and Huang (2018), can be easily distracted and may engage in non-learning related activities whilst using mobile devices, making it harder to maintain focus or stay motivated. Negative impacts on learning outcomes and language skills development have been mentioned in studies of this matter (Crompton & Burke, 2018).

As Crompton and Burke (2018) indicate, mobile learning may worsen the digital gap between EFL learners. This is because not all learners have the same level of access to mobile devices and internet connectivity. Particularly in Vietnam and in other developing nations, the cost of mobile data plans and smartphones may be too expensive for some language learners. Accordingly, their options for learning via smartphones can be curtailed. Integrating mobile learning into EFL courses when it comes to curriculum design comes with a variety of challenges. A prominent difficulty is the absence of support from institutions and resources. Many higher education establishments in Vietnam do not have the infrastructure or funding to support this form of learning (Linh & Vu, 2021). Furthermore, existing EFL programs in Vietnamese universities often rely on traditional, teacher-centered approaches, making it difficult to effectively integrate mobile learning (Tra, 2020).

Another challenge is the lack of training and expertise among EFL teachers in the use of mobile devices and language learning apps (Chen & Hsu, 2020). Research shows that many teachers feel overwhelmed and overwhelmed by the complexities of mobile technology, which can negatively influence their ability to integrate it into their curriculum (Domingo & Gargant é, 2016). This issue is particularly relevant in Vietnam, where English teacher training programs often do not focus on technology integration (Vu & Ha, 2020). Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological change can make it difficult to keep up with new developments and keep mobile learning courses relevant (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). For example, the constant evolution of mobile applications and devices may render previously effective teaching strategies and resources obsolete, requiring constant adaptation and innovation by teachers and curriculum designers (Godwin-Jones, 2011).

Finally, research on the effectiveness of smartphone-based language learning is still limited, especially in the Vietnamese context (Linh & Vu, 2021; Vu & Ha, 2020). While some studies have reported positive outcomes such as increased motivation and engagement (Gu et al., 2022), the evidence base is still insufficient to make conclusive recommendations for best practices in designing and implementing mobile learning courses (Shadiev et al., 2020). The lack of empirical research makes it difficult for educators and curriculum designers to make informed decisions about integrating mobile learning into EFL curricula.

All in all, learning a language on a smartphone has the potential to improve EFL education, but there are some problems, especially for Vietnamese students in higher education. Some of the biggest problems are that mobile apps aren't great or useful, they can be distracting, and not everyone has equal access to technology. Adding mobile learning to EFL courses also means dealing with institutional barriers, teacher training needs and the pace at which technology is changing.

III. METHODS

To address the challenges and drawbacks of smartphone-based language learning for Vietnamese EFL learners in higher education settings, this study employed a mixed-methods approach, which allowed for the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This approach allowed the author to gain a comprehensive understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives on the mobile application and course design.

A. Participants

This study involved 185 EFL learners from a public university in Vietnam. Participants take a variety of core courses at different levels of English, from beginner to advanced, based on their scores on standardized English language tests. Participants were between the ages of 18 and 24, with an average age of 20.5. Among the participants were 112 women (60.5%) and 73 men (39.5%). All participants have access to a smartphone and experience learning English using a mobile app.

B. Data Collection

Data collection was carried out using two instruments: surveys and semi-structured interviews. The survey aimed to gather quantitative data on participants' language learning experiences on smartphones, including frequency of app use, the types of apps they used, perceived effects of mobile apps, and the challenges of learning a language using mobile devices. The survey includes closed and open-ended questions to allow participants to provide additional insight and explain their answers (D örnyei, 1998).

After the survey was completed, a targeted sample of 20 participants representing different English proficiency levels and different mobile learning experiences was invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted in Vietnamese to ensure participants felt comfortable and expressive.

The interview protocol contained open-ended questions designed to learn more about participants' experiences of using mobile applications and curriculum design in EFL courses, as well as their perceptions of the challenges and shortcomings of smartphone-based language learning. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants.

C. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to describe participants' experiences and perceptions of smartphone-based language learning (Iman, 2015). Open-ended survey responses and interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative data analysis method that identifies, analyzes and reports patterns or themes in data. The author uses induction, allowing themes to emerge naturally from the data rather than imposing pre-existing categories or theories. The analysis was carried out in several stages, including data ingestion, initial coding, topic identification, topic review, and topic definition.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented in two parts: the results of the survey and the results of the semi-structured interviews. The survey results provide an overview of the participants' experiences and perceptions of smartphone-based language learning, while the interview findings offer deeper insights into the challenges and drawbacks they encountered in relation to mobile apps and curriculum design.

A. Survey Results

The survey results provide an overview of the participants' experiences and perceptions of smartphone-based language learning. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics on how often participants used mobile apps for language learning, the types of apps used, and their perceived effects. The results indicate that the mean frequency of app use per week was 4.2, with a standard deviation (SD) of 2.1. The mean number of apps used was 3.1 (SD = 1.4), and the mean perceived effectiveness was 3.6 (SD = 0.8), rated on a scale from 1 to 5.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MOBILE APP USE AND PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS (N = 185)

Measure	Mean	SD
Frequency of app use (per week)	4.2	2.1
Number of apps used	3.1	1.4
Perceived effectiveness (1-5)	3.6	0.8

The most commonly used language learning app among the participants was ELSA, followed by Duolingo, Memrise, Quizlet, Busuu, and AnkiDroid, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
MOST COMMONLY USED LANGUAGE LEARNING APPS (N = 185)

App Name	Frequency	Percentage
ELSA	123	66.5%
Duolingo	94	50.8%
Memrise	87	47.0%
Quizlet	67	36.2%
Busuu	53	28.6%
AnkiDroid	47	25.4%

When asked about the challenges of using mobile devices for language learning, participants reported various issues, as shown in Table 3. The most commonly reported challenge was distractions, with 74.1% of participants reporting it. Limited app quality and effectiveness were also a significant challenge, with 61.6% of participants reporting it. Other challenges reported included insufficient internet connectivity (38.4%) and difficulty integrating mobile learning with courses (36.8%).

TABLE 3
CHALLENGES OF SMARTPHONE-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING (N = 185)

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Distractions (e.g., social media)	137	74.1%
Limited app quality/effectiveness	114	61.6%
Insufficient internet connectivity	71	38.4%
Difficulty integrating with courses	68	36.8%

B. Interview Results

Thematic analysis of interview data revealed three main themes related to the challenges and disadvantages of smartphone-based language learning for EFL learners in Vietnam: (1) limited quality and effectiveness of mobile apps, (2) distractions and reduced cognitive engagement, and (3) challenges integrating mobile learning into EFL courses.

C. Limited Quality and Effectiveness of Mobile Apps

Participants raised concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the mobile apps they use for language learning. Many reported that the apps were more focused on gamification and entertainment than evidence-based language learning strategies. One participant commented:

"I enjoy using Duolingo, but I feel like I'm just playing a game. It doesn't help me improve my speaking and listening skills as much as I would like" (P6).

Furthermore, participants reported that most apps were not specifically designed for Vietnamese learners, which made it challenging to find apps that catered to their linguistic and cultural needs.

D. Distractions and Reduced Cognitive Engagement

Most participants reported that using a smartphone to learn a language often resulted in distraction and decreased cognitive engagement. They mentioned that they often engaged in activities outside their duties, such as Student 12. Checking social media or playing games, which hindered their academic progress. One participant explained:

"When I use my smartphone to study English, I often get distracted by notifications from social media or other apps. It's difficult to stay focused" (P12).

E. Challenges in Integrating Mobile Learning Into the EFL Curriculum

Participants reported challenges integrating mobile learning into their EFL courses, citing a lack of support and guidance from their teachers and institutions. They expressed a need for more structured guidance on how to use mobile apps effectively in their courses, as well as a desire for better coordination between apps and courses.

"I wish our teachers would provide more guidance on how to use mobile apps in our English classes. Sometimes I feel like I'm just guessing what to do, and it doesn't really connect with what we're learning in class" (P17).

Moreover, participants mentioned that their teachers often lacked training and expertise in using mobile devices and apps for language learning, which made it challenging for them to provide effective support and guidance. One participant shared:

"Our teachers seem unsure about how to use mobile apps in our lessons. They rarely use them, and when they do, it's not very effective" (P3).

V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight several challenges and drawbacks of smartphone-based language learning for Vietnamese EFL learners in higher education settings. The limited quality and effectiveness of mobile apps, coupled with the scarcity of apps designed specifically for Vietnamese learners, emerged as a significant concern. These issues are consistent with previous literature (Kacetl & Klímová, 2019; Nguyen, 2016).

Distractions and reduced cognitive engagement were also identified as key challenges, which aligns with the findings of previous research on the potential negative effects of smartphone use on learning outcomes (Gu et al., 2022). This suggests that educators should consider strategies to minimize distractions and promote focused learning when implementing smartphone-based language learning.

Finally, participants highlighted challenges in integrating mobile learning into EFL courses. This includes institutional support, teacher training, and lack of consistency between mobile his applications and courses. These results mirror previous studies that identified barriers to effective implementation of mobile learning in EFL environments (Godwin-Jones, 2011; Lai & Chang, 2021).To meet these challenges, institutions and educators must invest in teacher training, infrastructure, and curriculum design to support effective integration of mobile learning into EFL curricula.

Overall, this study provides Vietnamese EFL learners with valuable insight into the challenges and shortcomings of smartphone-based language learning and helps expand the literature on this subject. Further research is needed to explore possible solutions and best practices to address these challenges and maximize the benefits of mobile learning in the context of his EFL in Vietnam.

VI. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research suggests that educators, institutions, and curriculum designers should address the challenges and shortcomings of smartphone-based language learning to maximize potential benefits and improve language learning outcomes. This includes developing culturally and language-relevant applications, minimizing disruption, and investing in teacher training and institutional support. Institutions should ensure all students have access to mobile devices and reliable internet connections, align mobile learning with EFL curriculum, further research into effective strategies and best practices, and create more engaging, effective and inclusive learning environment. This will help Vietnamese EFL learners improve their language skills and create a more engaging, effective and inclusive learning environment.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the challenges and drawbacks of smartphone-based language learning for Vietnamese EFL learners in higher education settings, with a focus on their perspectives on mobile apps and curriculum design. A mixed methods approach, including surveys and semi-structured interviews, revealed several key challenges, including limited quality and effectiveness of the mobile app, distraction and reduced cognitive engagement, and the difficulties in integrating of mobile learning into the EFL curriculum.

To address these challenges and maximize the benefits of smartphone-based language learning, we offer some recommendations for educators, institutions, and curriculum designers. These include developing culturally and linguistically relevant apps, minimizing distractions, investing in teacher training and institutional support, aligning mobile learning with the EFL curriculum, and conducting further research on effective strategies and best practices in the Vietnamese EFL context.

Ultimately, by addressing these challenges and implementing these recommendations, educators and institutions can better support Vietnamese EFL learners in their pursuit of language proficiency, creating a more engaging, effective, and inclusive learning environment that harnesses the full potential of mobile technology. As the use of smartphones for language learning continues to grow and evolve, it is crucial to remain vigilant and responsive to the challenges and drawbacks that emerge, ensuring that this innovative approach to education truly benefits all learners and contributes to their success in the globalized world.

APPENDIX A SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

This appendix presents the survey questionnaire used to collect data on the participants' experiences and perceptions of smartphone-based language learning.

Section 1: Demographic Information
1. Gender:
- o Male
- o Female
- o Other
2. Year of study:
- o First year
- o Second year
- o Third year
- o Fourth year or higher
3. Major: _____

Section 2: Smartphone-Based Language Learning Experiences
4. On average, how often do you use mobile apps for English language learning per week?
- o times
- o 2-3 times
- o 4-5 times
- o 6-7 times
- o 8 or more times
5. How many different language learning apps do you use regularly?
- o 1
- o 2-3
- o 4-5
- o 6 or more
6. Which language learning apps do you use most frequently? (Please list up to three)
- o _____
- o _____
- o _____
7. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "not effective at all" and 5 is "extremely effective," how effective do you think using mobile apps is for improving your English language skills?

    1   2   3   4   5

Section 3: Challenges and Drawbacks of Smartphone-Based Language Learning
Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements related to the challenges and drawbacks of smartphone-based language learning (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree):
8. Using mobile apps for language learning often leads to distractions (e.g., social media, games, notifications)

    1   2   3   4   5

9. The quality and effectiveness of language learning apps are limited.

    1   2   3   4   5

10. It is difficult to integrate mobile learning into my English courses.
<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

11. Insufficient internet connectivity often hinders my use of mobile apps for language learning.
<div align="center">1   2   3   4   5</div>

12. Please describe any other challenges or drawbacks you have experienced with smartphone-based language learning:

_____
_____
_____
_____

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This appendix presents the semi-structured interview protocol used to collect in-depth qualitative data on the participants' experiences and perceptions of smartphone-based language learning. The interview questions were designed to elicit detailed responses related to the challenges and drawbacks of mobile learning, as well as to explore participants' perspectives on mobile apps and curriculum design.

1. Can you tell me about your experiences using mobile apps for English language learning?

_____

2. In your opinion, what are the advantages and disadvantages of using smartphones for language learning?

_____

3. Can you describe any challenges or difficulties you have faced while using mobile apps for language learning?

_____

4. How do you think the quality and effectiveness of mobile apps for language learning could be improved?

_____

5. How well do you think mobile learning is integrated into your English courses? What challenges or barriers have you experienced in this regard?

_____

6. What do you think teachers and institutions could do to better support the integration of mobile learning into the EFL curriculum?

_____

7. Do you have any suggestions or recommendations for improving the use of smartphone-based language learning in higher education settings?

_____

8. How do you manage distractions (e.g., social media, games, notifications) while using mobile apps for language learning? Can you suggest any strategies that might help other students minimize distractions?

_____

9. What are your thoughts on the availability and effectiveness of mobile apps designed specifically for Vietnamese EFL learners? How do you think these apps could be improved to better meet your needs?

_____

10. Can you share any examples of particularly positive or negative experiences you've had using mobile apps for language learning? What made these experiences stand out?

_____

11. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with smartphone-based language learning or any other related topic that we haven't discussed yet?

_____

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Tran Tin Nghi currently works as the Dean of Faculty of Foreign Languages, Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He is interested in second language learning and teaching, corpus studies, literacy studies, and cognitive linguistics.

Scopus Author ID: https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=57212464873

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6549-3895

Nguyen Tat Thang is a lecturer of English at Dalat University, Vietnam. He received the title of Associate Professor in linguistics in 2017. His interests are semantics, SLA, and socio-linguistics.

Scopus Author ID: https://www.scopus.com/authid/detail.uri?authorId=57212462062

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8486-2385

An Analysis of Arab Undergraduate Students' Writing Performance: Applying SWOT Framework

Alya S. Al-Mutawa[*]

Language Centre, College of Business Studies, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Ardiya, Kuwait

Hanan S. Al-Kandari

Language Centre, College of Technological Studies, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Shuwaikh, Kuwait

Fatema M. Fayez

Arab Open University Kuwait Branch, Ardiya, Kuwait

Abstract—**Writing is an indispensable skill in the academic as well as professional lives of individuals. As such, an in-depth multi-layered delve into the writing of students becomes necessary to gain a better understanding of these texts from different directions. This study explores the writing skill proficiency of undergraduate Arab business students using the SWOT framework: analyzing its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The SWOT framework was adopted as an analytical framework for this study to achieve interdisciplinarity between the different fields of knowledge during face-to-face and hybrid sessions. This, in its turn, could contribute to viewing a persisting issue in the field of language teaching and learning, such as students' writing performance, from a different angle. An analysis of a written corpus of 80 students' written analytical essays was thoroughly conducted to depict the nature of students' writing. The participants of the current study were business major students enrolled in an ESP course at the Arab Open University in Kuwait. Data analysis has yielded interesting findings with respect to the internal strengths and weaknesses in the students' writing in the business field. The data has also provided valuable insights on the future opportunities as well as the pitfalls to avoid in order to improve the quality of students' writing as external factors that might be affecting their performance in analytical business writing. Such findings could also be helpful for writing instructors when planning, teaching, and assessing their students' writing.**

Index Terms—**hybrid/blended learning, SWOT analysis, written errors, writing evaluation, ESP**

I. INTRODUCTION

The global scenario has posed some pressing issues that are worthy of research such as bilingualism and the status of the English language as a globally accepted lingua franca. This can be evidently manifested in the constant strive of educational systems on a global scale to integrate English into their educational programs and to prepare their learners for future scenarios. The domain of writing for tertiary level students itself has witnessed a notable development in various disciplines such as business (Evans & Morrison, 2011), scientific (Arnó-Macià et al., 2020), industrial (Kassim & Ali, 2010), as well as various other fields (Wette & Hawken, 2016; Lu, 2018; Er & Kırkgöz, 2018). This growth has yielded evidence for the importance of the writing skill as an indispensable tool of communicating ideas, messages, news, and updates in these domains of knowledge and future workplaces awaiting students. Starting from such premise, the idea of empowering students with the necessary English language writing skills to survive future multi-layered, multilingual, and multicultural workplaces has become essential.

Considering the complex cognitive processes involved in the experience of writing, it can be claimed that learning the writing skill can be challenging in a student's first language (L1) (Al-Khatib, 2017). Learning how to write in a second language (L2) is even more challenging due to the presence of other factors such as possible variations between the L1 and L2 linguistic systems (Talosa & Maguddayao, 2018), and the interference of L1 on the learning of writing in L2 (Elachachi, 2015). Many students find mastering the writing skill difficult since written communication can lead to various types of potential errors (e.g. structural, syntactical, semantic and/or cultural) something which could eventually jeopardize the quality of their writing. What even helped in exacerbating the current situation in different parts of the world is the sudden switch from the traditional face-to-face mode of education to the new virtual mode of learning as a contingency plan to accommodate for the changing global circumstances due to the COVID pandemic (Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Nguyen, 2021).

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[*] Corresponding Author.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Students and the Writing Skill

Writing in tertiary level serves a substantial aim; allowing learners to subscribe to the community of their academic institutions as well as their future professional communities, something which eventually contributes to forming and nurturing their professional identities. The teaching of writing in the English language, especially for specific purposes, has undergone some substantial stages of change. Previous research was primarily directed towards the study of the product of the students' writing, where the study of model texts and the imitation of these texts was the target. Attention to students' writing soon began to shift in focus on the process through which students write their texts. Researchers such as Hyland and Shaw (2014) maintain that the nature of the writing process and the stages which students experience is a focal point to enable them to write effectively. The modern approach to studying students' writing is more concerned with the study of the contextual factors governing and subsequently influencing the writing experience. In this genre-based approach, writing is seen as a social process which involves learners, language teachers and discipline teachers as primary contributors to the success of the writing experience. Thus, the contextual and social elements of the writing experience, such as audience and purpose, are taken into account (Bremner, 2012; Hyland, 2019). All the above claims suggest that L2 students are expected to write both effectively and accurately; therefore, helpful tools such as grammar, general and technical vocabulary, and awareness of the steps of effective writing are crucial (Pratt-Johnson, 2008; Hinkel, 2002). In general, these multiple perspectives of looking at the writing experiences of the students can provide researchers and practitioners with the knowhow of approaching writing research and instruction, helping students improve their writing skills, and evaluating their students' writing. Coe (1994) points to an interesting avenue of discussion in this realm when it comes to the 'form/ content dichotomy'. As discussed by Coe (1994), "form is the container that holds content and conveys it through social space from one mind to another; in this view, good form is socially important content should be appropriately dressed before being presented publicly" (p. 154). From such starting point, it can be argued that genres and their underlying ideas can be effectively and successfully exchanged via comprehensible form and awareness of the context of its occurrence.

Pineteh (2014), for example, reviewed the obstacles faced by students of higher education in South Africa such as poor preparation during schooling experience which in its turn resulted into students' lack of preparedness to receive and deal with their writing course at college level. The problem also aggravated, as explained by Pineteh, when the academic institutions failed to effectively and immediately deal with the issue, resulting into teachers' inability to upgrade their teaching and equip their students with analytical, logical, and critical thinking skills rather than merely focusing on the structural level. Other challenges were present in this research, such as plagiarism and the students' lack of ability to seek suitable channels and resources to write successful scientific papers.

A study by Bakhshayesh (2015) on Arab students at the Open University in Oman, another by Khatter (2019) on Saudi female students, and a study by Mudhsh et al. (2021) on Yemeni students identified numerous structural and grammatical errors made by students when writing. Amongst these errors was the incorrect usage of articles, adjectives, nouns, tenses, punctuation, spelling, prepositions, as well as incorrect structure of some subordinate conjunctions. The researchers attributed such errors to the impact of the students' mother tongue on their second language writing, maintaining that an underlying interpretation of such errors could strongly be of interlingual nature.

The study conducted by Al Fadda (2012) also unveils some structural and procedural challenges that students in the Saudi context face in their academic writing experiences. Al Fadda attributed such challenges to the interference of the students' L1 (Arabic) with their L2 learning experience, and the lack of skill-based teaching when it comes to the preparation and revision of the written content. Al Badi (2015) echoed some of the findings of structural errors found in Al Fadda's study, as well as other aspects such as coherence, voice and referencing. Al Badi urged academic institutions to tailor their programs to the needs and deficiencies of their students to achieve better improvements.

B. Hybrid Learning

The constantly changing world of technology has brought on vast developments to the field of education. With the surfacing of new technologies, younger generations are being more exposed to new technological instruments of communicative channels and platforms which are also used as means of teaching and learning (Buran & Evseeva, 2015). This leads us to speculate whether the traditional face to face classroom is still sufficient to achieve student learning or if pedagogical innovative methods such as blended/ hybrid learning are more effective in enhancing the learning process.

First, it is necessary to establish an understanding of what is meant by blended/ hybrid learning. Blended or hybrid learning is defined as the combination of conventional face to face and online or computer-based teaching (Bonk & Graham, 2006; Milad, 2017). Hofmann and Miner (2009) explain that blended learning allows for the use of several teaching methodologies combined such as traditional and synchronous classrooms. In the current study, hybrid instruction is seen as a form of teaching where students alternate between face-to-face and live online learning using a shared platform such as Microsoft Teams or Moodle.

Although hybrid classrooms have increased in popularity in educational institutions, there have been some contradictory opinions regarding teachers' as well as students' acceptance of the method and its effectiveness in the enhancement of learning. Shuib et al. (2018) posed the critical question of whether students are ready to receive

knowledge via new technologies which they are used to in their daily lives, but not really accustomed to when it comes to their learning and language acquisition experiences, hence raising teachers' awareness about the significance of a smoother transfer to new instructional modes by offering training for both teachers and learners.

Furthermore, Lee et al. (2017) studied the preparedness of learners in Hong Kong to apply self-directed methods during their individual mobile learning experience. They uncovered some critical issues which students have associated with this experience such as learning anxiety, lack of learning desire and lack of self-control when it comes to regulating study times and plans. Similarly in the Malaysian context, Hamzah et al. (2021) confirmed that their learner participants showed greater preference to traditional modes of face-to-face learning over online learning for reasons such as enhanced understandability, memorisation, and application of the learned content in the former over the latter mode of learning.

On the other hand, research has also shown that with the emergency state the world has experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic, educational institutions faced many critical challenges which have globally changed the interface of the teaching and learning experiences (Nguyen, 2021; Moorhouse & Kohnke, 2021; Kalaichelvi & Sankar, 2021). They further suggest applying a hybrid mode of teaching and learning as it allows for flexibility in both time and place, especially if these two are considered hindering factors to learning and teaching. Adopting hybrid classrooms is therefore extremely beneficial to the continuity of the learning process.

C. Why SWOT Framework

This research adopts SWOT as its analytical framework. Although SWOT (short for strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats) is mainly considered a strategic marketing tool used by companies, organizations and even individuals, it has been vastly used as a research tool in the literature over the last 50 years (Helms & Nixon, 2010). The SWOT framework has been used to conduct research in various fields such as information technology (Helms et al., 2008) medicine (Scotti & Pietrantonio, 2013) and management (Hajizadeh, 2019). Kılıçoğlu and Aydemir (2022), however call to attention that SWOT analysis has been recently adopted by the educational field. They further suggest using it as an appraisal tool which can lead to assessing learners' performance from a new lens, therefore potentially improving educational outcomes. Gurel and Tat (2017) state that adopting the SWOT Matrix for researching a context can help identify opportunities, which further enhance current strengths, and address threats by recognizing the weaknesses in the researched context. As a tool, the SWOT framework helps analyse the internal and external environments of an organization, thus assisting in understanding the strengths and weakness (internal environment) in order to create improvement by eliminating threats and maximizing opportunities (external environment) (Helms & Nixon, 2010; Gurel & Tat, 2017).

Beyond the field of business, the SWOT framework has gradually entered the educational field through some studies which manifested a significant benefit of the tool. Leiber et al. (2018) infer that "SWOT analysis may be a tool for bridging the gap between methodological challenges and the implementation of impact measurement in systematic quality management" (p. 2). A general look at studies within this domain renders an important concept to be considered: SWOT is a powerful tool to evaluate an individual's current situation compared to their counterparts as well as helping concerned individuals to depict the future of their institutions based on current conditions to enact effective plans for positive change.

Using the SWOT framework, Ahmed et al. (2021) probed into the viewpoints of students learning English through social media, depicting the experience as effective, less burdensome, and naturalistic. At the same time, they pinpointed some threats and weaknesses of the experience such as misinformation, distractions, and the lack of language accuracy in the sources to which they were exposed.

SWOT framework was also used in the area of management and decision-making in education, in the field of Higher Education in general (Romero-Gutierrez et al., 2016; Leiber et al., 2018), and program improvement in specific (Pardo & D áz, 2020). The study of Pardo and D áz (2020), for example, demonstrated how using the SWOT framework has aided not only to inflict positive change in the current conditions of the FL scene in an educational facility in Spain, but also to anticipate future threats that could jeopardise the sustainability and success of the educational experiences.

Through using the SWOT framework, Safonov et al. (2021) depict the picture of E-learning in a Russian context, encapsulating the strengths and weaknesses in key ideas such as practicality vs. quality of produced outcomes due to the lack of human exposure during instruction. On the other hand, they demonstrated the opportunities and threats in the lack of social skills and physical engagement with the learned materials in the former and the accelerated mode of learning in the latter.

In the ESP field, a study by Bondarenko (2013) implemented the SWOT framework to appraise the issue of adopting online materials in ESP courses. The study has unveiled valuable insights into the strengths of this adoption such as enriching the course with authentic materials which can effectively serve in preparing students for their future professional careers. This was compared to the weaknesses which were encapsulated in the danger of introducing students to an inadequate language level compared to their competencies, and the 'overwhelming' experience teachers faced while looking for and determining suitable sources for their students. The opportunities were illustrated in the promising prospects of empowering teachers to use the SWOT framework as a tool of evaluating different aspects of their own instructional experience and the necessity of equipping teachers with knowledge required for them to be able to search autonomously for their own EAP materials, bearing in mind the risk of misusing or misinterpreting these

online materials due to teachers' lack of knowledge on how to effectively employ these materials. Taillefer (2013) also employed the SWOT framework to appraise the current ESP scenario in the French academic institutions and whether CLIL can be feasibly introduced to the academic scenario. She tapped into some interesting issues which either encouraged or impeded the success of this project such as the political power held by ESP instructors, the perceived value of ESP, the multicultural environment of the French academic institutions, and the pedagogical beliefs promoted during teacher training programs.

All in all, it can be understood from the above discussion that SWOT analysis is one way to enable language teachers to neutrally understand their teaching and learning contexts from a different perspective. Such understanding can indeed help teachers to avoid the pitfall of applying/ imposing their own assumptions on their students' writing which can consequently impact their evaluation of their students' efforts in general and the written text in specific. It can also be a useful tool on which teachers can base their instructional plans and decisions, rather than drawing anticipatory conclusions about their students' writing.

D. Statement of the Problem

A cursory review of what the literature proposes about the quality of Arab students' writing, supported by the researchers' experiences as English language teachers, has led to a conclusion that the current position of Arab students' writing is not quite optimistic. Research conducted by Al-Khasawneh and Maher (2010), Al Fadda (2012), Al-Khatib (2017) and Milad (2017) asserts that writing is quite a challenging task for students in the Arab region. They further demonstrate the various types of challenges students face when writing such as grammatical errors which affects comprehensibility, students' lack of confidence in their ability to approach academic writing, and other challenges in specific steps of the writing process such as paraphrasing, drafting, and peer review.

E. Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the analysis of the quality of written texts produced by business students at the Arab Open University in Kuwait:

(a). Main Question

1. To what extent can face-to-face instruction affect the students' analytical business writing performance verses hybrid instruction?

(b). Sub Questions

1. What are the strengths found in Arab students' analytical business writing performance?
2. What are the weaknesses found in Arab students' analytical business writing performance?
3. What are the opportunities available according to the analysis of the students' analytical business writing performance?
4. What are the threats that can be inferred from the analysis of the students' analytical business writing performance?

(c). Hypothesis

There are some statistical differences in favour of the experimental group over the controlled group in improving AOU students' analytical business writing skills due to adopting the hybrid instruction over the face-to-face instruction.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Design

This research adopted a descriptive design to review and survey previous studies related to the variables of this study. It adopted a quasi-experimental design to identify the internal strengths and weakness in the students' writing in the business field. This is in addition to the external threats and opportunities that resulted in some recommendations for improving their business analytical writing performance by comparing face-to-face and hybrid instruction.

B. Variables

The research study had two main variables: an independent variable represented in the SWOT analysis framework and a dependent variable represented in the face-to-face and hybrid instruction model.

C. Participants

The participants in the present research study were 80 students registered in ESP courses offered by the faculty of business, Arab Open University, Kuwait.

Data in this research consisted of (80) written midterm exams of Arab undergraduate business students at the Arab Open University in Kuwait. Students in both groups were given 70 minutes to complete the same task: Reading a provided case study and applying the SWOT framework to create an analytical essay demonstrating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the given case. Table 1 provides information about the data, the participants, and other details:

TABLE 1
SAMPLE DETAILS

Variable	Group A- Experimental group	Group B- Controlled Group
Sample size	40 papers	40 papers
Type of instruction	Hybrid	Face-to face
Semester length	1 semester/ 4 months	1 semester/ 4 months
Number of practical workshops	1 workshop	1 workshop
Extra training	None	Extra quiz for practice /Extra lesson on the topic
Time for task completion	70 minutes	70 minutes

As noticed from the above table, the main variable differentiating between the two groups is the mode of instruction in which students were involved: hybrid instruction for the experimental group (A) and traditional face-to-face instruction for the controlled Group (B).

Since the aim of the research is to evaluate the writing quality of Arab students, 23 papers of non- Arab students (e.g., Indians, Bengali, Pakistani) were excluded from the sample. 17 papers were deemed non-valid as they did not meet the requirements of our investigation. For example, some papers were left blank, others wrote very little which made their papers unqualified for writing evaluation. Papers of students who did not attend the workshop were also excluded, thus, leaving us with a sample of 40 papers for each group. Both groups were taught by the same teacher to ensure the consistency of the teaching styles. Both groups have had one practical workshop to help them further practice the learned content. The only variation in the advantage of group B was that they were given a quiz as an extra practice to further help them identify their weaknesses and an additional lesson on the topic.

D. Instruments and Analysis

The data was analysed using two different rubrics. The first rubric analysed the grammatical and lexical aspects of the essay. Grammatical errors falling in the categories shown in Table 2 were numerically counted to attain an idea about their frequencies.

TABLE 2
CATEGORIES OF DATA ANALYSIS

Category									
Subject –verb agreement	Wrong word	Tense	Articles	Run on sentences and fragment	Linking adverbials	Prepositions	Noun- pronoun disagreement	Punctuation	

The second rubric looked at the organizational aspects of the essay: analysing the essay on a sentence and paragraph level. The analytical and paraphrasing performance was also evaluated as shown in Table 3. The scale shown in the table below was used to analyse the organizational aspects of the students' essays.

TABLE 3
ORGANIZATIONAL CATEGORIES ANALYSIS SCALE

Category											
Essay Organization			Paragraph organization			Analytical Performance			Paraphrasing		
Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Justification for Using SPSS V.26

Using SPSS V.26, researchers applied tests of normality, namely Shapiro-Wilk test, due to the sample size (less than 50 in each group). The frequency of wrong word, spelling, SVA, tense, articles, ROS and frag, linking adverbials, punctuation, noun-pronoun disagreement, and prepositions proved to be not normally distributed. Shapiro-Wilk test confirmed that the data distribution for all variables departure normality is ($p < 0.01$).

Therefore, Mean, Median, Inter Quartile Range (IQR) was used for data presentation. Mann-Whitney test was used for independent samples to detect the statistical differences between the two groups of students (Hybrid vs. Face-to - Face).

B. Analysis and Discussion of the Scores for All Domains

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE SCORES IN ALL DOMAINS

Domain	Group	N	Mean	Median	Min.	Max.	IQR	p-value
Wrong words	Hybrid	40	6.3	6.50	0	20	6.0	0.000
	Face to Face	40	2.6	2.00	0	13	2.0	
Spelling	Hybrid	40	11.0	9.5	0	40	8	0.008
	Face to Face	40	6.8	4.0	0	22	11	
SVA	Hybrid	40	3.9	3.5	0	11	3.0	0.006
	Face to Face	40	2.4	2.0	0	9	3.0	
Tense	Hybrid	40	4.0	3.5	0	12	5.0	0.014
	Face to Face	40	2.4	2.0	0	10	2.0	
Articles	Hybrid	40	4.3	3.0	0	16	4.0	0.000
	Face to Face	40	1.8	1.0	0	10	3.0	
ROS & Frag	Hybrid	40	8.0	6.0	1	22	6.0	0.149
	Face to Face	40	6.0	6.0	0	13	6.0	
Linking Adverbials	Hybrid	40	4.0	4.0	0	10	6.0	0.000
	Face to Face	40	1.4	2.0	0	4	2.0	
Punctuation	Hybrid	40	10.3	9.5	2	27	5.0	0.000
	Face to Face	40	3.9	3.0	0	13	5.0	
Noun Pronoun Disagreement	Hybrid	40	4.7	4.0	0	16	7.0	0.003
	Face to Face	40	2.0	2.0	0	10	3.0	
Preposition	Hybrid	40	3.5	3.0	0	11	4.0	0.002
	Face to Face	40	2.0	1.0	0	7	3.0	

Min.= Minimum   Max.=Maximum   IQR= Inter Quartile Range

This research study set out to investigate Arab undergraduate students' analytical business writing performance in two separate groups and how their performance is affected by the teaching method (hybrid vs. face-to-face). The hypothesis formulated was: there are some statistical differences in favour of the experimental group over the controlled group due to adopting hybrid over face-to-face instruction.

As can be seen from the above table, almost all gathered statistics were in favour of the face-to-face controlled group, where students attained a higher performance level in analytical business writing than that attained by the experimental hybrid group. Mann-Whitney tests further showcased a highly significant difference in means of *WW, spelling, SVA, tense, articles, linking adverbials, punctuation, noun-pronoun disagreement, and prepositions* in favour of the face-to-face teaching method used in the controlled group. The differences illustrated above fluctuate between ($Z = 2.64, p$ value $= 0.008$) and ($Z = 5.94, p$ value $= 0.000$). On the other hand, results related to ROS & Fragments ($Z = 1.44, p$ value $= 0.149$) show that although the hybrid group performed well in this domain, it was not attributed to the teaching mode according to the generated figures. As highlighted in the results, both groups' analytical business writing performances were similarly not affected by the teaching mode.

In general, findings suggest that using hybrid classrooms is not as effective as the traditional face-to-face classrooms in teaching analytical business writing. As confirmed by Shuib et al. (2018), this could be attributed to students being unaccustomed to using technology in the classroom despite it being integrated into all other aspects of their lives. Students are likely to associate technology, the internet, or apps with entertainment than with learning. Although Sutisna and Vonti (2020) believe that applying hybrid teaching is beneficial in saving time and space, our findings indicate that more time should be allocated to training students on the use of online platforms and helping them get accustomed to such a teaching and learning mode. This is because students are usually familiar with face-to-face learning, where interactions with teachers and other students contribute to their own learning. Exposing them to another means of instruction without proper training could very likely hinder their learning process.
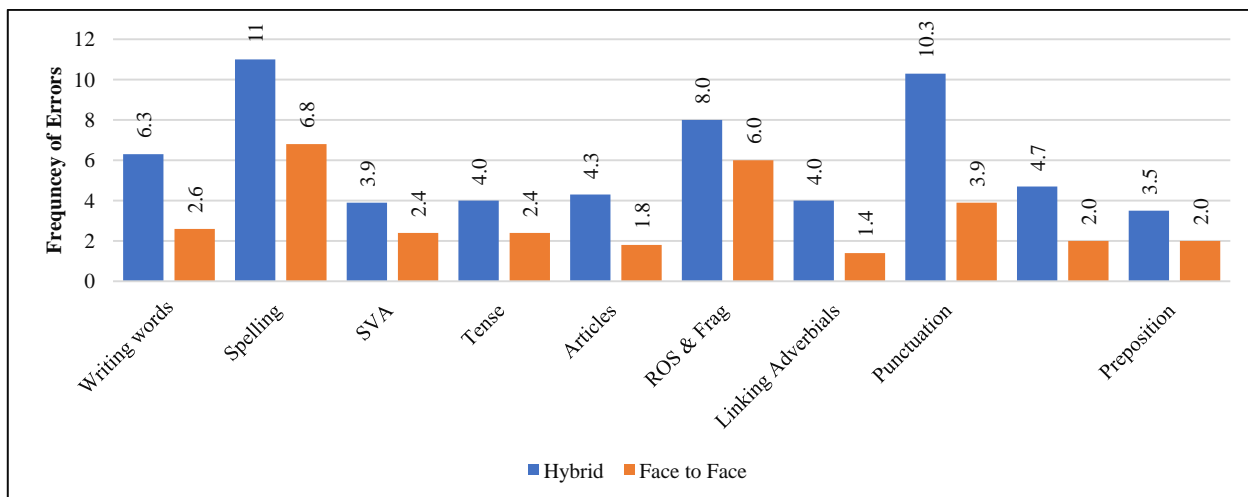
Figure 1. Means of Frequency of Errors Affected by Teaching Methods in All Domains

The above figure illustrates the frequency of errors found in the writing of both groups. As can be seen in the figure, the highest occurring error categories are spelling, punctuation, run-on sentences, and fragments. The nature of such errors highly suggests the presence of *interlanguage*, in this case the impact of L1 on the acquisition of L2 as explained by Richards (2015). Examples of some common spelling errors are shown in Table 5 below:

TABLE 5
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WRITING ERRORS

Student error	Correct form
On the ather hand	On the other hand
The broblem of the restornt	The problem of the restaurant
Some prands	Some brands
There hands	Their hands
Which makes their profit incres	Which makes their profit increase
Enfiroment	Environment

This is not surprising since the students' L1 (Arabic), and the target language (English) have dissimilar rules regulating spelling and punctuation. Arabic is a language where phonemes and graphemes highly correspond (i.e., that the pronounced sound is mostly written). The English language, on the other hand, does not have this high level of consistency between its phonemes and graphemes. Studies by Albalawi (2016) and Hameed (2016), in which they found that Arab students viewed spelling as a challenging aspect of writing, further support this claim. They suggest that the irregular nature of English spelling is the underlying reason for some of the spelling mistakes made by Arab students. They add that these spelling errors fall under three key classifications: omission, substitution, and addition. This comes in accordance with our findings as shown in the above examples.

Punctuation rules are also different in Arabic than they are in English. For example, the concept of capitalization does not exist in Arabic and because of this, students may have missed the capitalization of names, countries, companies etc. Additionally, ideas in Arabic writing do not always end with a full stop to signal an ending of one idea and the beginning of another as it is with basic sentences in English. Rather, more connection is shown between ideas in Arabic writing through the considerable use of commas, with a full stop placed at the end of a series of connected ideas. Therefore, students tend to write sentences that are long without any proper punctuation. A third example is the students' incorrect use of commas for listing items. While in English a 'comma' is used after each item with 'and' used before the last item, in Arabic 'and' is repeated after each item without using any commas. Put together, all the above examples indicate a strong relationship between the students' L1, in this case Arabic, and its impact on their attempts to write their English texts, something which has also been pinpointed in previous studies such as that of Khatter (2019); Al Fadda (2012); Al Badi (2015); and Bakhshayesha (2015).

The aforesaid discussion about the impact of L1 and punctuation mark errors possibly leads to explaining errors in categories such as fragments and run-on sentences. As apparent in the current study, the frequency of students' errors in the categories of run-on sentences and fragments was high in both groups. The fact the students' errors were considerable in these categories despite the mode of instruction can also be attributed to the interference of students' L1. As demonstrated in the research of Arabic aesthetics (Al Fadda, 2012), Arabic is usually a language of extended sentences with a series of connected ideas as shown in the above discussion. This, with the aforementioned discussion of punctuation marks, adds up to the issue of run-on sentence errors. This was confirmed by Elachachi (2015) who pinpointed the "wordiness" of the Arabic language as a tool for the solidification of ideas and persuasion as a serious issue experienced by Arab writers.

(*a*). *Association Between Teaching Method Used and Performance in Essay Organization, Paragraph Structure, Paraphrasing, and Case Analysis:*

In order to illustrate a meaningful relationship between the teaching methods used and performance in essay organization, paragraph structure, paraphrasing, and case analysis, a chi-squared test was applied to the data. Results are summarized in Table 6.

TABLE 6
STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ESSAY ORGANIZATION, PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE, PARAPHRASING, AND CASE ANALYSIS BY TEACHING METHOD

Teaching method		Levels of Performance			P-value
		Highly Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
////////////		Essay Organization			////////////
Hybrid	n	16	12	12	> 0.05
	%	40.0%	30.0%	30.0%	
Face to Face	n	17	17	6	
	%	42.5%	42.5%	15.0%	
////////////		Paragraph Structure			////////////
Hybrid	n	8	12	20	< 0.05
	%	20.0%	30.0%	50.0%	
Face to Face	n	18	11	11	
	%	45.0%	27.5%	27.5%	
////////////		Paraphrasing			////////////
Hybrid	n	4	10	26	> 0.05
	%	10.0%	25.0%	65.0%	
Face to Face	n	2	18	20	
	%	5.0%	45.0%	50.0%	
////////////		Case Analysis			////////////
Hybrid	n	11	15	14	> 0.05
	%	27.5%	37.5%	35.0%	
Face to Face	n	13	16	11	
	%	32.5%	40.0%	27.5%	

Table 6 above illustrates the results obtained from the chi-squared test. It statistically shows no association between the teaching methods and performance of both groups in essay organization ($\chi^2 = 2.89, DF = 2, p\ value > 0.05$), paraphrasing ($\chi^2 = 3.74, DF = 2, p\ value > 0.05$), and case analysis ($\chi^2 = 0.56, DF = 2, p\ value > 0.05$). As such, it can be said that the controlled and experimental groups' analytical business writing performance in these three categories was not affected by the teaching mode implemented, making these two factors independent.
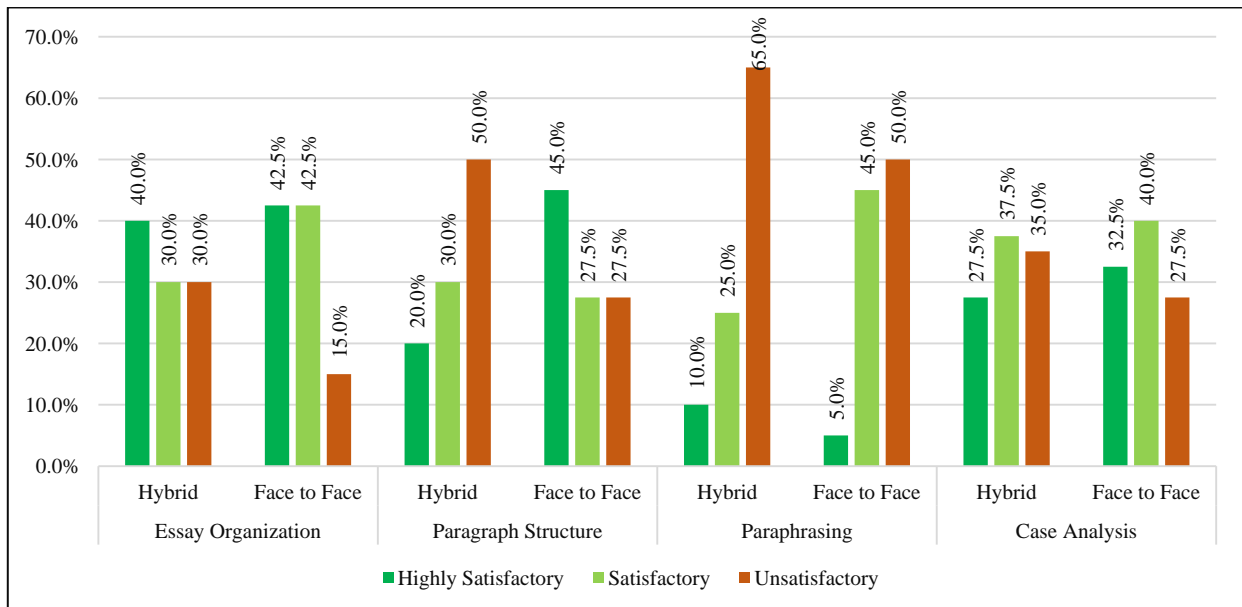

Figure 2. Performance in Essay Organization, Paragraph Structure, Paraphrasing, and Case Analysis by Teaching Method

On the other hand, the table also demonstrates that there was a statistical association between teaching methods and students' analytical business writing performance in paragraph structure ($\chi^2 = 6.50, DF = 2, p\ value < 0.05$). The generated figures show that performance in paragraph structure was very much dependent on the teaching mode used. More specifically, students in the face-to-face controlled group exhibited better performance in this category compared to their peers in the hybrid experimental group. This can be further illustrated in Figure 2 above.

(b). The SWOT Framework Analysis

Looking at the data from another angle, the SWOT framework used in this research has yielded some insightful concepts about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats pertinent to the students' analytical business writing experiences.

As inferred from the above findings, both hybrid and face-to-face students performed well in the case analysis and essay organization categories; aspects which were considered as strengths in students' writing and did not show significant association with the mode of instruction adopted. Although the paragraph structure category was deemed a strength for the face-to-face group, it was a weakness of the hybrid group. This can be connected with the threat pinpointed from the data in relation to the performance of both groups; the influence of L1 on the acquisition of L2 skills. The experimental and controlled groups shared the influence of L1 (Arabic) as indicated in their writing, especially in terms of punctuation, spelling, paraphrasing and ROS. This in turn owes its explanation to the nature of the Arabic language system and its difference from the English language system in relation to such categories. This concept was discussed elaborately in a previous section (See section: *Analysis of the scores for all domains*).

Another notable inference which can be understood from the findings is related to the impact of the hybrid and the face-to-face modes of instruction on students' analytical business writing performance. The experimental group's most immediate threat was the incorporation of the hybrid instead of the face-to-face method. This research confirmed that the students receiving face-to-face instruction generally performed better than those receiving hybrid instruction. The findings complement those of some previous studies such as Shuib et al. (2018); Lee et al. (2017); Hamzah et al. (2021) that the complete switch from the traditional face-to-face to hybrid teaching is still an ambitious step that educational institutions should consider carefully before taking. This is certainly not an invitation to exclude technological advancements from the language teaching and learning experiences altogether. Instead, findings concerning the readiness to receive online instruction shed the light on the importance of directing research towards such area to gain insights as to how and when can technological advancements be effectively used in language instruction. A pertinent issue here becomes the teacher and learner technological preparedness to be able to successfully engage in a virtual experience and the question of *how* to shift from traditional to blended instruction becomes seminal.

A significant opportunity which can be deduced from the findings is related to the field of ESP instruction; the ESP-content teacher collaboration specifically. Student participants exposed to the different modes of instruction have shown a highly satisfactory performance in aspects such as implementing the SWOT framework to analyse a business case at hand. A notable factor here could be that such skills were reinforced through the additional exposure to the examination of case analysis in their business courses. This in turn accentuates the need for ESP and discipline teachers to collaborate in planning and executing instructional agendas that could serve in effectively boosting content/ scientific knowledge for students. More specifically, language teachers can work closely with scientific content teachers to highlight the focal points to address in their courses. This is to allow teachers to avoid reiterating some aspects that could be addressed by the other teacher, as well as to allow teachers to direct their time and effort towards addressing unaddressed skills, such as critical thinking and problem solving, and remedying students' weaknesses, like students' linguistic aspects in the case of the current research. A useful model to adopt in this case can be the Collaborative Interdisciplinary Team Teaching (CITT) discussed lengthily by Stewart (2018). The positive aspect about this model in this particular situation is the full collaboration between language and content teachers to design, plan, teach, and evaluate both scientific and language courses. This in turn can have multiple benefits: it can help ESP teachers to better understand the scientific content through their interaction with discipline teachers, as well as to help learners reinforce the learned content and skills through focusing on them in both the scientific and language courses. As discussed by Stewart (2018), this can help teachers locate areas of weakness in students' work and dedicate more time to address and remedy them.

Based on the SWOT framework analysis, opportunities to improve the current scenario in relation to the students' analytical business writing performance can be summed into three points:

1. Boost face-to-face interactions; not only for students to benefit from the teacher-student interaction, but also to benefit from their interaction with other students. Students learn best when in groups, sharing their knowledge and learning experiences.
2. Provide proper training on the use of virtual platforms and allow students sufficient time to get accustomed to this new direction of teaching.
3. Push towards a strategic implementation of ESP-content teacher collaboration as an essential element in the academic program. This is both to accentuate the learned linguistic/ disciplinary content, and to effectively invest students' time and effort in areas of weakness.

V. CONCLUSION

A. Implications of the Study

Findings from this research yield important factors to be considered in the education of novice, as well as experienced, teachers. In general, it is evident from the above research that teacher-mentors and educators should hold the responsibility of encouraging teacher learners to endeavour on new ways and tools to evaluate the outcomes

produced by their students to gain a better understanding of their students and the expectations of the produced outcomes. This in turn can be beneficial in allowing teacher learners to plan more customised instruction and to better direct their instructional experiences for the benefit of the students. SWOT framework, in particular, is a useful tool which teachers can use to gain clearer insights into their students' strengths and weaknesses, as well as how to remedy the weakness and extenuate and facilitate potential improvement in the learning journeys of their students.

Considering the inflated number of students accepted in universities worldwide and the multicultural and multi-levelled students embarking upon their university experiences annually, teachers and academic administrative staff are very likely to expect high numbers of students with average and poor writing skills. It is then the challenge of such academic institutions and their participating members to embrace this issue and think seriously of possible and effective solutions to rectify the situation and help their students to gain better writing skills.

B. Limitations of the Study

The current research has some limitations which could be addressed in future research. The first of which is the context and sample size. Future research could provide further insights in this realm in different contexts and using larger samples in order to complement the picture with regards to the quality of students' writing and the ways of viewing, approaching and evaluating the instructional experience. Additionally, various methodological plans can be employed in this area to enrich the domain of students writing with different angles such as ethnography, focus groups and longitudinal studies.

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Alya Al-Mutawa is a faculty member at The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait. She holds a BA in TEFL from Kuwait University 2006, and an MA in ESP from the University of Essex, UK 2010. She has over 15 years of experience in teaching English, 13 of those in the academic field teaching general English courses as well as ESP courses in the College of Business Studies, Kuwait. She is a TESOL Kuwait member since 2012. Her fields of interest are teaching writing and business correspondence, needs analysis, genre analysis, ESP, EAP, and material evaluation. (Email: as.almutawa@paaet.edu.kw)

Hanan Al-Kandari is an Assistant Professor at the College of Technological Studies, PAAET in Kuwait. She has 13 years of experience in the academic field at several colleges such as business as well as science and technology. She received her MA from the University of Essex and Ph.D. from the University of Bath, UK. Both of her degrees are in the field of ESP. Her doctoral thesis focused on the cognitions of ESP teachers and learners and how these can guide the course of action in the ESP course. Her research interests are in the areas of ESP curriculum development, needs analysis, ESP teacher and learner cognitions, and the impact of social categories and gender on the experience of language teaching and learning. (Email: hs.alkandari@paaet.edu.kw)

Fatma Fayez is a faculty member at Arab Open University, Kuwait. She holds a degree in TEFL from Kuwait University, an MA in International Teaching from Framingham State College, USA and an MA in Language and Linguistics from the University of Essex, UK. She has over 20 years of experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language. Her fields of interest are teaching reading and writing for adults, history of language, and linguistics. (Email: ffayez@aou.edu.kw)

Digital Game-Based Language Learning: The Impact of Story-Driven Game *Life Is Strange 1* on Language Learners' Listening Skills

Moniza Ray S. P

School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Ajit. I*

School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract—The study aimed to examine the impact of employing a digital game, *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1*, on the listening skills of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. To conduct the study, the researchers employed a one-group pretest-posttest mixed-methods research design. A sample of 24 intermediate undergraduate engineering students from a private university in Chennai, India, participated in this study. During the experiment, the participants who enrolled in the course Interpersonal Listening Skills played the game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* in the university's language lab for four weeks. To collect quantitative data, all the participants took pre- and post-listening comprehension tests (LCT), and through close-ended questionnaires on students' perceptions using SPSS software, quantitative analysis of the data was made using frequency and percentage. And through the participants' face-to-face interviews, qualitative data were collected and analyzed to gain deeper insights into the participants' experiences and perceptions. The post-test results revealed that participants' listening skills had improved in comparison to the pre-test results. Additionally, qualitative data showed that participants enjoyed playing the game and found it motivating, engaging, and an effective method to improve their listening skills. These findings were in line with those of several other studies. Thus, the study revealed that ESL learners' listening skills could be improved by playing the video game, which may have significant implications for ESL educators and researchers who can integrate DGBLL to improve language learning outcomes into their teaching and research.

Index Terms—listening skills, digital game-based language learning (DGBLL), English as a second language (ESL)

I. Introduction

The study of the impact of technology on education has been a recognized field since around 1950, specifically in the area of CALL (Beatty, 2013). The broad scope of CALL includes any activity in which a learner utilizes a computer and subsequently enhances their language skills (Beatty, 2013). According to research by Cornillie et al. (2012) and Reinhardt (2017), digital games are recognized as an important part of CALL, much as traditional games are seen as a part of second language acquisition (SLA), as noted by Wright et al. (2006) and Ersöz (2000). In recent years, video games have been proven to have educational benefits in various subject areas, particularly in language acquisition, due to their immersive nature and ability to expose users to the target language, as well as their motivational factor (Hung et al., 2018). As video games continue to become a prevalent form of entertainment, digital game-based language learning (DGBLL) has become an increasingly interesting area of study (Alyaz & Genc, 2016).

According to Osman and Rabu (2020) DGBLL is the incorporation of digital games into teaching and learning a second or foreign language, which can create variation in teaching and improve students' commitment, motivation, and language proficiency (Hung et al., 2018; Eltahir et al., 2021). In education, the integration of digital games is recognized as an important pedagogical approach that modern-day learners need, aimed at enhancing understanding and making education more interactive and interesting (Ishak et al., 2021).

As stated by Reinhardt (2017) "digital games are played by millions of people in a wide range of genres, titles, and languages" (p. 202). Kronenberg (2012) highlights that there are several video game genres available, including Simulation, Adventure, Role-Playing (RPG), Strategy, and Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games (MMORPG). Furthermore, numerous titles are available, such as COTS games like Fortnite, The Sims, and World of Warcraft, which has gained a lot of popularity. Although COTS games are primarily created for entertainment rather than education, they could be valuable tools for students to immerse themselves in written and spoken English and break away from traditional learning environments, providing a motivational factor (Ersöz, 2000).

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* Corresponding Author

COTS games can help learners develop language skills by providing them with the target language they are learning in its natural context. As noted by Gee (2005) "good video games present learners with constant opportunities to use and reinforce specific language skills in context" (p. 50). By integrating language-specific content into COTS games, educators can create a language-rich environment that provides learners with an opportunity to practice and strengthen their language skills. The National Education Policy (NEP) (2020) emphasizes the integration of technology and digital resources in education; DGBLL aligns well with the NEP's goals of engagement, skill development, and language proficiency among learners in higher education. Likewise, it is essential for language educators to integrate technology into their instruction for effective teaching, especially in light of the recent COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the pandemic, computer-based instruction has become more widely used (Hubbard, 2021). Therefore, exploring the potential of DGBLL in language learning has become an even more relevant and logical step when contemplating the education of tomorrow.

Studies conducted previously in the DGBLL field have examined the impact of COTS games on different language learning aspects, such as grammar, communicative fluency, and vocabulary (Baltra, 1990; Miller, 2006; Chen & Hsu, 2020). These studies have indicated that playing COTS games leads to enhanced proficiency in the mentioned language skills. Despite the potential benefits, research on story-based COTS games on improving the listening skills of learners in higher education settings has been limited or nonexistent. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the impact of playing the story-driven COTS game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* on ESL learners' listening skills in higher education, thus filling a gap in research and contributing to a broader understanding of DGBLL as an effective and engaging pedagogical approach. For this reason, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the story-driven game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* impact the listening skills of the participants?
2. What are the perceptions of the participants towards using the story-driven game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* to improve their listening skills?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Game- Based Learning

The concept of DGBLL is a subset of game-based learning (GBL). DGBLL is a new and rapidly growing field that uses digital games for language teaching (IGI Global. n.d.). In DGBLL, digital games play a central role in the learning environment. IGI Global (n.d.) explains that digital games can either be specifically designed for entertainment, known as COTS games, or for educational purposes, known as serious games. The interest in digital games has increased tremendously, and research within DGBLL has followed suit since 2014 (Zou et al., 2021; Amenabar, 2022). However, according to Hung et al. (2018), previous research dates back to the 1990s.

In their study, Xu et al. (2020) explored the characteristics of DGBLL, methodological aspects, gaming features, and their interrelationships. The research aimed to better understand the use of DGBLL in educational technology contexts, emphasizing the importance of effective game design. The study analyzed over 2,000 documents obtained from eight widely used databases. Despite the fact that most studies did not examine the participants' level of English proficiency, the research found that the language skill that receives the highest level of focus is vocabulary. In addition, most of the studies employed quantitative methods and tests designed by researchers. Furthermore, commercial games were found to have the most successful features. Xu et al. (2020) also highlighted that all good game elements have a stated goal.

The majority of studies on DGBLL have been mixed-method studies that have included both quantitative and qualitative data collected using perception questionnaires and learning tests. These studies have mainly focused on exploring how digital games impact the process of learning a second language (Hung et al., 2018). Previously conducted studies (Baltra, 1990; Miller, 2006; Lai & Chen, 2023) have shown positive outcomes from the use of DGBLL in language education.

B. Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) Games

According to Ersöz (2000), COTS games offer an alternative approach to traditional classroom teaching methods, providing advantages like discovery learning, group work, and the incorporation of all language skills (Baltra, 1990). Hubbard (2021) emphasizes the potential of COTS games for listening comprehension as they combine audio and video with features like text assistance, glossaries, and translations. However, there are disadvantages to consider, such as high difficulty levels, limited modifiable subtitles and dialogue delivery speed, and difficulty in selecting games appropriate for all students' skill levels (Baltra, 1990; Chen & Yang, 2013).

Chen and Yang (2013) suggest selecting COTS games with clear pronunciation and subtitles for language education. Teachers face challenges in finding suitable games, as there are numerous options available, but finding a game that meets all requirements remains a challenge. To effectively integrate COTS games into language learning contexts, they must have well-defined objectives, be engaging, and be playable by learners of different skill levels without requiring a thorough understanding of the game's rules and mechanics. Therefore, educators should carefully select content that engages students and provides a sense of control, autonomy, and choice (Kronenberg, 2012).

C. Digital Game-Based Language Learning

According to studies in the field of DGBLL, playing video games can help students improve their communicative fluency, grammar, and vocabulary (Baltra, 1990; Miller, 2006; Lai & Chen, 2023). DGBLL research gives the most importance to COTS games. However, Alyaz and Genc (2016) investigated the effect of serious games on language skills. Their study involved 60 second-year pre-service teachers who played a serious role-playing game (RPG) called Adventure German-A Mysterious Mission. The pre- and post-tests, interviews, and game journals revealed that the game improved participants' vocabulary and was valued both as a teacher and a learner. However, some parts of the game were perceived as dull, and participants faced difficulties with technology, gaming challenges, and language tasks.

Another study by Chen and Yang (2013) investigated how using an adventure puzzle game called Bone 1 and 2 affected EFL students' vocabulary learning and language skills. Participants took a pre-test, played the games for 1.5 hours, and took a post-test. Results showed that participants improved their vocabulary, listening, reading, and general English abilities. A survey of 35 college students also revealed that the game improved their language skills and motivation. In a recent study conducted by Lai and Chen (2023), the impact of both virtual reality (VR) and PC gaming on emotional perception and vocabulary acquisition in language learners was investigated. The researchers randomly assigned 30 Grade 12 high school students to either the PC or VR groups, and the participants were instructed to complete a virtual reality science fiction visual novel game called Angels and Demigods. Both groups showed improvement in word knowledge; however, the VR group outperformed the PC group with a significantly higher mean score in the delayed vocabulary translation post-test.

Finally, a study by Miller (2006) investigated whether vocabulary acquisition could be enhanced by pairing games with supportive and supplemental material as well as explicit vocabulary instruction. Eighteen intermediate adult ESL students played The Sims once a week for five weeks, with different control groups receiving various levels of supplemental material. The results showed that there was little effect on vocabulary learning, especially when accompanied by supportive and explicit vocabulary instruction.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The researchers employed a one-group pretest-posttest mixed-methods research design in this study. In this design, a single group of participants is tested twice: once before an intervention (pretest) and again after the intervention (posttest) (Reichardt, 2019; Shuttleworth, 2009). According to Vaus (2001), it is necessary to use the same test twice to compare results. This design allows researchers to examine both the quantitative changes in specific variables and the qualitative nuances of participants' experiences (Cook et al., 2002). The quantitative component involves administering pretests and posttests to measure changes in specific variables, and close-ended questionnaire responses, while the qualitative component involves gathering additional insights through focus group interviews, which were used as research tools for data collection.

B. Research Setting and Participants

The study was carried out at a Chennai-based private university in India. Participants in the study were 18-19-year-old II-year undergraduate engineering students who were enrolled in a course on Interpersonal Listening Skills, which is a part of an ESL programme on improving listening skills. The students who were originally enrolled in the course were requested to fill out a voluntary written consent form. However, when the data was processed, out of sixty students, only twenty-four consented to participate in the study. According to Cook et al. (2002), the one-group design is relatively inexpensive and requires only one group of subjects, rather than two or more. Due to the limited number of participants providing consent, the final one-group design consisted of 24 participants. The participants who gave their consent comprised 18 males and 6 females, as shown in Figure 1, where green represents female and red represents male participants.
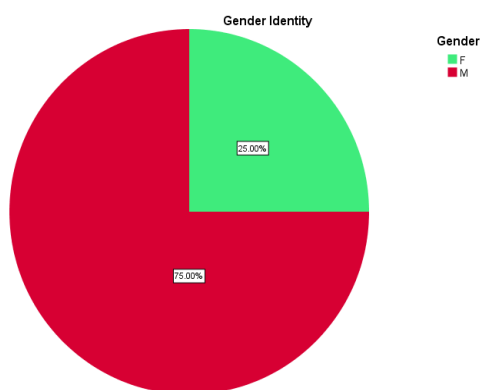

Figure 1. Participants Gender Identity

C. Materials Used for Data Collection

A story-driven game, *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* was chosen as the primary material for this study. The participants were able to access the game on the Steam website at no cost. The game comprises five separate episodes, but only the first episode, which takes around two to three hours to complete, was selected for this study due to its cost-free and time-efficient nature.

Participants' listening skills were assessed using the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), a standardized language proficiency test measuring English communication skills in real-world situations (Bachman & Palmer, 2022). The test focused on listening for connections between ideas, integrating information from different sources, and generating new ideas based on evidence. Using the listening audio sourced from IELTS the researchers developed a pre-test and a post-test question and administered them, where participants listened to conversations and took the same tests twice, before and after the intervention. The tests had thirteen questions and lasted thirteen minutes and forty seconds.

D. Procedures of the Study

- During the study, which lasted for a month, participants played the first episode of *Life is Strange 1* in their English class. The students had a total of twelve English classes, each lasting around an hour, with three classes per week. During those classes, they played the game individually on their university computers in a language lab.
- Before the study began, the researcher administered an online diagnostic survey to the experimental group students in order to understand their gaming habits, preferences, past experiences, and needs.
- During the first class of the study, students were presented with information through a PowerPoint explaining the purpose of the study, their expected contributions, and its importance to them. The rest of the first class helped the students download and install the game, so the first class was not focused on gaming.
- During the second class of the study, a pre-test was administered, which provided a baseline measure of the participants' listening skills prior to their engagement with the game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1.*
- In the third class, the gaming sessions began, in which the participants individually played the first episode of *Life is Strange 1*
- During their English classes in the language lab, for a total of nine classes, participants were asked to fill out a Google form to report their progress in the game after each class.
- Upon completing these nine classes, during the twelfth class of the study, the participants took the post-test, filled out a questionnaire about their perceptions of playing the game, and were interviewed regarding DGBLL and COTS games.
- Finally, the results of a diagnostic survey, pre-test and post-test, and responses to questionnaires were compiled and compared using the SPSS software.

Figure 2. Two Screenshots Showing Life Is Strange: 1 Episode 1 Game's Samples

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

A. Diagnostic Survey

The researchers administered an online diagnostic survey to the experimental group students at first in order to understand their gaming habits, preferences, past experiences, and needs. To understand the participants' gaming habits and preferences, 43.3% reported playing video games either every day or several times a week, while 36.7% reported playing video games once a week or less. The remaining 20% reported that they do not engage in playing video games at all. The most popular gaming platforms used were PCs 26.7%, followed by smartphones 58.3%, and gaming consoles 15%. The most popular game genre among the participants was action games, with 65% of participants reporting playing them, followed by sports games 43.3%, puzzle games 41.7%, and strategy games 35%.The results of the participants' past experiences with online games revealed that 55.20% of the participants had no previous experience of using online games in their major courses. Furthermore, 44.80% of them affirmed that they had very good technological skills for using ICT tools in ESL learning. Almost all participants 96.7% reported that using technology for language learning would be helpful. The participants also stated that using video games for ESL learning should be interesting 45.8%, motivating 26.7%, competitive 17.2%, and challenging 10.3%.

Participants' learning needs were identified by asking them to rate their confidence level in different language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (LSRW). The results revealed that 81.7% of participants want to improve their English language skills. In particular, 70% of participants agreed that they want to improve their listening skills, followed by 50% of participants who said that they have difficulty understanding spoken English and 56.7% of participants who agreed that they find it difficult to stay focused while listening to spoken English.

Overall, these results suggest that the majority of participants regularly play video games, find playing video games enjoyable, and prefer using video games for language learning. Additionally, a considerable number of participants expressed their interest in improving their English language skills, especially their listening skills. These results were used to design an intervention to reinforce these identified learning needs.

B. Listening Comprehension Tests Results

(a). Pre- Test Results

The pink bars in Figure 3 illustrate the pre-test results. The test had a maximum potential score of 13, and the participants' scores ranged from 0 to 13. Out of the twenty-four participants, the pre-test results showed that twenty-two participants scored higher than 6/13. Therefore, more than half of the participants scored more than 50% in the pre-test. Two out of twenty-four students, with a score of 5/13, scored exactly 50%. However, a total of ten participants scored above 10-12/13.

(b). Post- Test Results

The violet bars in Figure 3 illustrate the post-test results. According to the post-test results, all participants scored above 50%, with twelve participants achieving a score between 6-10/13. Upon analyzing the post-test, it was found that four out of twenty-four participants scored 13/13 highest on the test.

(c). Listening Comprehension Tests Results Comparison

The chart displaying participant IDs and their test results is shown in Figure 3. On the post-test, approximately 66.6% of the participants showed improvement, although the extent of their progress varied. The highest increase was five points, while the greatest decline was two points. The comparison of the test results revealed that, out of the twenty-four participants, four participants P1, P3, P5, and P20 showed improvements of 1-5 points in the post-test results. To more clearly demonstrate the differences between the pre- and post-test results, they are displayed side by side on this chart.
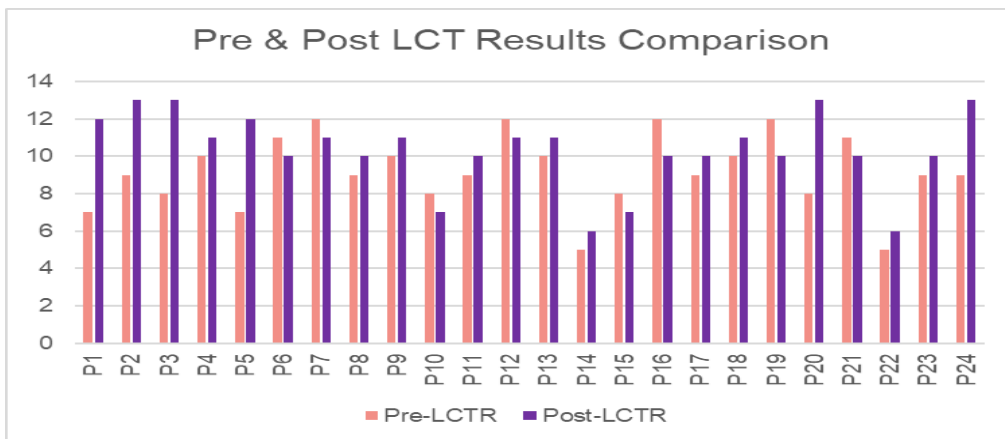

Figure 3. Listening Comprehension Results

(d). Gaming Sessions Attended

Figure 4 presents the total number of gaming sessions attended by the participants, along with their respective participant IDs, from one to twenty-four. As shown in Figure 4, the bars represent the participants' attendance during the gaming sessions, which ranged from zero to a total of nine, and the number of gaming sessions attended by the participants ranged from a total of five to nine. According to the attendance data presented in Figure 4, eight out of the twenty-four participants attended all nine sessions, four attended eight sessions, ten attended seven, and two attended five sessions. Participants numbered P1, P4, P5, P6, P9, P13, P18, and P21 had the highest attendance rate, attending all nine sessions. However, two participants, P1 and P5, showed improvement by five points. Participants P4, P9, P13, and P18 improved by one point, while participants P6, and P21's results decreased by one point. Participants P7, P8, P11, and P12 attended eight out of nine sessions, with participant P8, P11 improving by one point and participant P7, P12 decreasing by one point. Participants P2, P10, P14, P15, P16, P17, P19, P22, P23, and P24 attended seven out of nine sessions, with participants P16, and P19 scoring two points lower, participants P10 and P15 scoring one point lower, and participants P14, P17, P22, and P23 improving by one point. Lastly, participants P2 and P24 improved by four points and attended seven sessions, while participants P3 and P20 improved by five points but only attended five sessions. Therefore, higher attendance does not correlate with a significant improvement in results.
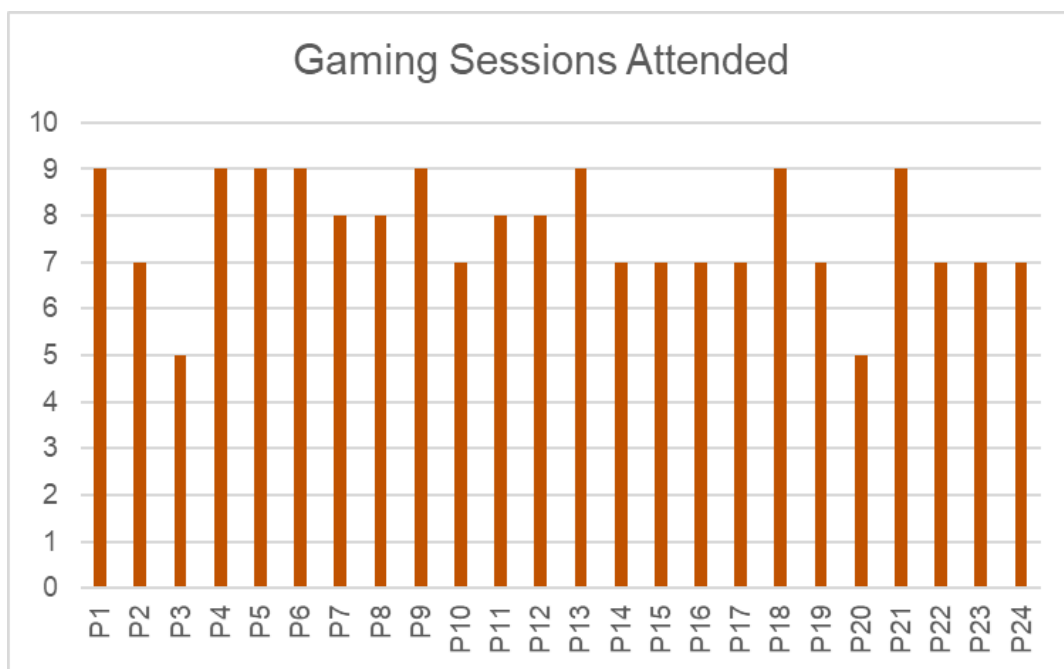

Figure 4. Gaming Sessions Attended by the Participants

(e). Students' Perceptions Towards COTS Video Game Life Is Strange 1: Episode 1

In relation to students' perceptions of playing *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1*, Table 1 presents the questionnaire results gathered from the participants.

TABLE 1
PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS TOWARDS VIDEO GAME LIFE IS STRANGE 1: EPISODE 1

Perception Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
I found playing the COTS game enjoyable.	0.00%	0.00%	12.5%	62.5%	25.00%
I feel using the COTS game in the language classroom is a new and more interesting way to learn the skill.	0.00%	4.2%	8.3%	45.8%	41.7%
I feel playing the COTS game in the language classroom is a fantastic method to improve concentration.	0.00%	4.2%	8.3%	50.00%	37.5%
I feel that I need better equipment (e.g. headphones, computer speed) to fully enjoy the game.	22.5%	20.8%	29.2%	19.2%	8.3%
I felt the need to socialize with other players while playing the game.	26.8%	31.7%	8.3%	19.00%	14.2%
I preferred other genres of games over an adventure game *Life is Strange*.	31.5%	25.00%	11.7%	13.5%	18.3%
I did not have enough time to play the game as much as I would have liked.	17.8%	19.7%	9.2%	30.5%	22.8%
I felt that playing the game motivated me to attend the class and helped me improve my listening skills.	0.00%	0.00%	20.8%	42.5%	36.7%

(f). Interview Results

With respect to the results of the interview, Table 2 shows an extract of the most significant students' perceptions of playing *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1*.

TABLE 2
INTERVIEW RESULTS

Participant 1	I found the game's use of dialogue in the target language helpful for practicing my listening skills, particularly, as the characters' dialogue was spoken at a natural pace.
Participant 6	The game's use of real-world scenarios and situations helped me see how the language could be used in practical contexts.
Participant 10	I found that the combination of different learning styles such as visual aids, images, reading subtitles, listening to dialogue, and character interactions with the game's environment helped me engage with the game in a more meaningful way and made the learning process more enjoyable.
Participant 13	The game provided a fun and engaging way to practice the skills, which motivated me to feel like I was part of the story.
Participant 18	I think the game is a great tool for language learners. It made me more confident in my ability to understand spoken language and kept me motivated.
Participant 22	I found the game to be challenging at times, but in a good way it provided an opportunity to learn from mistakes and try again, which made me keep playing and improving my skills.

V. DISCUSSION

To examine the impact of DGBLL and a story-driven COTS video game, *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1*, on language learners' listening skills, the study aimed to address the following questions: How does the story-driven game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* impact the listening skills of the participants? And what are the participants' perceptions of using the story-driven game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* to improve their listening skills? As mentioned in the above results section, the intervention findings for research question 1 revealed that all the experimental group's students improved on the post-test after playing the game compared to their pre-test.

With regard to research question 2 concerning students' perceptions of playing the game, 87.5% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that they found playing the story-driven game to be enjoyable and engaging. Hence, the results obtained are similar to those by Ranalli (2008), Chen and Yang (2013), and Lai and Chen (2023). Similarly, 87.5% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that using the COTS game in the language classroom is a new and more interesting way to learn skills. This indicates that using games could be a way to engage students and make language learning more interesting. Additionally, 87.5% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed that playing the COTS game in the language classroom is a fantastic method to improve concentration. This suggests that games may be an effective way to increase students' focus during language learning. However, there were some concerns raised regarding the need for better equipment (e.g., headphones, computer speed) to fully enjoy the game. 27.5% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, echoing Baltra's (1990) point that adequate equipment is important to handle video games. In terms of socialization, 33.2% of participants' responses either strongly agreed or agreed that the game did not provide enough opportunities to socialize. When asked about their preferences for other genres, the majority of participants 56.5% had no strong preference. However, 31.8% of participants reported that they prefer other types of games over *Life is Strange* due to its lengthy texts and conversations, which made the game feel dull. These findings concur with previous research by Alyaz and Genc (2016) that certain aspects of the game may be less engaging because they were not intended for educational purposes. According to the participants in this study, the game was dull, and this could be linked to the fact that the game did not belong to their preferred gaming genre. Meanwhile, some participants felt that they did not have enough time to play the game, with 53.3% of the responses falling under either strongly agreed or agreed. It is important to note that Chen and Yang (2013) conducted a study that lasted for two hours and demonstrated the positive impact of using DGBLL and COTS games. The study's findings align with those of other studies, most of which have been connected to improved performance after engaging in gaming sessions (Ranalli, 2008; Chen & Yang, 2013; Lai & Chen, 2023). Consequently, the results of the study also showed a positive attitude towards using COTS games. It is worth noting that despite the issues mentioned, the majority of participants 79.2% either strongly agreed or agreed that playing *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* helped them improve their listening skills.

Furthermore, the interview results shed light on participants' perspectives regarding the game's effectiveness in language skill development, including the aspects they found the game's natural pace, real-world scenarios, and engaging gameplay made it beneficial for students to practice and improve listening skills. It's fun and motivating nature boosted confidence in spoken language and encouraged persistence through challenges. This positive impact on language learners' listening skills, motivation, and proficiency development is evident in integrating DGBLL to improve language learning outcomes.

VI. CONCLUSION

The results of the study show the potential of adopting the COTS game *Life is Strange 1: Episode 1* as a DGBLL tool to improve the listening skills of ESL learners. The results of the post-test showed that participants' ability to understand spoken English improved significantly, indicating the benefits of using digital games in language acquisition. The DGBLL approach promotes engagement, significant learning, and creativity by encouraging students to take ownership of their learning process. Furthermore, digital games address real-world challenges by pushing players to consider the consequences of their decisions and develop important life skills such as critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, and language proficiency. While the findings indicate that DGBLL is beneficial in ESL or EFL courses, more research is needed to investigate its applicability and more effective applications of COTS games. The study acknowledges certain limitations, including the short duration of the study, lack of a comparison group, limited sample size, and potential for test repetition bias.

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Moniza Ray S. P is a dedicated scholar currently pursuing a Ph.D. in English Language Teaching (ELT) at Vellore Institute of Technology, India. She completed her M.Phil in English at Ethiraj College for Women, India. Her research interest centers around innovation in ELT within the realm of higher education. She has published papers in Scopus, non-Scopus journals, and book chapters.

Ajit. I is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of School of Social Sciences and Languages at Vellore Institute of Technology, India. He has completed his doctorate of Philosophy from Bharathiar University, India. His research interests lie primarily in exploring and developing novel approaches, methodologies, and technologies to enhance the teaching and learning of English as a second language in higher education settings as well as media-assisted learning, gender studies, folklore, and literature. He has 11 years of teaching and research experience in India. He has published extensively in academic journals and presented his research at international conferences. His notable publications are as follows:

Author Papers:

1. Perumal, K., & Ajit, I. (2022). A Descriptive Study on the Effect of Blogs on Writing Skill Development Using Social Constructivism as a Theory. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 12(8), 1537-1544.
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The Definite Article am- [ʔam-] of Jazani Arabic: An Autosegmental Analysis

Mohammed Q. Ruthan

Department of English, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**A decent number of studies have discussed phonological or morphological aspects of the definite article in Standard or Classical Arabic. However, only a few have described the definite article in Southern Arabic dialects. Arabic consonants are divided into two categories based on how they affect the definite article al- [ʔal-]. Fourteen consonants with the [+coronal] feature cause assimilation, whereas the remaining consonants with [-coronal] do not. This process raises the question of whether this is also the case with the definite article [ʔam-] of the Southern dialect Jazani Arabic. Thus, one goal of this study was to examine whether assimilation occurs in the first place with [ʔam-]. If so, does it assimilate to consonants with specific features? Does it fully or partially assimilate to other consonants? Does directionality play a role in assimilation? Enlightened by autosegmental phonology and feature geometry, this study presents a novel dataset and a non-linear phonological analysis of Jazani [ʔam-] via linking or delinking features. Results showed that [ʔam-] completely assimilated and caused geminates when followed by [m] and partially assimilated when followed by [b] or [w] but never after [-labial] sounds. Assimilation occurred progressively or regressively based on the sonority hierarchy of the consonants. In addition, assimilation only occurred across morphological boundaries and never within one morpheme.**

Index Terms—**autosegmental phonology, assimilation, Arabic, Jazani Arabic, Saudi Arabic**

I. INTRODUCTION

In Standard Arabic, traditional grammarians classify the consonants into two categories based on how they affect the definite prefix al- [ʔal] (Kenstowicz, 1994). One category affects al- while the other does not. Fourteen consonants are called "sun letters" because they behave in the same way as the consonant [ʃ] behaves in the word /ʔal-ʃæms/, which surfaces as [ʔaʃʃæms] "the sun," i.e., assimilating and causing the two consonants to geminate. The other consonants are referred to as "moon letters" because they behave in the same way as the consonant [l] in the word /ʔal-qamar/, which surfaces as [ʔalqamar] "the moon". In other words, they do not assimilate. The sun letters are [s, ʃ, t, d, z, r, n, l, sˤ, zˤ, θ, ðˤ, l, zˤ], and the moon letters are [f, k, h, ʔ, x, b, m, h, w, j, ʕ, ʁ, dʒ] (Alfozan, 1989). Briefly, this assimilation process only occurs when [l] in [ʔal-] is followed by a sound that shares a coronal feature with [l].

Unlike Standard Arabic, Jazani Arabic has [ʔam] as the definite article instead of [ʔal]. While lexically the same, phonologically, these definite articles contain different segments, /l/ and /m/, and thus potentially have different analyses. As mentioned above, [l] in [ʔal-] assimilates to the following sound if it has a coronal feature. Based on this analysis, one can initially predict that [m] in [ʔam-] will assimilate to the following sound if it shares the labial feature with [m] but not coronal or dorsal consonants. This generalization also predicts that there should be a gemination pattern similar to that of [ʔal], meaning a complete assimilation might be observed. This study sought to examine whether assimilation occurred under this generalization, and if so, whether [ʔam-] showed complete or partial assimilation. The researcher tested these speculations by using the Jazani definite article [ʔam-] followed by words beginning with any of the labial sounds available in Jazani Arabic.

To understand this assimilation process, the concept of assimilation, autosegmental phonology, and feature geometry are explained in the literature review.

The Current Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the assimilation process in Jazani Arabic, a dialect spoken in the Southern region of Saudi Arabia. The study has aimed to provide a novel dataset, present an autosegmental analysis of the definite article [ʔam-] of Jazani Arabic, and compare its patterns to that of Standard Arabic, highlighting any similarities or differences. The significance of the current study lies in the paucity of non-linear phonological analyses of this definite article, which has not been discussed before.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Assimilation, Gemination, and Autosegmental Phonology

Assimilation describes how a segment becomes similar to an adjacent segment by taking on features of that segment (Chomsky & Halle, 1968). It occurs when two sounds share a common feature in place or manner of articulation (Dawood & Atawneh, 2015). Assimilation occurs either within a word or across word boundaries (Roach, 2009). It

usually occurs in casual and rapid speech and is less likely in slow and careful speech (Roach, 2009). There are various manners of assimilation, which include progressive, regressive, and coalescent assimilation (Gimson, 2001), and forms of assimilation, which include complete or full assimilation (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014) and partial assimilation (Padgett, 1995; Lin, 2002).

Autosegmental phonology developed a completely distinct understanding of assimilatory processes (Goldsmith, 1976). In autosegmental phonology, assimilation is explained as a spreading rule (Hayes, 1986). According to this framework, each segment is associated or linked by association lines to its separate layer or tier (Goldsmith, 1976). The spreading rule adds more association lines, which increases the domain of the segments but also sometimes deletes or delinks features/segments. In different words, assimilation can be expressed without the use of interdependent variables and instead by assigning the assimilating features to a distinct autosegmental layer or tier of representation. The pertinent features or set of features merely broaden its domain to encompass the components undergoing the assimilation process (Pulleyblank, 1995). Before demonstrating how assimilation occurs, it is important to discuss gemination.

In the literature, geminate consonants are represented either as a long consonant or two sequences of a consonant, phonemically contrasting with singleton consonants in terms of segmental duration. In these cases, the realization of the phonetic length of a segment as a singleton or geminate is contrastively important to distinguish lexical items. Geminate consonants can thus be viewed as two identical consonants that occur one after another to cause longer closure duration (Trubetzkoy, 1969; Catford, 1977). In the syllable structure, the first segment of the two-consonant sequence is in the coda of the first syllable, and the second segment is in the onset of the second syllable. Moreover, a geminate consonant is a sequence of two consonants that usually have the same place and manner of articulation (Delattre, 1971). There are two types of geminate consonants: true geminates and fake geminates. A true geminate occurs in a single morpheme, while a fake geminate occurs across morpheme boundaries, namely due to the melodic segment created by the two segments at the morpheme boundary (Hayes, 1986). A true geminate is doubly linked, as represented in (1a), while fake geminates are singly linked, as in (1b).

1a.   C   C   1b.   C   C

t   t   t   (Hayes, 1986)
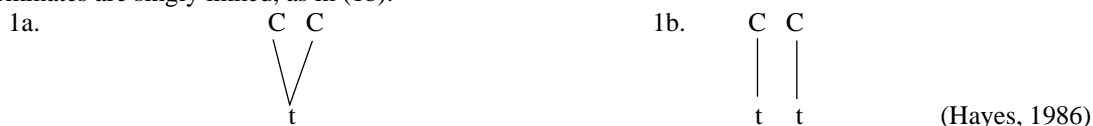
Equipped with these concepts, complete assimilation of the Arabic definite al- [ʔal] prefix can be explained as a spreading of the following coronal segment node to the [l] C-place node after delinking it from its coronal. Therefore, [l] in [ʔal] becomes [ʃ] before a word that initially begins with [ʃ], as in [ʃams]. When the definite article is combined with this word, the word's underlying representation is /ʔal-ʃams/ and surfaces as [ʔaʃʃams] (Kenstowicz, 1994). The outcome of this assimilation rule results in a geminate consonant. Thus, the autosegmental underlying representation can be expressed as in (2a) and the surface representation as in (2b).

2a.   ʔ a l ʃ a m s   2b.   ʔ a ʃ a m s   segmental tier

C V C C V C C   C V C C V C C   CV tier
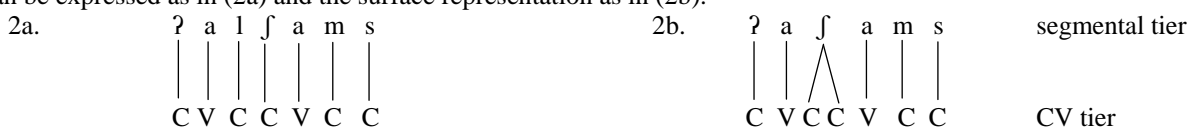
B. Arabic Consonants

Arabic is a Semitic language with a limited vocalic system, containing only /a/, /i/, and /u/, but an extensive consonantal system, including 28 consonants, 14 of which are categorized as sun letters and the remaining as moon letters. As mentioned above, this assimilation process is only applicable to sun letters. Table 1 illustrates these two categories.

TABLE 1
CLASSIFICATION OF ARABIC CONSONANTS (ADAPTED FROM KAMBUZIYA, 2007)

| Sun letters (coronal)	Surface representation	Gloss	Moon letters (non-coronal)	Surface representation	Gloss
/ʔal-ʃæms/	[ʔaʃʃæms]	The sun	/ʔal-qæmær/	[ʔalqæmær]	The moon
/ʔal-sænæh/	[ʔassænæh]	The year	/ʔal-færæs/	[ʔalfæræs]	The mare
/ʔal-zæit/	[ʔazzæit]	The oil	/ʔal-kitæ:b/	[ʔalkitæ:b]	The book
/ʔal-næhr/	[ʔannæhr]	The river	/ʔal-hærf/	[ʔalhærf]	The letter
/ʔal-dæ:r/	[ʔaddæ:r]	The house	/ʔal-ʔæb/	[ʔalʔæb]	The father
/ʔal-θæwb/	[ʔaθθæwb]	The garment	/ʔal-xæ:tæm/	[ʔalxæ:tæm]	The ring
/ʔal- rædʒul/	[ʔarrædʒul]	The man	/ʔal-bæ:b/	[ʔalbæ:b]	The gate
/ʔal-tidʒæ:ræ/	[ʔattidʒæ:ræ]	The commerce	/ʔal-mæwt/	[ʔalmæwt]	The death
/ʔal-læbæn/	[ʔallæbæn]	The milk	/ʔal-hæræb/	[ʔalhæræb]	The escape
/ʔasl-sˤaif/	[ʔasˤsˤaif]	The summer	/ʔal-wælæd/	[ʔalwælæd]	The boy
/ʔal-ðˤæ:lim/	[ʔaðˤðˤæ:lim]	The cruel	/ʔal-jæwm/	[ʔaljæwm]	The day/today
/ʔal-tˤi:n/	[ʔatˤtˤi:n]	The mud	/ʔal-ʕæ:lim/	[ʔalʕæ:lim]	The scientist
/ʔal-zˤæʕf/	[ʔazˤzˤæʕf]	The weakness	/ʔal-ʁæ:r/	[ʔalʁæ:r]	The cave
/ʔal- ðælɢ/	[ʔaððælɢ]	The tip of the tongue	/ʔal-dʒæbæl/	[ʔaldʒæbæl]	The mountain

C. Feature Geometry

The autosegmental representation by itself is not enough to explain how assimilation occurs. It is important to know how and in what cases the spreading rule applies. In other words, the question that arises is what common feature exists between the [l] in [ʔal] and the following consonant that causes [l] to assimilate. Some researchers have discussed this assimilation rule in the frame of feature geometry (Clements & Hume, 1995). Many researchers have adopted autosegmental phonology to analyze assimilation as a spreading rule and feature geometry to show what features are spreading based on the organization of feature grouping. Kambuziya (2007) and Youssef (2013) proposed that the /l/ is [+coronal] and shares the same feature with all consonants it assimilates to. To clarify, the [+coronal] feature of the segment following the [l] spreads to the C-place node of [l] after it delinks from its coronal node. The definite article [ʔal] assimilation rule is represented in (3).

3. [ʔal-] Assimilation Rule in Classical Arabic
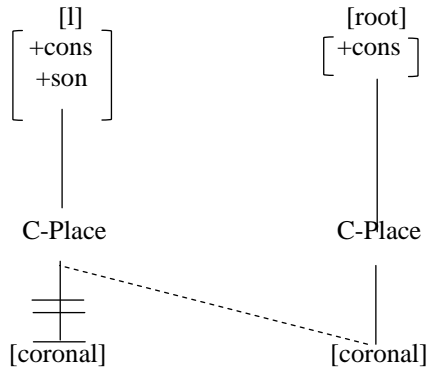
This assimilation spreading rule illustrates that the segment following [l] in the definite article [ʔal-] spreads the coronal feature of that segment to the C-place of [l], making this an instance of complete assimilation. The assimilation rule in (3) only applies to segments with a coronal feature. If the sound following [l] is dorsal or labial, [l] does not assimilate to that sound. For instance, if the word /færæs/ "mare" comes after the definite article [ʔal-], [l] will not assimilate to [f] because [f] is labial, not coronal, so the word surfaces as [ʔalfæræs]. Likewise, if /kitæːb/ "book" follows [ʔal-], [l] will not assimilate to [k] because [k] is dorsal, so the word surfaces as [ʔalkitæːb]. The complete assimilation spreading rule in Classical Arabic is a regressive assimilation rule, as seen in (3), where the coronal node spreads leftward. The assimilation rule results in a geminate consonant that is doubly linked, meaning it is a true geminate. Abu-Salim (1980) argued that geminates resulting from the assimilation rule can be described as "true" or "fake" geminates by testing them with /i/ epenthesis. Abu-Salim contended that true geminates cannot be separated by epenthesis. Therefore, he proposed the derivation in (4).

4.
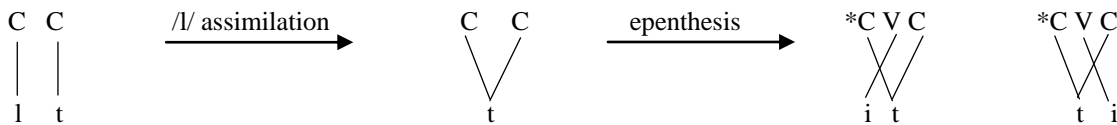
With this background on the assimilation of [l] in [ʔal-] in Standard Arabic, the question that arises is whether the abovementioned assimilation rule applies to the definite article [ʔam-] that ends with [m], and if so, in what environment. Should we expect to see the same pattern of assimilation and gemination with labial sounds since [m] is a labial sound? The next sections present, analyze, and discuss whether the assimilation process is applicable to the definite article am- [ʔam-] in Jazani Arabic, and if so, how the rule might be applicable.

III. METHODOLOGY

The Current Study Data

The Jazani Arabic definite article am- [ʔam-] is the same as the Standard Arabic article al- [ʔal-] in terms of lexical function, meaning that both [ʔam-] and [ʔal-]- are equally used as definite articles behaving like the English definite article "the." The data in the literature could be used, to some extent, with the Jazani Arabic definite article, namely the data mentioned above from Kambuziya (2007). However, due to lexical differences between Standard Arabic and Jazani Arabic, the researcher, a native Jazani speaker, has provided new data for the purpose of the current study.

Phonologically, these two articles function differently and have different analyses. As noted above, to say "the sun" in Standard Arabic, the article [ʔal-] has to be added to /ʃæms/ "sun," producing [ʔaʃʃæms], with [l] assimilating to the following sound [ʃ] and causing gemination. In Jazani Arabic, the prefix am- [ʔam] will not change the meaning, but the gemination of [ʃʃ] resulting from the [l] assimilation in Standard Arabic is not attested with the use of [ʔam-], so the word will be pronounced [ʔamʃams] in slow and careful speech and [mʃams] in casual and rapid speech. It also does not assimilate to velar consonants like [g], so /ʔam-gamar/ is realized as [ʔamgamar] or [mgamar]. This pattern is further illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
/ʔAM/ WITH CORONAL AND DORSAL WORDS

Sun letters	Surface representation	Gloss	Moon letters	Surface representation	Gloss
/ʔam-ʃams/	[mʃams]	The sun	/ʔam-gamar/	[mgamar]	The moon
/ʔam-samak/	[msamak]	The fish	/ʔam-kitæb/	[mkitæb]	The book
/ʔam-zait/	[mzait]	The oil	/ʔam-ħaʒdar/	[mħaʒdar]	The stone
/ʔam-nar/	[mnar]	The fire	/ʔam-ʔarnab/	[mʔarnab]	The rabbit
/ʔam-deek/	[mdeek]	The rooster	/ʔam-xæ:tam/	[ʔam-xæ:tam]	The ring
/ʔam-θob/	[mθob]	The robe	/ʔam-hail/	[mhail]	The cardamom
/ʔam- rudʒul/	[mrudʒul]	The man	/ʔam-jad/	[mjad]	The hand
/ʔam-tamr/	[mtamr]	The dates	/ʔam-ʕalam/	[mʕalam]	The flag
/ʔam-laban/	[mlaban]	The buttermilk	/ʔam-ɣʊrfah/	[mɣʊrfah]	The room
/ʔam-sˤuba/	[msˤuba]	The boy	/ʔam-dʒɪsɪr/	[mdʒɪsɪr]	The bridge
/ʔam-ðˤaama/	[mðˤaama]	The thirst			
/ʔam-tˤawlah/	[mtˤawlah]	The table			
/ʔam- ðorah/	[m ðorah]	The corn			

While it is clear from the examples in Table 2 that assimilation of [m] in [ʔam-] does not occur with the following coronal and dorsal consonants, it is unclear whether assimilation occurs with labial consonants. The generalization predicts that the Jazani Arabic definite article [ʔam-] may show complete assimilation and gemination before [m], similar to that of [ʔal] before [l], and partial assimilation with other labial sounds. Therefore, to avoid redundancy, data pertaining to all labial sounds are provided and discussed in the next sections.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. [ʔam-] With the Voiced Bilabial /m/

When the Jazani Arabic definite article [ʔam-] is followed by a word that begins with /m/, the two /m/ consonants result in gemination. For instance, when the article [ʔam-] is followed by the word /moz/ "bananas," gemination occurs in /ʔammoz/, which surfaces as [mmoz] "the bananas." However, instead of stating that the gemination resulted from spreading and delinking rules, as this would sound redundant, a simpler statement would be that phonetically, a sequence of two labial sounds, in this case [m], resulted in a geminate consonant. In an autosegmental analysis, this can be represented as either two sequences of /m/, each of which is linked to a single C tier, as represented in (5a), or doubly linked, as represented in (5b).

5a.   ʔ a m m o z   5b.   ʔ a m o z   segmental tier

        C V C C V C   C V C C V C   CV tier
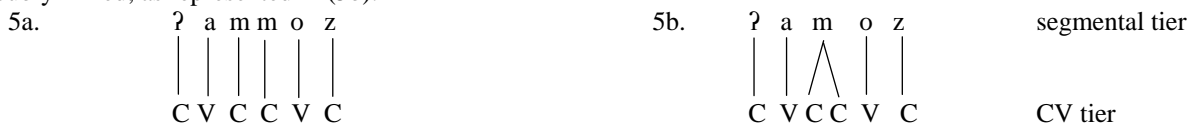
Both representations phonetically ensure that the surface of this word has a gemination of the consonant /m/. However, according to Hayes (1986), the representation in (5a) expresses a fake geminate, while the representation in (5b) expresses a true geminate. Abu-Salim (1980) argued that the geminate sounds that resulted from [l] assimilation in Standard Arabic were true geminates, proposing that this geminate could not be separated by epenthesis. Similarly, I propose that geminates in Jazani Arabic that have resulted from a sequence of two consonants are also true geminates. Any attempt to break up this gemination with epenthesis results in the wrong surface representation. For instance, if the geminate sound /mm/ in the word [ʔammoz] "the bananas" is separated by /i/, this epenthesis results in the wrong surface representation: *[ʔamimoz]. However, (5a) violates the Obligatory Contour Principle, which states that adjacent identical segments are not allowed. Thus, tier conflation is needed (McCarthy, 1986), in which morphemes are on a separate tier, producing (5b). Table 3 provides a sample of data exhibiting the geminate sounds that occur due to a sequence of two instances of [m].

TABLE 3
/ʔAM/ WITH LABIAL /M/ WORDS

ʔam + m	Surface representation	Gloss
/ʔam-mɪftaħ/	[mmɪftaħ]	The key
/ʔam-moz/	[mmoz]	The bananas
/ʔam-malaf/	[mmalaf]	The file
/ʔam-mabna/	[mmabna]	The building
/ʔam-mʊx /	[mmʊx]	The brain

Another question is whether the same results are apparent if the following word begins with /w/. In other words, will [m] assimilate to /w/? Therefore, the next section provides examples of words that begin with /w/ and presents an autosegmental analysis to demonstrate any phonological processes.

B. [ʔam-] With the Voiced Labio-Velar /w/

In the case of /w/, when [ʔam-] is followed by a word that starts with /w/, a complete assimilation or gemination does

not occur. Instead, the labial or rounding feature spreads from the labio-velar /w/ to [m] in the definite article [ʔam-], which results in a labialized bilabial nasal sound [mʷ]. For instance, when the word /walad/ "boy" follows the definite article [ʔam-], the pronunciation of [m] in the article surfaces as [mʷwalad] "the boy". Unlike the assimilation in Standard Arabic, this is partial rather than complete assimilation, spreading only the labial feature from the [w] labial node to the V-place node of [m] and not spreading to the C-place. Speaking of feature spreading direction, this process is a regressive assimilation rule, spreading leftward just like the assimilation in Standard Arabic. The labialization spreading rule is represented in (6).

6.

[m]
$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{cons} \\ +\text{son} \end{bmatrix}$$

[w]
$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{cons} \\ +\text{son} \end{bmatrix}$$

C-place   C-place

[labial]   V-place   V-place   [labial]
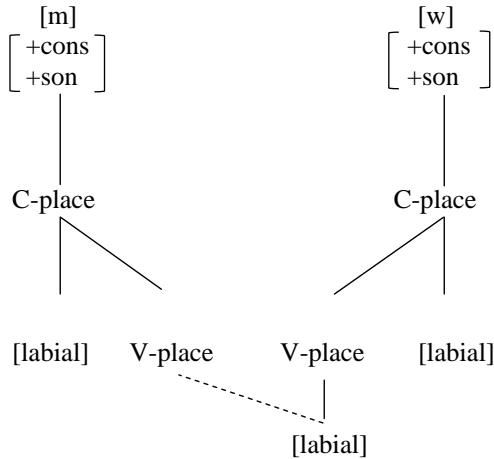
[labial]

It is important to emphasize that the assimilation rule in (6) only applies to labial sounds. In other words, if someone assumes that /w/ is a glide and /j/ is a glide as well, then a palatalization assimilation rule is expected. For example, if there is a word that begins with /j/, the [m] in [ʔam-] presumably surfaces as [mʲ]. Whether that is the case or not, it is beyond the scope of the current study, a topic I leave for future research. Instead, this rule is restricted to the labio-velar sound /w/. Thus, the [labial] feature is specified in the assimilation rule. Table 4 provides a sample of data exhibiting the labialization or rounding of /m/ in Jazani Arabic.
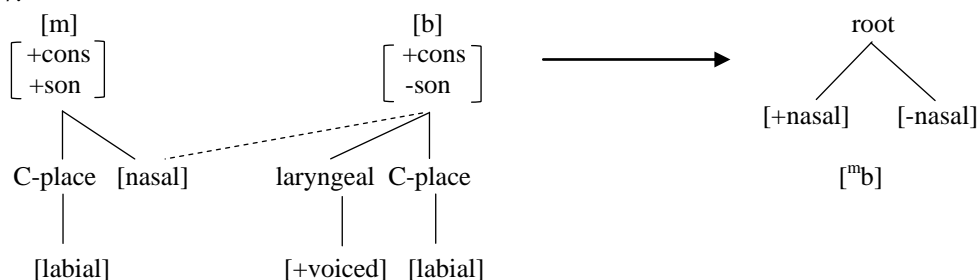
TABLE 4
/ʔAM/ WITH LABIAL /W/ WORDS

ʔam + w	Surface representation	Gloss
/ʔamʷward/	[mʷward]	The roses
/ʔamʷwalaʕah/	[mʷwallaʕah]	The lighter
/ʔamʷwadi/	[mʷwadi]	The valley
/ʔamʷwaragah/	[mʷwaragah]	The paper
/ʔamʷwarʃah/	[mʷwarʃah]	The workshop

However, if the following word begins with /b/, it is unclear from the data above whether there would be partial or complete assimilation. Will [m] assimilate to /b/, producing a sequence of two [b] sounds like with [m]; will [m] partially assimilate to [b], like with [w]; or will a new pattern be attested? The next section provides examples of words that begin with /b/ and presents an autosegmental analysis to demonstrate any phonological processes in this regard.

C. [ʔam-] With the Voiced Bilabial /b/

In the case of /b/, when [ʔam-] is followed by a word that begins with /b/, a complete assimilation or gemination does not occur; instead, partial assimilation occurs. Unlike the previous assimilation rule, in which [ʔam-] is followed by a word with initial /b/, [m] is the segment that spreads a feature. It spreads the [nasal] feature to the following sound, namely to the voiced bilabial /b/ for the moment. For example, if the word /bæ:b/ "door" followed the article [ʔam-], the representation of this word would be realized as [ᵐbæ:b] "the door". The assimilation spreading rule is represented in (7).

7.

[m]
$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{cons} \\ +\text{son} \end{bmatrix}$$

[b]
$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{cons} \\ -\text{son} \end{bmatrix}$$

→   root

C-place [nasal]   laryngeal C-place   [+nasal]   [-nasal]

[labial]   [+voiced] [labial]   [ᵐb]

This assimilation spreading rule illustrates that only the [nasal] feature of the sound [m] spreads to the following

segment [b] to become a prenasalized sound [ᵐb]. This is similar to the previous assimilation rule in terms of spreading only partial features and unlike the assimilation in Standard Arabic, which was an example of complete assimilation. In addition, unlike both the labialization assimilation rule and the C-place assimilation rule in Standard Arabic, this rule involves progressive assimilation, spreading rightward from the /m/ in the definite article [ʔam-] to the following segment, in this case the voiced bilabial /b/. It is important to ensure that the rule in (7) results in a prenasalized sound [ᵐb] and eliminates other predictions like [mb], proposing that the segment has two parts, just like affricate representations, but this segment has [+nasal] and [-nasal], as illustrated above. Cross-linguistically, prenasalized sounds in some African languages function as a single segment and so are represented as an underlying nasal + obstruent sequence across morpheme boundaries, which is remarkably similar to the case of Jazani Arabic (Odden, 1996). Table 5 provides a sample of data showing the prenasalized labial sound [ᵐb].

TABLE 5
/ʔAM/ WITH LABIAL /B/ WORDS

ʔam + b	Surface representation	Gloss
/ʔamᵐbortuqal/	[mᵐbortuqal]	The oranges
/ʔamᵐbatˤah/	[mᵐbatˤah]	The duck
/ʔamᵐbent/	[mᵐbent]	The girl
/ʔamᵐbaiðˤ/	[mᵐbaiðˤ]	The egg
/ʔamᵐbatˤriq/	[mᵐbatˤriq]	The penguin

With respect to nasal feature spreading, one might wonder whether this assimilation rule applies to other labial sounds in the language, such as /f/. The assimilation rule above is clear; the nasal feature only spreads to a sound that is [+voiced]. Furthermore, these two assimilation rules show a difference in the directionality of spreading, a point discussed below.

D. Directionality and Sonority Hierarchy

With the assimilation rules established for Jazani Arabic, similarities and differences were noticed with the assimilation rule in Standard Arabic. The first difference is that Standard Arabic has a complete assimilation rule, while Jazani Arabic has partial assimilation. The second difference is that the spreading rule in Standard Arabic is regressive assimilation, while in Jazani Arabic the labialization assimilation rule is regressive, and the nasality-spreading rule is progressive. Therefore, the question that arises is what causes the directionality in the spreading rules in Jazani Arabic. To answer this question, it is necessary to look at sonority hierarchy concepts regarding assimilation.

Heselwood (2011) proposed that assimilation rules followed the sonority hierarchy, claiming that the less sonorous sound assimilated to the more sonorous sound, as in (8).

8.

n   l   r   j →
Increasing sonority
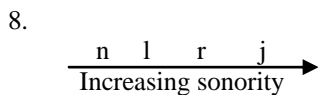
Based on this sonority hierarchy, Heselwood (2011) assumed that /n/ assimilated to /l/, /l/ to /r/, and /r/ to /j/ but not vice versa. However, many languages show the opposite trend, and some do not follow the hierarchy at all. For instance, Lebanese Arabic follows the sonority hierarchy. The prefix /b/, a less sonorous segment, assimilates to the following nasal /n/, a more sonorous segment. Therefore, the word /bnaakul/ surfaces as [mnaakul] "we eat".

Other languages do not follow the sonority hierarchy. In Diola, a West African language, a segment only assimilates to another segment with less or equal sonority. For example, in the word /ni-gam-gam/, the more sonorous sound /m/ assimilates to the less sonorous sound /g/, and the word surfaces as [nigaŋgam] "I judge". As another example, in /ku-bon-bon/, the more sonorous sound /n/ assimilates to the less sonorous sound /b/, so the word surfaces as [kubombon] "they sent" (Sapir, 2011).

In Standard Arabic, on the other hand, the [l] in the definite article [ʔal-] assimilates to the following coronal sound irrespective of sonority. For instance, it has been observed that [l] assimilates to a more sonorous sound like /r/ in /ʔal-rædʒul/, which is realized as [ʔarrædʒul]. Moreover, [l] assimilates to less sonorous sounds like [ʃ], [s], and [z]. For instance, when the definite article precedes the words [ʃæms] "sun," [sænæh] "year," and [zait] "oil," the [l] assimilates to [ʃ], [s], and [z], respectively, so the words surface as [ʔaʃʃæms] "the sun," [ʔassænah] "the year," and [ʔazzait] "the oil" (Youssef, 2013).

With that in mind, framing the assimilation rules in Jazani Arabic in terms of the sonority hierarchy can help determine the directionality of the spreading rules. In Jazani Arabic, the less sonorous sound assimilates to the more sonorous sound. In other words, the more sonorous sound spreads a feature to the less sonorous sound. To clarify, in the labialization rule, the more sonorous sound [w] spreads [+rounding] to the less sonorous sound, in this case [m]. In the nasal feature spreading rule, the more sonorous [m] spreads the nasal feature to the less sonorous [b]. This explanation accounts for the leftward or rightward directionality of the spreading rules in Jazani Arabic. After observing these assimilation rules in Jazani Arabic and how the sonority hierarchy is related to the directionality in spreading, the study addresses whether these rules are phonetic or phonological.

E. Is Assimilation in Jazani Arabic Phonetic or Phonological?

Because phonetics and phonology have some interaction and overlap, the rules discussed in the previous sections

could be seen as belonging to one area or the other. However, if the rules apply everywhere, one can say that the rules are general and thus are phonetic rules. If the rules are only applicable in certain contexts, one can claim that the rules are phonological. As mentioned before, the place assimilation rule in Standard Arabic only occurs across morpheme boundaries, but the assimilation rules in Jazani Arabic have not previously been established.

(a). Morpheme Boundary

One question here is whether the assimilation rules for [ʔam-] in Jazani Arabic are restricted to a morpheme boundary. Other Arabic morphemes that end with [m] followed by words that begin with [m] can be used to test whether gemination occurs due to a sequence of two instances of /m/. In Standard Arabic, for example, the plural object pronoun /hum/ "them" is attached to verbs. When this pronoun is attached to the verb /kallama/ "call," it becomes [kallamahum]. If this form is followed by a noun that begins with /m/ like /muħamməd/, the result is [kallamahum muħaməd] "Mohammed called them". That is, the /m/ in the pronoun and the /m/ in the following noun do not geminate, as in the case when the Jazani Arabic definite article [ʔam-] is followed by a noun that starts with /m/. Therefore, one can conclude that [m] gemination cannot occur with other morphemes that have /m/, and this gemination is restricted to [ʔam-] in terms of morpheme boundaries.

(b). Word Boundary

In addition to /m/ gemination not occurring with morphemes other than [ʔam-] across morpheme boundaries, this gemination pattern does not occur across word boundaries either. If a word that ends with /m/ was followed by any other labial sound investigated in the earlier sections, e.g., /m, b, w/, none of the assimilation rules would apply. For example, if the word /galam/ "pen" is followed by the name /walid/, the labialization spreading rule does not occur, so the phrase will surface as [galam walid] "Waleed's pen". Table 6 provides more data showing that none of the assimilation rules apply across word boundaries.

TABLE 6
ASSIMILATION ACROSS WORD BOUNDARIES

Word boundary	Expected rule	Surface representation	Gloss
ʕalam# #masˤr	[mm]	[ʕalam masˤr]	Egypt's flag
gasem# #muʃtark	[mm]	[gasem muʃtark]	Common denominator
tˤagem# #worud	[mʷ]	[tˤagem worud]	Set of roses
film# #waħed	[mʷ]	[film waħed]	One movie
kʊllʊhʊm# # barra	[ᵐb]	[kʊllʊhʊm barra]	All of them are outside
xatem# #bader	[ᵐb]	[xatem bader]	Bader's ring

Based on the data in Table 6, it can be proposed that assimilation rules in Jazani Arabic are restricted to the definite article [ʔam-]. With that said, the question of whether the assimilation rules in Jazani Arabic are phonetic or phonological can now be answered. If the rules are phonetic in nature, the assimilation rules should apply across other morpheme boundaries and word boundaries. However, the rules are not applicable everywhere in all contexts but are rather restricted to the specific morpheme boundary in which [ʔam] occurs. Thus, I can generalize that [ʔam-] assimilation rules are morpho-phonologically driven. This is an example of a derived environment effect (Mascaró, 1976; Kiparsky, 1993; Kager, 1999). Similarly, in Terena, an Arawakan language in Brazil, the prenasalization of consonants is derived by a morphological rule. In this language, the first singular pronoun is represented in the [nasal] feature that is aligned to the left edge and then spreads rightward. For instance, the word /piho/ is realized [mbiho] "went," which indicates that this is driven by a morphological rule (Cole & Kisseberth, 1995). In the following section, I review the main points of this study and its contributions.

V. CONCLUSION

This discussion on the Jazani Arabic definite article [ʔam-] and Standard Arabic definite article [ʔal-] has revealed similarities and differences between the assimilation rules in these dialects. Both the [m] in [ʔam-] and [l] in [ʔal-] showed assimilation rules based on the following sound's features. That is, Jazani Arabic showed assimilation with the following labial sounds because [m] is a labial sound, while Standard Arabic showed assimilation with the following coronal sounds because [l] is a coronal sound.

In terms of differences, Standard Arabic showed a complete place assimilation rule, while Jazani Arabic had partial assimilation rules. Another observed difference was that Standard Arabic had a regressive spreading rule, whereas in Jazani Arabic both regressive and progressive assimilation rules were attested. The directionality of the spreading was explained by the sonority hierarchy. The assimilation process in Jazani Arabic showed that less sonorous sounds assimilated to more sonorous sounds. In contrast, Standard Arabic appeared to apply assimilation irrespective of sonority hierarchy, so [l] could assimilate to less sonorous as well as more sonorous sounds.

Many studies have examined the Standard Arabic definite article [ʔal-], but few have discussed some linguistic aspects of [ʔam-] and none have discussed the phonological aspects of [ʔam-]. Therefore, the contribution of this paper is to provide a phonological analysis of the Jazani Arabic definite article [ʔam-] using an autosegmental phonology and feature geometry framework, which had not been accomplished in prior research.

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Mohammed Q. Ruthan received his BA in English Language and Literature from Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University and graduated with a Second Honor Degree in 2010. In 2016, he got his MA in Linguistics from Southern Illinois University. In 2020, he was awarded his PhD in linguistics from Michigan State University. His dissertation investigated phonological and sociolinguistic aspects of Jazani Arabic.

An Analysis of Life Skills in the Content of English Language Text Books

Abeer Alghazo

Department of English Language and Literature, Ajloun National University, Ajloun, Jordan

Abstract—This present paper aims at analyzing the six main domains of life skills: Effective Communication, Problem-solving, Decision-making, Creative/Critical thinking, Personal/ social life skills, and Leadership life skills / Self-awareness. The unit of analysis used in this study is the activities that show or indicate the specific life skill. The criteria of this paper are the extent of the inclusion of life skills activities that enhance interactive learning and meaningful communication in the pupils' book of Action Pack10. The researcher adopted the analytical descriptive approach. Frequencies and percentages are measured to verify the results of the questions of the study. The findings showed variation in the frequencies of the six main domains and each domain as well. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester.

Index Terms—content analysis, communicative activities, life skills, action pack

I. INTRODUCTION

"Life skills are those skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life." Hendricks (1998, pp. 28-29).

The educational system in Jordan tries to accustom the learners to improvement and development in the areas of teaching and learning. This system is responsible for integrating the English language into the learners' daily life by stepping from the secondary stages at schools to advanced levels at universities in a systematic process. To achieve that, there should be a well-designed curriculum that takes into account the learners 'cognitive, linguistic, and emotional factors. Hutchinson and Torres (1994; cited in Litz, 2005) stated that:

> *The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Every year millions of copies are sold, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in [various] countries… No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook.* (p. 315)

In addition, there is a major need to take life skills factors such as social, religious, political, and communicational factors when designing the curriculums and courses into consideration. These kinds of life skills have a crucial role to engage the learners in their community and make them productive members in their real-life conditions. Educators, syllabus designers, supervisors, and teachers have a big responsibility toward offering students with needed skills for developing their level of proficiency and enabling them to be active members in everyday life situations.

Language proficiency is a measurement of how well an individual has mastered a language. Proficiency refers to the ability of an individual to communicate effectively in a particular language. It involves the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar and the ability to use them in context. In today's globalized world, language proficiency has become increasingly important. It is no longer enough to be able to speak one's native language; being able to communicate in multiple languages has become a valuable skill in many fields. There are different levels of language proficiency, ranging from basic to advance. Basic proficiency refers to the ability to understand and use simple phrases and sentences, while advanced proficiency involves the ability to understand and use complex language structures and express oneself fluently. Language proficiency can also be categorized into receptive and productive skills. Receptive skills refer to the ability to understand spoken or written language, while productive skills refer to the ability to produce spoken or written language. In short, proficiency is what students can do with what they know.

The ACTFL proficiency guidelines which were published in 1982 and continued to be updated and developed through the 1990s define and measure language ability in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. The guidelines were not initiated from a particular theoretical view, but they share many of the same components of other theoretically derived frameworks of communicative language ability. The ACTFL guidelines have four major proficiency levels: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior, and three sublevels: low, mid, and high. The levels of proficiency on the ACTFL scale have four interrelated assessment criteria, global tasks/ functions, context/ content, accuracy, and text type. Today the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines have a crucial effect on the content and the teaching methodology of many foreign language courses.

Based on the above-mentioned frameworks, Omaggio (2001, pp. 90-91) suggests five guiding principles for organizing and planning instruction in a second language classroom. These principles apply to instruction at all levels of proficiency ranging from novice to superior. They are meant to be flexible enough to meet the varying needs and develop the growth of learners. The principles are stated in the form of hypotheses. The hypotheses are built on five major characteristics. She believes that they are conducive to the development of proficiency when they are taken into

consideration in the foreign language curriculum. These characteristics are context, functions, accuracy, effectiveness, and cultural understanding. The five working hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Opportunities must be provided for students to practice using language in a range of contexts likely to be encountered in the target culture. Hypothesis 2: Opportunities should be provided for students to practice carrying out a range of functions (task universals) likely to be necessary for dealing with others in the target culture. Hypothesis 3: There should be a concern for the development of linguistic accuracy from the beginning of instruction in a proficiency-oriented approach. Hypothesis 4: Proficiency oriented approaches should respond to the affective needs of students as well as to their cognitive needs. Students should feel motivated to learn and must be given opportunities to express their meanings in a non-threatening environment. Hypothesis 5: Cultural understanding must be promoted in various ways so that students are prepared to live more harmoniously in the target-language community. (pp. 90-91)

All the ACTFL guidelines and Omaggio's principles, push foreign language teachers to focus on the communicative aspect as a whole and not to separate the components of language learning into separate skills that must be mastered individually (Omaggio, 2001, p. 39). These communicative aspects promote communication, interaction, authenticity, and life skills practices, etc. The communicative language teaching approach and its principles (communication, task, and meaningfulness) conform to the five hypotheses of proficiency. It is a flexible approach to teaching and practicing the language. As a result, the Ministry of Education in Jordan has realized the fundamental role of using the communicative approach to teach English language skills for the basic and secondary stages in public and private schools. Ministry of Education (2006, p. 9) stated that "English language teaching should be interactively attempted and evaluated in light of the basic principles of communicative language teaching".

Communicative language teaching (CLT) makes use of real-life situations that require communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Language teaching is based on different functions and the classroom activities vary according to the learners' needs. Students' motivation comes from their intrinsic desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics. Richardson and Rodgers (cited in Omaggio, 2001, p. 117) assure that "(CLT) does not claim a particular theory of language learning as its 8 bases..." though, they believe there are several theoretical premises that can be deduced from a consideration of the approach: 1. The communication principle: activities that involve communicative promotion of learning. 2. The task principle: completion of real-world tasks promotes learning. 3. The meaningfulness principle: meaningful and authentic language uses are necessary for learners. Accordingly, Communication skills are vital to good performance in society. Learners should learn strategies and ways to communicate effectively by listening carefully to what others say to state their thoughts and ideas (Ferry, 2006; Loy, 2006).

English language courses in Jordan are introduced as compulsory subjects to the learners in Government and private schools from the early stage, kindergarten to the twelfth class. Action Pack, which is the Jordanian English curriculum, is built based on the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language that tries to build the communicative competence of learners. CLT has been established as the major approach in teaching English as a foreign language in Jordan that focuses on enhancing good communication with other peoples (Mclean et al., 1985). The English textbook is considered one of the precious tools to develop learners' communication skills and abilities.

Consequently, the Educational process in Jordan tries to prepare the learners for their future life. Recently, "the education for Life" attended much interest among educators all around the world. This concept put much emphasis on the relationship between schools and universities and society. Accordingly, English textbooks in Jordan should include a variety of life skills to engage learners in their society and enable them to be effective members of everyday life situations. Motallebzadeh and Ashraf (2014) stated that English language textbooks are used as tools for developing the learners' life skills. Consequently, life skills should be taken into consideration while designing the curriculum and textbooks. Ferch (2005, p. 47) indicated that teachers agree that textbooks have a crucial role and influence on daily instruction.

Richards (2001, p. 91) stated that to engage learners in society, there is a need to develop life skills in the curriculum. World Health Organization (2000) stated that "Life skills are the abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enables individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life". Hendricks (1998, pp. 28-29) also defined life skills as "those skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life". It can't be denied that life skills are needed for helping individuals and learners to be productive members of their homes, schools, society, and their life in general (Anderson, 2005).

Maass et al. (2006) classified life skills into these types: communication, problem-solving decision-making, community service, goal setting, conflict resolution, critical thinking, and cooperation. El Sawi and Smith (1997) also stated that these life skills, such as decision-making, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving, communication should be taken into account while designing an account of a young program. Bender (2002; cited in Hamdona, 2007) analyzed the life skills into these domains "decision making, problem-solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relating, self-awareness, ability to empathize, coping with emotions and coping with stress" (p. 15). By adopting these life skills, learners can make their decision correctly, develop responsibility, build their motivation and self-esteem, improve solve-problem abilities, develop their communication skills, and develop they are working in pairs and teams. There is an urgent need to take these skills when designing curriculums

and textbooks into consideration. Content analysis is considered a good way and technique to identify specified characteristics of texts and messages. It also provides valuable insights into texts and the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook. Palmquist (1990) indicated that there are many advantages to analyzing the content of any text:

> looks directly at communication via texts or transcripts, and hence gets at the central aspect of social interaction, can provide valuable historical/cultural insights over time through analysis of texts, allows a closeness to text which can alternate between specific categories and relationships and also statistically analyzes the coded form of the text, can be used to interpret texts for purposes such as the development of expert systems (since knowledge and rules can both be coded in terms of explicit statements about the relationships among concepts), is an unobtrusive means of analyzing interactions and provides insight into complex models of human thought and language use. (p. 3)

Accordingly, this paper is an attempt to analyze eight main domains of life skills 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem-solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/ Critical thinking 5) Personal/ social life skills 6) Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although the Jordanian Ministry of Education (2006) puts down a list of English guidelines "General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language" that stress the integral role of English as a foreign language in developing and improving the learners' language competence and proficiency, EFL learners still face many difficulties and challenges on how to communicate in English effectively. It is essential to analyze the required life skills that should be involved in the content of English textbooks. So the researcher took Action Pack ten as a sample to measure the distribution and the inclusion of these skills in it and see if it is sufficient or not.

III. PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

According to the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language in Jordan of 2006, the present paper aims at analyzing six main domains of life skills 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/Critical thinking 5) Personal/ social life skills 6) Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

This will be answered by the following questions:
1. To what extent does the textbook provide skills that enhance effective communication?
2. To what extent does the textbook include a variety of problem-solving life skills?
3. To what extent does the textbook enhance the development of decision–making?
4. To what extent does the textbook enhance creative and critical thinking?
5. To what extent do the activities enhance personal and social life skills?
6. To what extent does the textbook enhance self-awareness and leadership life skills?

IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In Jordan, the English language is taught from grade one to grade twelve. It is used as a foreign language for communication. As a result, the Ministry of Education gives great importance to school textbooks since they are the sources of knowledge. Accordingly, a content analysis of English textbooks becomes a necessity for EFL syllabus designers and teachers to investigate the required life and their roles of enhancing the learners to make their decision correctly, develop responsibility, build their motivation and self-esteem, improve solve-problem abilities, develop their communication skills and develop their working in pairs and teams. Moreover, the analysis of textbooks helps those EFL teachers and syllabus designers to assess the English content to find out the weakness and strengths points.

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is limited by the following factors:
1. The study analyzes the life skills activities in the student's book for the first semester of Action Pack10
2. Analyzing six main domains of life skills:
   - Effective Communication
   - Problem-solving
   - Decision-making
   - Creative/Critical thinking
   - Personal/social life skills
   - Leadership life skills/Self-awareness

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher reviewed several previous studies related to the effectiveness of life skills and their domains.

Maass et al. (2004) investigate the impact of long-term 4-H participation on the development of life-skill competencies. A questionnaire that included seven domains was used to obtain the needed data. The results revealed that the most effective 4-H aspects were trips, clubs, meetings with volunteers/leaders, and making important decisions.

Anderson (2005) studied students, teachers, and parents' perceptions of the value of lifelong skills. Moreover, they implemented Lifelong Guidelines Program to produce a community of responsible learners for life. Teachers and students from a public elementary school in a small urban area in East Tennessee participated in the study. Interviews and open-ended surveys were used in the study. The findings revealed that the life skills and Lifelong Guidelines program have a positive effect on teachers and students at their schools.

Smith et al. (2005) evaluated the impact of the Appalachian Regional Commission Youth Leadership Incubator Program (ARCYLI) on the development of the participants' leadership life skills to increase the economic development within their home counties. 32 participants participated in the study to get the needed data. The researchers used suitable statistical analysis to analyze the results. The findings showed that the program has a positive effect in that the participants develop their leadership life skills ability and foster them in their lives.

Ferry (2006) tried to identify the most common components of communication and decision-making skills used by the learners as a result of attending the training program. 100 participants who live in urban counties near Philadelphia participated in this study. After making a comparison between selected socio-demographic groups to determine if there is a statistically significant difference in the curriculum's effectiveness due to educational attainment level, gender, and race/ethnicity, the findings focused on the forms of communication and decision-making skills for which learning occurred and the training did affect use.

Hamdona (2007) analyzed the activities in the textbook that match the five main domains of life skills. The researcher designed a card and measured its' Validity and reliability to collect the needed data. The results revealed that the Communication life skills domain, personal/social life skills domain Leadership life skills domain, and decision-making/problem-solving life skills domain got the highest score while the critical thinking domain got the lowest one.

ALghazo (2013) analyzed the activities of Action Pack Eleven which enhance meaningful communication in light of the communicative language teaching approach. To answer the results of the questions, Frequencies, and Percentages are measured. The results revealed that contextualized activities are given the highest percentage (78) among the other activities. Moreover, the results showed that grammar and vocabulary, and group work activities are also given good space among other activities. However, the functional language practice activities, and cross-cultural understanding activities, are not given much space among the other activities.

Al Masri et al. (2016) analyzed the availability of life skills -decision-making interpersonal relationship skills, creative thinking, critical thinking, problem-solving, effective communication, self-awareness, and coping with emotions- in the Action Pack English textbooks for the 5th, 6th, and 7th grades. The results showed that life skills are distributed irregularly.

VII. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A descriptive-analytical method was used to obtain the needed results. Conducted this method is used due to its relevance and suitability for analyzing the main life skills in English textbooks in Jordan – Action pack, Grade ten textbook.

A. Sample of the Study

Action Pack ten is one of the Action Pack Series that are taught in public schools in Jordan. It was published in 2009, as the EFL textbook, and consists of six modules that are divided into two semesters, each module has two units. Action Pack Ten is selected as the representative sample of this study. Each unit includes theme/title, functions, Grammar in context activities, listening, speaking and writing activities, vocabulary and pronunciation activities and some and supplementary reading activities in addition to the self-projects to develop their abilities.

B. Instrument of the Study

To achieve the study purpose, the researcher developed a life skills list included in an English language textbook, for grade tenth in Jordan based on the educational literature. The life skills list consisted of (6) categories and each category has a number of the sub- category. Six main domains of life skills are categorized as 1) Effective Communication 2) Problem-solving 3) Decision-making 4) Creative/Critical thinking 5) Personal/social life skills 6) Leadership life skills/Self-awareness

C. Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

To guarantee the validity of the study instrument, a jury of TEFL professors at Ajloun National University, supervisors, and EFL teachers in the Directorate of Ajloun, examined the criteria to be amended and improve the life skills list. To measure the inter–rater reliability, the content analysis was carried out by three EFL-qualified teachers who have been teaching the English language for 10 years and above. The Pearson correlation of agreement between these two analyses was .85, which is considered an acceptable value for this study. The researcher also measured the Intra-rater reliability of the content analysis by attempting the analysis of the activities twice by one analyst at two

weeks intervals. The result shows that the total l coefficient of agreement between the first analysis and the second analysis was high (.96) which is acceptable for this study: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) was .037.

D. Analysis Procedures

This study used the content analysis method for analyzing the main life skills in English textbooks in Jordan – Action pack, Grade ten textbook. Berelson (cited in To'eima, 1987, p. 22) defined content analysis as "a systematic, scientific technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding". Holsti (1969) also gave a broad definition of content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". Accordingly, the researcher measured the extent of the inclusion of life skills activities in the textbook, Grade ten, that enhance interactive learning and meaningful communication.

E. Categories of Life Skills

To do this analysis, the researcher divided the life skills into the following categories:
- Effective Communication life skills:
- Problem-solving life skills
- Decision-making skills
- Creative/Critical thinking skills
- Personal/ social life skills
- Leadership life skills/Self-awareness.

F. Statistical Analyses

This study has a descriptive-analytical design. It used a content analysis approach. The researcher used percentages and frequency for eight life skills: a. Effective Communication life skills. b. Problem-solving life skills. c. Decision-making skills. d. Creative / Critical thinking skills. e. Personal/ social life skills. f. Leadership life skills / Self-awareness.

VIII. FINDINGS AND THEIR DISCUSSION

A. Findings Related to the First Question of the Study

The activities that enhance meaningful communication will be shown and contrasted with other activities. The table below presents the frequencies and percentages of all the communication life skills included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 1
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE COMMUNICATION LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK10"

communication life skills Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Oral and non-oral communication with others.	13	38
Listening carefully to others	6	18
Giving and receiving feedback.	5	15
Expressing feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly	10	29
communication Activities- total	34	18.8
Others	117	81.2
Total	144	100%

The table above shows that the frequencies range between 5 and 13. It also shows that the percentages range between 15 and 38. Through looking into the results, one can notice that oral and non-oral communication with others has the highest percentage 38%. 13 activities encourage EFL learners to communicate with others. The second domain which indicates "Expressing of feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly" got a percentage of 29. This means that 10 activities encourage the learners to express their feelings, ideas, and opinions clearly. The third and the fourth criteria which represent Listening carefully to what others say and Giving and receiving feedback have the lowest frequencies and percentages in a percentage of 15% and 18%.

This means that many activities give the learners opportunities to learn the language in context and apply their knowledge to cope with real–life situations. Moreover, these kinds of activities allow students to engage in practicing new features of the language, vocabulary, grammatical form, pronunciation … etc. They also focus on working in small groups and pairs to paraphrase ideas, ask questions, and share their feelings and ideas to solve the problem and develop their language proficiency.

According to General Guidelines for the English Language (2006), it is expected that the "students will speak and interact in English in a variety of authentic contexts in light of the basic principles of communicative language teaching". The general guidelines assure that "through learning English, students will be able to develop confidence, competence, and self-reliance ..." (General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language

Curriculum, 2006, p. 9). Communicative activities provide EFL learners with opportunists for natural learning of language in context to increase their interaction and communication.

An example to clarify this issue is presented on p. 13: "Work in pairs. What have you already done today? What haven't you done yet?". The main function of this activity is to express opinions freely. In this activity, the teacher needs to explain that their students are going to work in pairs to talk about what they have/haven't done.

A: I have already my school bag for tomorrow.

B: I haven't found a topic for my project yet.

Another example listed in Unit Two, page 23, as explained in sample activity 2 is mainly based on the discussion in groups to collect more information about super scientists who won the Nobel prizes. The function of this activity is to think and speak about super scientists who won the Nobel Prizes. This task is designed to encourage learners to have more exchangeable conversations to practice language for a communicative purpose. A third reading activity on page 108 is about Ajloun Forest Natural Reserve. This article is considered an authentic one; the students should have information about Ajloun Forest Natural Reserve from many resources such as media which is a good example of presenting authenticity. This task is designed to support students to read about important places in their environment. The teacher allows time for the students to read the article. The students are encouraged to collect information about this natural reserve and other places in Jordan from many resources such as the media which is a good example of presenting authenticity. According to these authentic activities, it is clear that most of the activities in Action Pack 10 are related to the students' real environment. Since the Jordanian curriculum is supposed to follow the CLT approach, activities should be similar to what is likely to happen in the real life situations.

B. Findings Related to the Second Question of the Study

Table 2 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the problem-solving life skills activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 2
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE PROBLEM-SOLVING ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Problem-solving life skills Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Identifying alternative solutions to problems	8	25
Accomplishing certain purposes by using systematic plans.	9	28
Thinking about what will happen after making my decision.	5	16
Conflict resolution.	2	6
Managing time during accomplishing a certain purpose	5	16
Solving problems that are presented to me.	3	9
Problem solving Activities(total)	**32**	**22**
Other activities	**112**	**78**
Total activities	**144**	**100**

Table 2 shows that there are 32 activities out of 144 in the Pupil's Book that represent problem-solving activities with a percentage of 22. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester. The item "Accomplishing certain purpose by using systematic plans" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 28%. "Identifying alternative solutions to problems" got the second frequency with a percentage of 25%. The lowest item is "Conflict resolution" which obtained a percentage of 6 %. An example to clarify this issue is presented on p.13. The main context of this activity is "Read the text and find the correct sentences". This task is designed to help students to think critically to fill the gap with correct sentences in the text. The teacher asks students to read the paragraphs about the birds in Jordan carefully, and then try to choose the correct sentence to complete the text. Another example is on page 27: the main context is "Read the text and list all the words for people connected with science". This task is designed to help students to think critically to read the text silently, list all the words for people "the famous scientist" connected with science then complete the table. It is found that practicing these kinds of solve problem activities, provides EFL learners with opportunities to concentrate while learning new information and interacting with the context effectively.

C. Findings Related to the Third Question of the Study

TABLE 3
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE INCLUDED DECISION-MAKING SKILLS IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Decision-making skills	Frequency	Percentage
Setting main aims.	0	0
recording all points of view when making any decision	0	0
Recording options before making any decision.	3	75%
Assessing decisions	1	25%
Decision -making Activities(total)	**4**	**2.78%**
Other activities	**140**	**97.22%**
Total activities	**144**	**100%**

This domain is not given much space among the other activities, Table 3 shows that there are only 4 activities out of 144 in the student's Book that present activities that have decision –making oriented, with a percentage of 2.7. This means that these activities are not fully represented. The item "Recording options before making any decision." got the highest frequency with a percentage of 75%. While "Assessing decisions " got the second frequency with a percentage of 25%. An example of this could be the activity that asks students to take a decision and react quickly "How Fast Do You React?". Another example could be the activity about a quotation. Students are asked to read it and give their opinion if they agree or disagree with it.

D. Findings Related to the Fourth Question of the Study

Table 4 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the critical thinking activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 4
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE CRITICAL THINKING LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Critical Thinking Life Skills	Frequency	Percentage
Recognizing relevant information.	8	26.6
Having a deep understanding of subjects.	4	13.3
Findings solutions to different problems.	5	16.6
Searching answers to challenging questions.	6	20
Self-Confident in attaining a reasonable conclusion.	4	13.3
Seeking the truth	1	3.3
Organizing thoughts to reflect logical thinking.	2	6.6
Critical thinking activities (total)	**30**	**20.8**
Other activities	**114**	**79.2**
Total activities	**144**	**100%**

Table 4 shows that there are 30 activities out of 144 in the Student's Book that represent critical thinking activities with a percentage of 20. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester clearly and regularly. The item "recognizing relevant information" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 26.6%. "Searching answers to challenging questions" got the second frequency with a percentage of 20%. The lowest item is "Searching for the truth" which obtained a percentage of 3 %.

Most of the activities which develop critical thinking are mainly to ask students to create new ideas about their expected future or to write a paragraph, sentences, suggestions, opinions and …etc. Since students need to use language in real-life situations, critical thinking helps them to be more communicative and makes the class more active and dynamic. Students have to think critically, analyze, and give shreds of evidence to come up with new ideas and develop their understanding to become creative, enthusiastic, and positive respondents. Developing the learner's creativity of thinking leads to meaningful communication. Language is used to express our ideas and emotions and it is considered the main way to interact with different groups and individuals of people. In other words, it is the main mean of Socializing.

The general guidelines assure that "communicate information, ideas, opinions, and feelings, and utilize critical thinking skills to make value judgments on texts, context, and social norms in light of Arabic- Islamic culture and values; analyze information and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials based on evidence draw from other sources" (General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language Curriculum, 2006, p. 10).

An example of this could be the activity that is designed to help students solve problems in real situations. The teacher allows time for the students to study the information. Go round and explain any problems, then ask the class for their initial reactions – how can we protect our environment? Read out the question and ask different students for their opinions. Put the students in groups of three (AAA, BBB, and CCC). Ask them to read the appropriate role card carefully. Then ask them to discuss and note down their ideas about how our environment can be protected. Go around and make suggestions if necessary. Ask the students to look at the Useful Language 28 box. Then put students in new groups (ABC). Each student takes turns putting forward their character's point of view. In their groups, students discuss different ideas and try to persuade each other. Groups think critically and give solutions to the problem by acting in the roles.

E. Findings Related to the Fifth Question of the Study

Table 5 presents the frequencies and percentages of all the personal/social life skills activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 5
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE PERSONAL/SOCIAL LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Personal/ social life skills	Frequency	Percentage
Developing meaning of social life.	8	34.8
Giving the value of morals, values, and rights.	2	8.7
Showing understanding for others' rights and values.	0	0
Gaining social responsibilities.	2	8.7
Taking part as a member of a team.	10	43.5
Showing Loyalty to social morals and values,	1	4.3
Personal/ social life Activities (total)	**23**	**16%**
Other activities	**121**	**84%**
Total activities	**144**	**100**

Table 5 presents the percentages and frequencies for each item in the personal/ social life skills. There are 23 activities out of 144 in the student's book that represent personal/social activities with a percentage of 16. The item "Taking part as a member of a team." got the highest frequency with a percentage of 43.5%. "Developing meaning of social life" got the second frequency with a percentage of 34.8%. The lowest item is "Showing understanding for others' values" which obtained a percentage of 0. Languages cannot be taught in isolation from their culture. But, the main question here is: which culture should be taught in a foreign language? Is it the target culture? Or the learner's own culture? It seems that the general guidelines and general and specific outcomes of Jordan's curriculum tend more to the teaching of the learners' own culture.

General Guidelines for the English Language (2006) stated that students are expected to speak and interact in pair and group work in a variety of authentic contexts in light of basic interactive learning and communicative approach. Consequently, EFL textbooks provide learners with authentic activities and tasks that have been carefully sequenced to help them cope with the real–world communication demands they will face. The main role of EFL teachers is to prepare their students to use the language in a real situation. An example to clarify this issue is presented in the activity which is designed to help students to develop meaning in social life, Contribute to them as a member of a team and show understanding of other cultures, values, and rights. A speaking activity entitled "Giving opinion". This activity indicates that the students discuss what people can do to save the rainforests in the group. In this activity, students are aware of how and why they should protect the environment. Another activity is an article about one of the most Islamic palaces "Alhambra Palace". This article is related to our Islamic architecture in Jordan and we are proud of this kind of Islamic heritage. Tomlinson (1998) stated that "most learners are more at ease with text and illustrations that they can relate to their own culture than they are with those which are culturally exotic" (p. 8).

F. Findings Related to the Sixth Question of the Study

Table 6 presents the frequencies and percentages of all Leadership life skills / Self-awareness activities included in the student's book in "Action Pack 10".

TABLE 6
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE LEADERSHIP LIFE SKILLS / SELF-AWARENESS ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE FIRST SEMESTER IN "ACTION PACK 10"

Leadership life skills / Self-awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Organizing a group to achieve its goal.	4	19
Implementing different leadership styles.	2	10
Sharing others in leadership	3	14
Working cooperatively with others.	8	38
Showing responsibility for group activities.	2	10
Self and peer assessment.	2	10
Leadership life skills/Self-awareness activities (total)	**21**	**14.6**
Other activities	**123**	**85.4**
Total activities	**144**	**100%**

Table 6 presents the percentages and frequencies for each item related to leadership life skills. There are 21 activities out of 144 in the student's book that represent self-awareness and leadership activities with a percentage of 14.6. This means that these kinds of activities are represented in the first semester clearly and give prominence to pair and group work activities. The item "Working cooperatively with others" got the highest frequency with a percentage of 38%. "Organizing a group to reach its goal." got the second frequency with a percentage of 19%. "Implementing different leadership styles", Showing responsibility for group activities" and "Self and peer assessment" got the same and lowest frequency in the percentage of 10%. These kinds of activities urge the learners to work cooperatively together in pairs or groups to increase interactive learning in the classroom. In addition, these activities encourage others to share in

leadership. For example, the researcher finds out the following pair and group work activities: In Unit 1, page 19, the activity asks students to discuss in pairs or groups some questions about an object that they can see in class Such as describing it to their friends briefly. Can your friends guess what the object is? By working in pairs or groups, students can exchange their ideas about the topic which will be more beneficial and make the class more effective and successful. Pair and group work activities are very useful to improve students' skills such as communication, sharing and getting knowledge, cooperation, and self-expression.

Such pair and group activities stimulate interaction in the classroom. Students can increase their language store since they can exchange their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Pair and group activities enable students to be cooperative, with each other to negotiate to mean, promote students' responsibility and autonomy, enhance students' motivation, and reduce stress to create a positive classroom climate. All of these advantages of Pair and group activities can provide students with opportunities for natural learning of language to increase their interaction and communication.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Life skill education plays a crucial role in everyone's daily life. It is a type of education in which skills are developed to polish the learners' personalities to deal with any kind of situation and face struggles to achieve their goals. By educating life skills, learners can develop self-confidence in them. It makes them cooperative and communicative. It prepares them to take quick action in any unfavorable circumstances. Consequently, it is very important to add life skill education to the school curriculum to achieve better outcomes. The findings showed variation in the frequencies of the six main domains and each domain as well. This means that these kinds of activities are represented and distributed in the first semester clearly.

According to the results of this paper, the researcher recommends the need of administrating many training workshops on the crucial role of life skills activities. In addition, Life skills should be taken into account in all educational stages, from the primary stage in school to the advanced level at universities.

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Abeer Alghazo is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language at Ajloun National University. She holds a Ph.D. in English Language She teaches graduate TEFL courses. Her research interests include Teacher Education, Applied Linguistics, Translation, Content Analysis, Contrastive Analysis, Language Acquisition, and TEFL. She has published in various peer-reviewed journals.

ESOL Student's Portfolio Writing Practice: Studying Corrective Feedback With Formative Assessment to Enhance L2 Outcomes in Saudi Arabia

Demah Aamer Alqahtani
Department of English Language, College of Education, Shaqra University, Al-Muzahimiyah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Mohammed Hafizur Rahman[*]
College of Applied Medical Sciences, Buraydah Colleges, Al-Qassim, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**Corrective Feedback with Formative Assessment (CFFA) could be a vital component in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). It is a coherent approach to enhance ESOL students' writing skills. The aim of this study is to analyze heterogenous outlines, quantitative congeniality, and the effectiveness of WF (Written Feedback) with one-on-one corrections. The EFL writing portfolios include the CFP (Corrective Feedback Planning), WFD (Writing the First Draft), and EFD (Evaluating and Improving the First Draft). It also includes using the CFFA to teach EFL skills based on various modules of authentic ESOL course material selected for teaching at the lower-to-elementary levels of ESOL learning students. The quantitative data from simultaneous questionnaires affirmed the efficacy and relevance of CFFA with the students' composition of descriptive and expository texts within the Preparatory Year English writing courses at three different campuses of a university in Saudi Arabia. 351 students from various groups and individual instructors in charge of the RW (Reading and Writing) courses responded to correlated questionnaires, and task outlines were collected for stylistic analysis. Besides being an effective teaching practice, CFFA involves an informal instructor-student exchange and written remarks. Although not summative, they aim to enhance students' writing skills. The students merely perceived their errors as part of the recurrent practice required in the elaborate but formulaic methodology of the instructional techniques of EFL writing. In turn, the absence of summative grading reduced student anxiety. The results demonstrated that the well-defined written CFFA aligns with students' levels and course objectives.**

Index Terms—**ESOL, writing practice, formative assessment, corrective feedback, L2 outcomes**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

Teaching a second language has experienced a major alignment change and turned from a positive and test-oriented method to a more constructive and assessment-based approach. The change has been due to the focus of educationists leaning towards learner-based practices, especially in teaching a second language (Sulistyo et al., 2020; Young, 2020). The new assessment method of education encourages greater student involvement in the evaluation method, ultimately resulting in greater learning value (Clarke & Boud, 2018). An assessment also effectively outlines how students learn. It also helps in learning a second language (Chen et al., 2016).

According to the philosophies of teaching language, a portfolio is regarded as a type of alternative assessment used to help students acquire a language efficiently in a dependable and interesting setting (Ghoorchaei & Tavakoli, 2019). According to Genesee and Upshur (1996), portfolios are considered a deliberate collection of learners' work that shows their strong points and flaws in a language learning process. Portfolios document students' learning by maintaining a collection of the work so that learners can be evaluated and attended to by the feedback from their teachers (Li et al., 2020).

In ESOL learning, feedback is essential in formative assessment because it aims to improve student learning using the knowledge the instructor provides (Chong, 2018). This knowledge aids students with revising and strengthening prior knowledge while concentrating on the essential parts of learning, which is essential in formative assessment. Although it has been demonstrated that feedback significantly affects learning results and student growth, the extent of the difference depends on how the feedback is given in assessments (Admiraal et al., 2020). One important type of feedback application that instructors regularly use and value in assessments is 'WCF' (Goldstein, 2004). It can assist

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[*] Corresponding Author

students in recognising "performance potentials, assessing their comprehension, and being cognizant of misunderstandings".

An increasing corpus of empirical studies and literature has been done on WCF in response to recent disagreements on its effectiveness (Tseng & Yeh, 2019). There are two primary strands of study in these arguments. One line of research has concentrated on the impact of various WCFs on L2 learning accuracy (Simard et al., 2015). For example, several studies evaluated the impact of targeted vs. broad WCF, where the former only provides feedback on selected types of mistakes (such as verb usage or incorrect spellings), while comprehensive WCF makes an effort to offer feedback on all kinds of errors (Derakshan & Shakki, 2016).

Another strand of WCF study deals with the students' views of WCF and how they help them achieve desirable results while learning a second language (Ghoorchaei & Tavakoli, 2019; Sulistyo et al., 2020). Such studies—which are typically focused on surveys—demonstrate that learners desire and anticipate ESOL instructors to offer thorough WCF on their work. These studies recruited adults and students in a variety of educational settings, including ESOL students in Saudi Arabia (Alkhatib, 2019; Alshakhi, 2019), university ESOL students in Pakistan (Ismail, 2019), ESOL students in Oman (Trabelsi, 2019), etc. However, there are several contradictory results regarding the type of WCF students prefer and how it helps them in ESOL learning.

Considering the gap in the literature, this research attempts to discover the impact of WCF with Formative Assessment (CFFA) on developing positive L2 results among ESOL students in Saudi contexts.

B. Research Objectives

The objective of the study is to determine the influence of WCF with Formative Assessment (CFFA) in portfolio writing tasks as a tool to develop positive L2 outcomes among ESOL students in the Saudi context.

C. Research Questions

The research addresses the following questions:

1: What is the importance of WCF planning (by teachers) while teaching writing skills to ESOL students?

2: What is the relevance and usefulness of the Formative Assessments of Students and Corrective Feedback of Teachers and their consequences in the preliminary level of ESOL learning?

3. How do students perceive the absence of summative grading in Formative Assessment and the relevance of WCF?

4: How does the Corrective Feedback with Formative Assessment help students improve their performance in writing tasks?

D. Hypothesis

WCF with Formative Assessment (CFFA) in portfolio writing tasks is an effective tool for developing positive L2 outcomes among EFL students.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Portfolio Writing Practice for ESOL

In recent years, many studies have revealed the problems ESOLs face in the process of learning and writing (Rakedzon & Baram-Tsabari, 2017; Alshakhi, 2019; Kenta & Bosha, 2019; Alzamil, 2020). Portfolio writing emerged as an alternate assessment method that encourages learner autonomy. It allows students to review their skills, observe their progress, and assess and highlight their individual capabilities and shortcomings in mastering the language. Initially, researchers showed a general lack of interest in exploring the topic of portfolio writing assessment since many of them found it too vague and difficult to handle (Obeid, 2017). The progress and advancement in handling such issues were apparent when researchers started to recognize and prove the significance of portfolio writing practice in influencing the performance of ESOLs worldwide, which later developed into an area of interest for many researchers (Moses & Muhammad, 2019).

Several studies and literature prove portfolios to be the best method for ESOL performance. For instance, Ismail (2019) showed that portfolio writing is a highly useful assessment method that allows easy learning and instructing writing for teachers and learners. It also assists students to perform better in ESOL. The study highlighted a significant difference in the results of the first and final writing drafts with the help of portfolio writing. Farahian and Avarzamani (2018) also determined the impact of portfolio writing on the metacognitive progress and writing skills of EFL learners. In addition, learners showed a positive attitude toward their instructors and peer feedback. Similarly, Roohani and Taheri (2015) also proved, through quasi-experimental research, that portfolio writing enhanced the expository writing skills of learners. Therefore, portfolio writing provides several positive individual and academic results for EFL learners.

B. Formative Assessment

According to Myers (2019) formative assessment is typically used after instruction. This definition implies that formative assessment allows feedback for both the instructor and the student. Many studies highlighted different trends in using formative assessment in instructing ESOL (Cho et al., 2020; Alahmadi et al., 2019). Notably, several studies

have been conducted in the Saudi context to discover EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment. For instance, Alahmadi et al. (2019) found positive results in the influence of formative assessment on the efficiency of L2 learners in terms of writing and speaking skills. In addition, Klatt et al. (2020) conducted research regarding skills-based assessment and found positive results within a one-year span.

Moreover, the perception of L2 learners on formative assessment turned out to be positive. Such results highlight the significance of formative assessment in shaping the skills of second language learners. Crucially, formative assessment helps students identify their capabilities and shortcomings in L2. Similarly, Alotaibi (2019) researched the perception of instructors on different factors affecting the usage of formative assessment in Saudi Arabian educational institutions. The study showed that teachers' willingness to accept formative assessment has revolutionized teaching EFL and helped L2 learners significantly.

C. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF)

Stefanou and Révész (2015) described WCF as a teacher's response to the errors in a learner's essay. WCF has been classified in several ways. For instance, Ellis (2009) stated that WCF can be categorized as direct or indirect.

Direct WCF methods enable the teachers to correct the errors in learners' writing. It also includes crossing unnecessary or incorrect words or rewriting the sentence into its accurate form. In contrast, the indirect WCF method enables EFL teachers to highlight, in any way, that there are single or more errors without providing the correction. Indirect WCF may include emphasizing the error, calculating the number of mistakes in a single line, or giving a code highlighting the error type. L2 instructors try to provide indirect WCF so that the L2 learners can engage in cognitive problem-solving (Storch, 2018).

Tutors have fundamentally practiced WCF in teaching ESOL writing, and a wide range of research has focused on the effectiveness of WCF in ESOL. In ESOL writing literature, WCF has been studied as a typology, and its effectiveness and relationships have also been explored. Past studies explored teachers' perceptions of WCF in L2 teaching, focusing mainly on interviews and cross-sectional surveys. Bitchener and Storch (2016) showed that ESOL instructors largely depend on providing direct correction when giving WCF on writing to the students. Such studies were conducted in high school and university settings with different types of teachers. They showed that ESOL instructors explicitly used direct WCF, and they chose to make corrections of these errors in a comprehensive manner instead of selectively (Guenette & Lyster, 2013).

Mao and Croswaithe (2019) examined that the genre, environment, elements like the exact time throughout the semester, and the expectations of the students all impact the format and focus of teachers' WCF on student writing. Institutional and curricular requirements, instructors' personalities, and contextual elements like their academic identities may also influence instructors' practices and beliefs towards WCF (Nash & Winstone, 2019).

D. EFL Error Correction Without Summative Assessment

Tedick and Gortar (1998) conducted a study on error correction regarding WCF given to students. These error correction methods without Summative Assessment or types of WCF are given below:

TABLE 1
ERROR CORRECTION METHODS

Types of WCF	Description
Explicit Correction	This type of WCF highlights that the student's utterance was not correct. Hence, the instructor gives the correct form.
Recast	The instructor indirectly corrects the error without implying that the utterance was incorrect.
Clarification Request	In clarification requests, the teacher requests the student to clarify the sentence using phrases like, 'Excuse me?' or 'Didn't get it?' Stating the lack of understanding implies that a correction is needed.
Metalinguistic cues	The teachers raise questions or provide comments on the incorrect word or statement, 'Is it Poison or Poisson?' or 'Do we say it like this?'
Elicitation	Teachers directly ask students to reword the sentence or use the correct form by asking questions such as, 'How do we say that in English?' They may ask them to restructure the sentence. 'Say that again'.
Repetition	In this type, the teacher repeats the student's error and regulates modulation to highlight it to the student.

E. Systematic Error Identification

In the context of second language learning, errors can be due to a lack of knowledge or the production of inappropriate written pieces (Moqimipour & Shahrokhi, 2015). According to Divsar and Heydari (2017) error identification is a method to identify errors in learners' language, determine if the errors are systematic, and explain the causes of these errors. It implies that someone performs this process to identify all the errors in students' writings. Jabeen et al. (2015) provided the significance of error analysis by stating that error identification and analysis provide a deeper comprehension of the language learning procedure in students. Also, Agustina and Junining (2015) indicated that error identification is essential for teachers to understand students' capability to learn a second language. It is also important for learners to understand the type of mistakes they make to practice and learn from them.

F. Student's Perception of Error Identification and WCF

Many recent studies regarding students' preferences of error correction and attitudes towards WCF have found a positive attitude and perception towards WCF in ESOL (Saragih et al., 2021; Trabelsi, 2019). Mayo and Labandibar (2017) discovered that learners had a positive attitude toward ESOL learning when they were provided with WCF on different errors. Moreover, recent research also highlighted that students' views and responses seem to be influenced by the type of errors. For instance, Simard et al. (2015) revealed that WCF could possibly direct the consideration of Japanese students learning EFL to lexical errors but not to other kinds of errors. Contrarily, Zhang (2018) found it easy for EFL students to view WCF on orthographic errors. Also, different students expressed confusion on ECF provided on pragmatic errors.

Students' perception of WCB in ESOL is also well-researched in the Saudi context. For instance, Al-Wossabi (2019) reported that Saudi learners do not favor corrective feedback, nor do they have a favorable perception regarding error identification due to cultural factors. Hamouda (2011) conducted an extensive survey on 200 students and 20 teachers of ESOL in Saudi universities. The study revealed that the students highly value written feedback, and they liked to get detailed direct feedback from the instructors. The research also highlighted that Saudi learners prefer comprehensive correction by the instructor to peer or self-correction.

Lastly, the research of Alkhatib (2015) revealed that Saudi ESOL learners strongly prefer WCF from their instructors. However, students face challenges in comprehending a few comments given by their teachers. On the other hand, those who did not consider instructors' WCF resulted in a lower level of motivation and performed lower than others.

G. ESOL Outcomes

In this study, ESOL outcomes as a result of WCF are determined on two levels: ESOL Fluency and ESOL Accuracy. In the context of ESOL, where accuracy is the main principle, Hussein and Bostanci (2020) showed that error correction strongly correlates with grammatical accuracy. The study was experimental, and consequently, the errors were reduced significantly due to the WCF provided to the students. However, the control group showed no difference in the result. Similarly, the experimental study of Ghasemi et al. (2020) showed that WCF not only helped ESOL learners reduce the number of errors but also boosted their performance; hence, they achieved ESOL accuracy and fluency with the help of WCF.

Rummel and Bitchener (2015) revealed that the three different groups with various corrective feedback noticed major progress in tense usage. However, the control group did not reach ESOL accuracy. Also, Frear and Chiu (2015) conducted a study on understanding indirect WCF on EFL accuracy by identifying errors of weak past tenses. They conducted the study on different series such as pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test. The results showed that learners had exceptional performances after receiving indirect feedback during the post-test and delayed post-test. They achieved EFL accuracy, and they observed a visible difference in the performance of the L2 learners from the control group.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Strategy

The present research chose an exploratory design for this study. Exploratory study design deals with examining the phenomena, as the name implies. Moreover, the research opts for a mixed-research method, which means collecting and analysing the study's quantitative and qualitative data. For making inferences from the findings regarding the perception of teachers and students on WCF, data is gathered, translated into digits, and then empirically evaluated to determine whether a link can be identified. However, qualitative data is used to understand the type of corrective feedback the teacher gives to the students.

B. Participants

The population of the study is ESOL students and ESOL teachers in Saudi Arabia. To understand the relevance and usefulness of Formative Assessments of Students and Corrective Feedback of Teachers and their consequences on the student's performance, the researcher considered the formative and summative assessment papers of EFL concerning WCF. A sample of 26 ESOL students from all the groups was selected, and the researcher considered their formative assessments of the WCF. Another 14 students were selected to examine the summative assessment with respect to WCF.

Also, to understand the impact of English Language immersion, EFL error correction, Systematic error identification, and WCF on EFL fluency, accuracy, and output, the researcher surveyed 19 EFL teachers from schools in Saudi Arabia. A questionnaire was constructed considering all the variables and circulated among 19 EFL teachers. Similarly, the effectiveness of EFL from the perspective of students was determined using a questionnaire. The researcher surveyed 360 EFL students from Saudi Arabian schools.

C. Instrument

For quantitative analysis, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. Both questionnaires were developed to inquire about the perspective of teachers and students regarding the usefulness of Formative Assessments of Students and Corrective Feedback of Teachers. The questions included in both questionnaires were assessed with the help of a five-point Likert scale. The respondents had five options, i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly

agree.

For qualitative analysis, the researcher collected the papers from both students' groups, i.e., formative and summative assessment, where the teachers' WCF were given.

D. Data Analysis

The qualitative data was analysed by evaluating the assessments from both groups, i.e., formative assessments and summative assessments of the ESOL students and the type and number of WCF given to the students. The quantitative data was assessed with the help of SPSS software. The questionnaire used for both teachers and students was coded and then analysed with the help of different statistical tests such as descriptive statistics and correlation analysis.

IV. RESULTS

The first part of the chapter provides the qualitative results achieved from the formative and summative assessments of ESOL students' portfolio writing tasks. However, the second part of the chapter focuses on the quantitative results collected from the questionnaires administered to teachers and students.

A. Qualitative Results

(a). Teacher's Practices on WCFs With Formative Assessment:

The second research question investigates the relevance and usefulness of Formative Assessments of Students and Corrective Feedback of the Teacher and their consequences in the preliminary level of ESOL learning. To answer this question, the study took a sample of 26 students from all the groups with respect to the WCF on formative assessment. The results highlighted that the teachers provided a total of 185 WCFs with different formative assessment strategies discussed below.

Explicit Correction:

The frequency of the explicit correction strategy is 90, with an overall percentage of 48.64%, which implies that this was the method teachers preferred most in providing WCF.
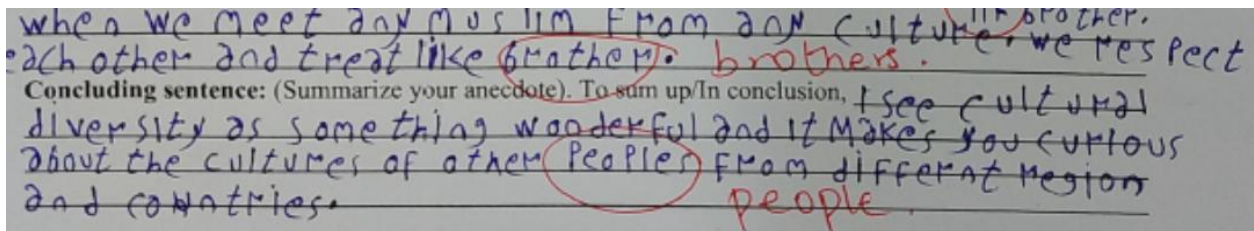

Figure 1. Example of Explicit Correction in Formative Assessment

Recast:

The recast strategy was used 27 times, with a usage percentage of 15.42%. This result shows that recast was the second-most preferred corrective strategy for formative assessment.
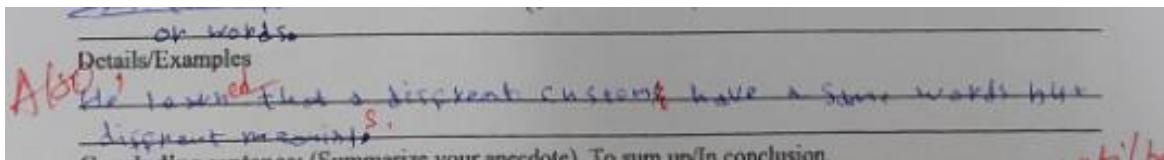

Figure 2. Example of Recast in Formative Assessment

Clarification Request:

The analysis showed that the frequency of clarification requests was 11, with a percentage of 5.94%. It shows that clarification requests were less common for providing WCF.
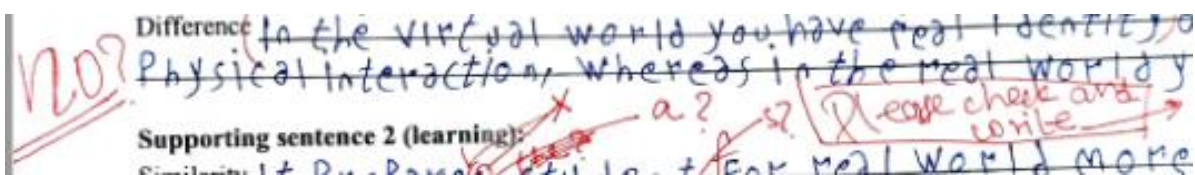

Figure 3. Example of Clarification Request in Formative Assessment

Metalinguistic Cues:

The frequency of usage was 42, with a 22.7% usage rate. It shows that metalinguistic cues rank third in the usage frequency of formative assessments.
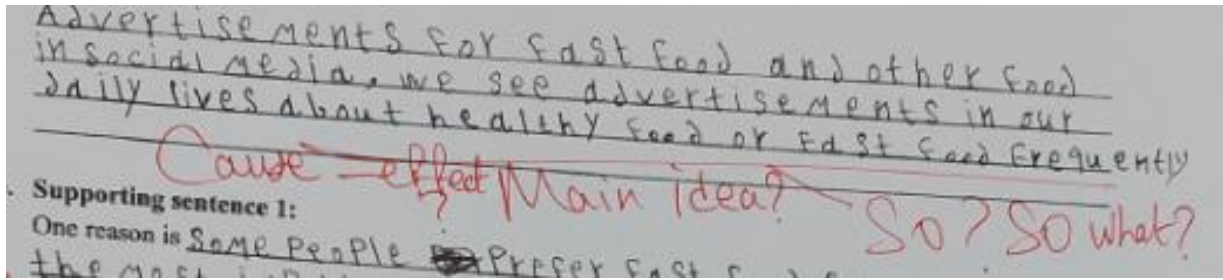
Figure 4. Example of Metalinguistic Cues in Formative Assessment

Elicitation:

The results showed that teachers rarely used the elicitation strategy to correct formative assessment errors. The frequency of usage was 4, with a 2.162% usage percentage.
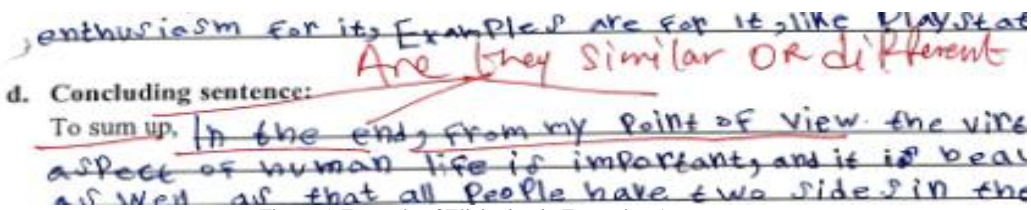

Figure 5. Example of Elicitation in Formative Assessment

Repetition:

The frequency of usage is only 11 times (5.94%), making it one of the least preferred strategies for correcting errors.
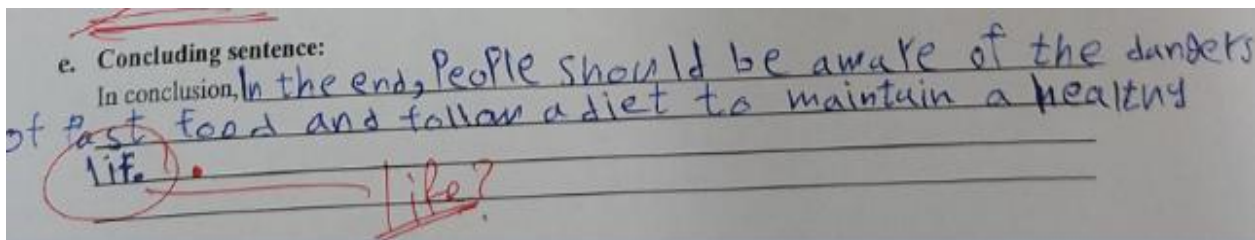

Figure 6. Example of Repetition in Formative Assessment

From the above results, it is clear that teachers used the explicit correction strategy most frequently while providing WCF on formative assessment. Meanwhile, elicitation correction was the least preferred strategy.

(b). Teacher's Practices on WCFs With Summative Assessment:

This section deals with the WCF on the Summative Assessment teachers use for ESOL learners. It used a sample group of 14 students, so 14 papers of summative assessment were reviewed to determine WCF usage. According to the results, the total number of WCF was 110 on the summative assessment.

Explicit Correction:

According to the result, explicit correction was the most used strategy in summative assessment. The frequency of usage by teachers was 62 (52.85%).
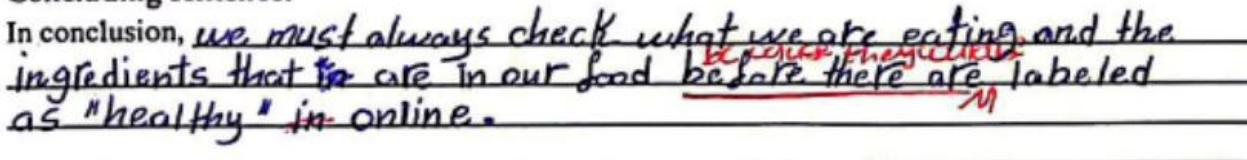

Figure 7. Example of Explicit Correction in Summative Assessment

Recast:

According to the results, recast was the second most used strategy by the teacher in providing WCF in summative assessment. The frequency of usage is 37 and a (33.33%) usage rate.
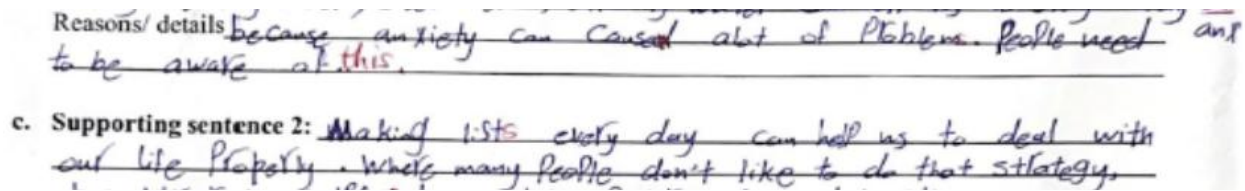
Figure 8. Example of Recast in Summative Assessment

Clarification Request:

The results revealed that clarification requests in summative assessment appeared only 6 times, which was only 5.40% of the time.
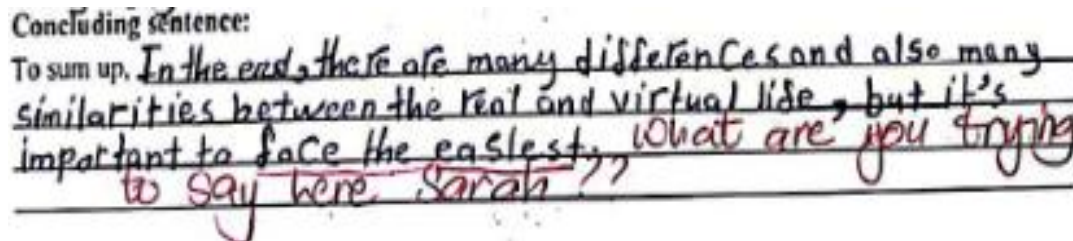

Figure 9. Example of Clarification Request in Summative Assessment

Metalinguistic Cues:

The findings showed that teachers only used metalinguistic cues 5 times while correcting errors in summative assessment. The usage percentage was only 4.54%, making it the least-used WCF strategy.
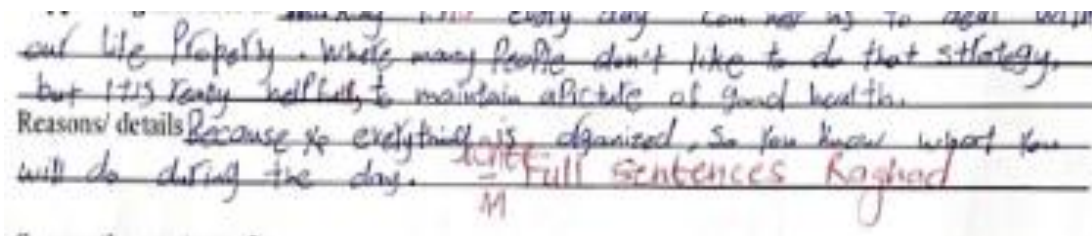

Figure 10. Example of Metalinguistic Cues in Summative Assessment

The result showed that the number of WCF is significantly less than used in formative assessment. It implies that students make a few errors when the assessment is marked with numbers. Also, explicit corrections appeared with more frequency compared to other strategies. The teachers did not use any elicitation or repetition strategy in the summative assessment.

(c). Effects of WCF on Students' Performance:

This section addresses the fourth research question, which aims to understand how WCF, with formative assessment, helps students improve their performance in writing tasks.

The results showed that providing WCF to ESOL learners helped them improve their writing accuracy both in formative and summative assessments. The number of errors in the formative assessment appeared to be more than in the summative assessment. The students considered the teacher's feedback and improved their performance in terms of accuracy in their final drafts. All three groups of students' final drafts were reviewed with respect to their assessments and found positive performances among ESOL learners.

Of the 26 papers reviewed in the formative assessment, 21 were accurate in terms of sentence structure, verb usage, articles, singular—plural forms, paragraphing, spelling, etc.

Similarly, in the second group of students in summative assessment, 13 out of 14 final drafts were reviewed, and the positive results were highlighted in terms of EFL accuracy. Finally, in the third group of students, 6 out of 6 final drafts were found to be accurate in terms of correcting errors highlighted in their respective assessments. The paragraphing error persisted in some of the final drafts of all three groups.

Some draft examples appear below, showing the positive results of WCF.

Figure 11. Examples of WCF and Final Drafts of Formative Assessments (Group 1)

Figure 12. Examples of WCF and Final Drafts of Summative Assessments (Group 2)
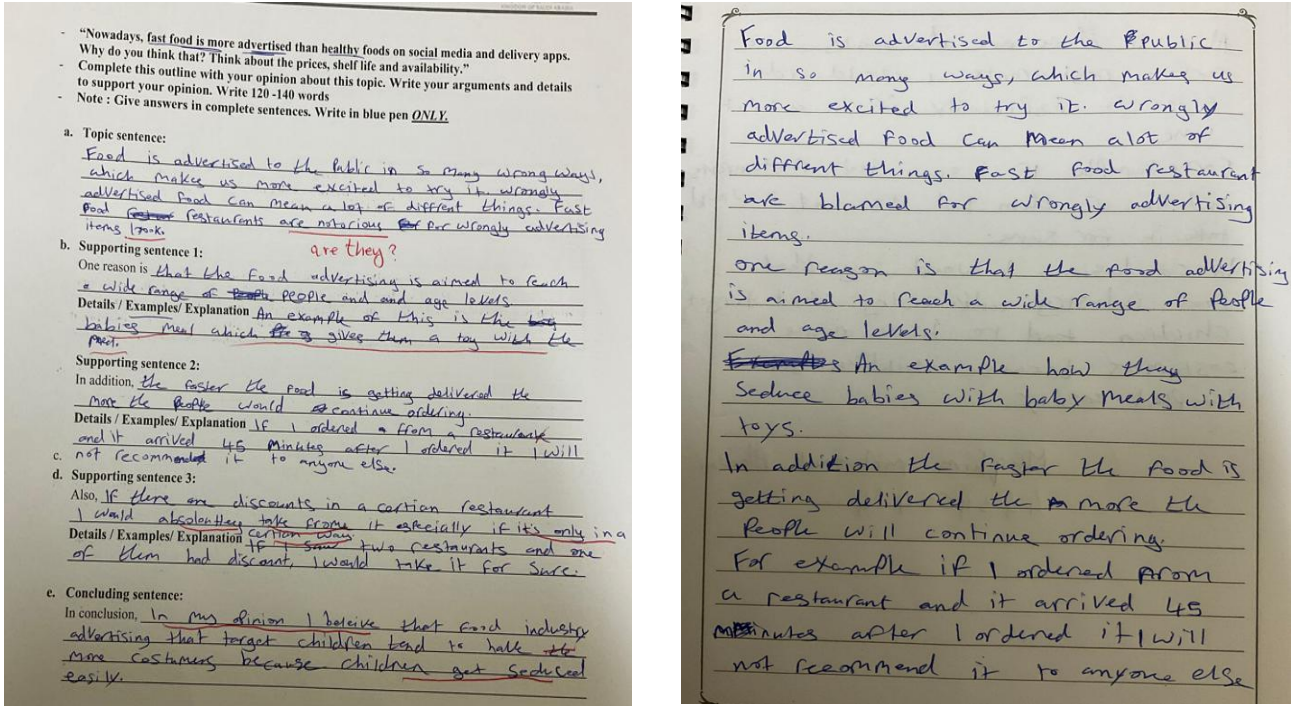
Figure 13. Examples of WCF and Final Drafts (Group 3)

B. Quantitative Results

The researcher conducted a statistical analysis of the questionnaires administered to teachers and students. The first part of the quantitative analysis was focused on analysing teachers' responses regarding the impact of English Language immersion, EFL error correction, systematic error identification, and WCF on EFL fluency, accuracy, and modified output. However, the second part of the quantitative analysis presents the result of the students' questionnaire, where the researcher intended to determine the effectiveness of WCF from the students' perspective. The data for students and teachers were analysed using SPSS software.

(a). Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis:

The responses of the teachers were analysed with the help of different statistical tests.
Descriptive Statistics:

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
English Language Immersion Based on Formative Assessment.	19	1	5	4.00	.943
EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	19	2	5	3.79	1.032
Systematic Error Identification.	19	1	5	2.47	1.264
WCF.	19	3	5	4.42	.692
EFL Fluency	19	1	5	3.89	1.286
EFL Accuracy	19	2	5	3.95	1.079
Modified EFL Output.	19	2	5	4.00	1.106

From the table, it is evident that WCF is the variable with the highest mean value, i.e., 4. The mean WCF value of 4 indicates that most of the respondents agreed with the statement of WCF. However, the lowest mean value from the table can be seen for systematic error identification, i.e., 2.47. This figure shows that most respondents disagreed slightly with the statement of systematic error identification.

(b). Correlation Analysis:

TABLE 3
CORRELATION ANALYSIS

	English Language Immersion.	EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	Systematic Error Identification.	WCF.	EFL Fluency	EFL Accuracy	Modified EFL Output.
English Language Immersion Based on Formative Assessment.	1	.057	-.047	.255	.595**	.273	.533*
EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	.057	1	.422	.209	.108	-.360	-.195
Systematic Error Identification.	-.047	.422	1	-.114	-.139	-.307	-.239
WCF.	.255	.209	-.114	1	.240	-.192	-.145
EFL Fluency	.595**	.108	-.139	.240	1	.436	.547*
EFL Accuracy	.273	-.360	-.307	-.192	.436	1	.885**
Modified EFL Output.	.533*	-.195	-.239	-.145	.547*	.885**	1

From the result, it is evident that variables mostly share a negative correlation. The strongest and most positive correlation can be seen between EFL accuracy and Modified EFL output (r = 0.885). The correlation between EFL fluency and Modified EFL output (r = 0.547) is also positive. Moreover, English Language Immersion based on formative assessment also shares a strong strength of association with Modified EFL output (r = 0.533). Also, English Language Immersion based on formative assessment has the strongest strength of association with EFL fluency (r = 0.595).

The rest of the variables do not have any significant correlation with each other.

(c). Regression Analysis:

The first table presents the regression analysis between independent variables with EFL fluency.

TABLE 4
REGRESSION ANALYSIS – EFL FLUENCY

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.177	2.053		.086	.933
	English Language Immersion Based on Formative Assessment.	.775	.295	.568	2.623	.020
	EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	.167	.300	.134	.558	.586
	Systematic Error Identification.	-.166	.241	-.163	-.688	.502
	WCF.	.089	.420	.048	.212	.835
a. Dependent Variable: EFL Fluency						

English Language Immersion has the strongest effect on EFL fluency. The significance value in the table for the variable is 0.020, which is less than 0.05. Hence, we can conclude that English Language Immersion based on formative assessment positively and significantly influenced EFL fluency. However, the other has an insignificant influence on EFL fluency.

The second table presents the regression analysis between independent variables with EFL accuracy.

TABLE 5
REGRESSION ANALYSIS – EFL ACCURACY

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.535	1.848		2.996	.010
	English Language Immersion Based on Formative Assessment.	.391	.266	.341	1.469	.164
	EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	-.243	.270	-.233	-.900	.383
	Systematic Error Identification.	-.189	.217	-.222	-.872	.398
	WCF.	-.398	.378	-.256	-1.053	.310
a. Dependent Variable: EFL Accuracy						

According to the table, English Language Immersion has a slight contribution towards EFL accuracy, while other

variables have a negative relationship with EFL accuracy. Hence, it can be concluded that all the variables have an insignificant influence on EFL accuracy.

The third table presents the regression analysis between independent variables and Modified EFL output.

TABLE 6
REGRESSION ANALYSIS – MODIFIED EFL OUTPUT

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.102	1.696		2.418	.030
English Language Immersion Based on Formative Assessment.	.711	.244	.606	2.912	.011
EFL Error Correction without Summative Assessment	-.080	.248	-.075	-.323	.751
Systematic Error Identification.	-.187	.199	-.214	-.938	.364
WCF.	-.493	.347	-.309	-1.418	.178
a. Dependent Variable: Modified EFL Output.					

According to the table, English Language Immersion based on formative assessment has the strongest effect on Modified EFL output, i.e., 0.711, and the significance value is 0.011, which is less than 0.05. Hence, it can be concluded that English Language Immersion based on formative assessment positively and significantly influences Modified EFL output. However, the others have a negative and insignificant influence on Modified EFL output.

(d). Student's Questionnaire Analysis:

The students' questionnaire aimed to understand students' perspectives on writing assessments and WCF on formative and summative assessments. The data was analysed with the help of the frequency and percentage methods.

TABLE 7
IMPORTANCE OF WRITING TASKS AND ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENTS

Strongly Disagree	1%
Disagree	6.94%
Neutral	21.11%
Agree	50.83%
Strongly Agree	16.94%

The responses from Table 7 show that around 50.83% of the respondents agreed that a portfolio of writing tasks and assessments significantly helped the students in terms of writing.

TABLE 8
EFL ERROR CORRECTION BY THE INSTRUCTOR

Strongly Disagree	5%
Disagree	10%
Neutral	20.56%
Agree	44.72%
Strongly Agree	19.72%

According to the responses, 44.72% of respondents showed their agreement, and 19.72% of the respondents strongly agreed with EFL error correction. Only 5% of the respondents stated that they strongly disagreed.

TABLE 9
ERROR IDENTIFICATION AND ITS VALUE

Strongly Disagree	2.33%
Disagree	3.33%
Neutral	15.56%
Agree	41.94%
Strongly Agree	36.67%

The above Table 9, presents the results, which show that 41.94% of the students agreed and 36.67% strongly agreed with error identification and its value in the language learning process.

TABLE 10
LOSS OF INTEREST DUE TO ERROR IDENTIFICATION

Strongly Disagree	11.11%
Disagree	28.33%
Neutral	28.83%
Agree	17.78%
Strongly Agree	14.44%

The above Table 10, presents the responses regarding the students' loss of interest during error identification before each writing assessment. The majority of the respondents either disagreed or showed indifference towards the statement.

It means that many students do not feel any stress or loss of interest due to error identification by the teacher.

TABLE 11
IMPROVEMENT IN SPEAKING AND LISTENING DUE TO ERROR IDENTIFICATION

Strongly Disagree	7.54%
Disagree	14.44%
Neutral	27.22%
Agree	33.33%
Strongly Agree	17.5%

In the above Table 11, the researcher asked the students if error identification and correction in the task outline assisted them in improving their speaking and listening skills. From the above responses, it is evident that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 33.33% agreed, while 17.5% strongly agreed. However, 27.22% showed indifference to the statement.

TABLE 12
IMPROVEMENT IN GRAMMAR, SPELLING, PUNCTUATION, TENSES AND VOCABULARY RANGE

Strongly Disagree	18.89%
Disagree	37.78%
Neutral	23.89%
Agree	14.72%
Strongly Agree	4.72%

The next question inquired if the error identification and correction helped the students improve the accuracy of grammar, spelling, punctuation, tenses, verb-subject agreement, and vocabulary range. From the above table, 37.78% disagreed, and 18.89% strongly disagreed.

TABLE 13
CONFIDENCE IN DRAFTING AND EDITING PARAGRAPH DUE TO MULTIPLE ASSESSMENTS

Strongly Disagree	6.39%
Disagree	11.67%
Neutral	25.28%
Agree	41.67%
Strongly Agree	15%

The above Table 13 shows that 41.67% agreed and 15% strongly agreed that multiple writing assessments helped them draft, edit, review, and finalize paragraphs and summaries in the English Language.

V. DISCUSSION

The research aimed to determine the influence of WCF with formative Assessment (CFFA) in portfolio writing tasks as a tool to develop positive L2 outcomes among ESOL students in the Saudi context. The qualitative results revealed that teachers used different strategies of WCF in formative assessments. The results also show that explicit correction was the strategy teachers used most frequently while providing WCF. On the other hand, elicitation was the least preferred strategy while teachers provided WCF. The findings are consistent with the argument made by Ferris et al. (2012) who noted that "explicit corrective feedback with particular terms or other detailed information may be more helpful for ESOL learners than the implicit strategy. Similarly, Erkkilä (2013) also suggested that explicit corrective feedback is the most desired strategy in providing WCF to ESOL learners.

The qualitative analysis also showed that WCF is used significantly less in formative assessment. It shows that students tend to make a few errors when the assessment is marked with numbers. Also, the number of explicit corrections is higher than for other strategies. Moreover, teachers did not use any elicitation or repetition strategy in the summative assessment. The qualitative results also revealed that providing WCF to ESOL learners helped them improve their writing accuracy both in formative and summative assessments. The number of errors in the formative assessment was found to be more than in the summative assessment. Still, the students considered the feedback provided by the teacher and improved their performance in terms of accuracy in their final drafts.

The result contradicts the argument provided by Truscott (2016) who stated that the practice of WCF does not significantly affect the writing accuracy of ESOL students and that teachers should not frequently use it. The positive result of accuracy in the research is not unexpected as it is attributed to several factors. The main determinant of this positive result is due to a number of WCF strategies provided in a direct manner. As revealed in the study, explicit correction is the most used strategy in formative and summative assessments. According to the proposition of Van Beuningen (2010) direct feedback through WCF gives learners clear and straightforward information, which assists the students in avoiding errors and mistakes while going through WCF and taking on the correction immediately. Due to the clarity in direct WCF, it is less cognitively demanding compared to indirect WCF.

Lastly, the study showed students' perceptions regarding the feedback and error correction by the students. The findings showed that most of the students agreed that the portfolio of writing tasks and assessments significantly helped students in terms of writing, language learning process, speaking and listening skills, grammar structure, and final

drafting. Moreover, the study showed that the students disagreed with the statement that error correction resulted in the loss of interest and confidence. The results are consistent with the findings of Burner (2014) who stated that with the help of error identification and corrective feedback, learners could avoid the fossilisation of any language problems they may have early in the learning process by obtaining timely, relevant feedback. Also, the study of Chen et al. (2016) and Farjadnasab and Khodashenas (2019) revealed similar results.

VI. Conclusion

The study concludes that the hypothesis of the study is accepted and WCF with Formative Assessment (CFFA) in portfolio writing tasks is an effective tool to develop positive L2 outcomes among EFL students. English Language Immersion based on Formative Assessment was found to have the highest impact on EFL fluency and Modified EFL output. The study also made it clear that students would want ESOL instructors to directly address all of their errors, including lexical and grammatical ones. This group did not find much value in indirect feedback that only acknowledged a mistake. Also, they perceived that WCF helped them improve their EFL accuracy, writing, grammar, and final draft. From the qualitative analysis, it was evident that the students considered the feedback provided by the teacher and improved their performance in terms of accuracy in their final drafts.

The current research adds to the existing body of literature on WCF in Formative Assessments of ESOL learners. A deeper understanding of how ESOL instructors and learners perceive and approach WCF has been gained by analysing the connections between teachers' views and practices as well as between students' preferences and instructors' practices in a similar environment. This is a significant addition, mainly because the majority of prior WCF work concentrated on the problem of WCF efficacy. Additionally, this research has significantly added to teachers' WCF practices, followed by formative and summative assessments.

It is acknowledged that this is a small-scale research, and the findings cannot be extrapolated to other Saudi Arabian ESOL learners and instructors in different schools and colleges. Additionally, it appears that other institutes in Saudi Arabia have various procedures regarding error correction and feedback, or none at all. Therefore, it would be intriguing to learn whether instructors' WCF practices and attitudes contrast in other educational institutions from the one in this study in further research.

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Demah A. Alqahtani is an Assistant Professor at Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia. She earned a PhD in linguistics from the University of Essex, UK. Her research interests span various areas, including Translanguaging, Phonology, Morphology, Technology in language learning and teaching, ESOL pedagogical implications, and Computational linguistics. She has authored numerous research papers on these subjects that have been published in esteemed academic journals. Additionally, she has had the privilege of speaking about her research at various international conferences. Dr. Alqahtani has been awarded the Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, acknowledging her achievement in meeting the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and learning support in higher education. She is devoted to the advancement of knowledge and understanding in her field and has a strong commitment to mentoring and educating future generations of scholars.

Mohammed H. Rahman is an Assistant Professor at Buraydah Colleges under the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. He earned his PhD in TESOL from Invertis University, India. He is a Cambridge certified Language Instructor with 9 years of experience in teaching and research in Second Language Acquisition, EFL pedagogy, paralinguistics oriented ESOL, and Interpersonal communication skills. Dr. Rahman strives to develop cutting-edge teaching methodologies based on distinct patterns of personalized language instruction, extensive observances during Task based ESL Communication and Ecolinguistics.

Second Language Arabic Knowledge Useful for Learning Hebrew Vocabulary

Kazuhito Uni[*]

Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Abstract—**Arabic and Hebrew belong to the Semitic branch of the Afroasiatic language family, and thus, they are semantically and phonetically similar in many lexical aspects. This study examined the benefits of Malaysian university students having prior knowledge of Arabic while learning Hebrew. A two-page questionnaire was administered to two groups of 30 and 40 students at advanced and fundamental Arabic proficiency levels, respectively. Page 1 contained a checklist with Yes/No columns about 30 Hebrew words to examine the participants' prior knowledge. If participants answered yes, they were asked to write the meaning of the word in English or Malay. They then answered multiple-choice questions about the 30 Hebrew words on Page 2. Arabic counterparts were not shown on the questionnaire to prevent cuing the participants. The first group of participants, 30 Malaysian students with advanced Arabic proficiency, learned an average of 23.07 Hebrew words. The vocabulary items most correctly identified by Group 1 were *'olam* "world" (30 correct answers), *katavti* "I wrote" (28), *mavet* "death" (28), *melekh* "king" (27), *moakh* "brain" (27), *shabat* "Saturday" (27), *shen* "tooth" (27), *shamayim* "sky" (26), *shana* "year" (26), *ahavti* "I loved" (26), and *ozen* "ear" (26). The second group, 40 Malaysian students with basic Arabic knowledge, acquired 12.83 words on average. The scores of the two groups differed with statistical significance at the 5% level ($p < 0.001$, $df = 68$, $t = 14.26$). From these results, it appears that Arabic lexical knowledge significantly facilitates Malaysian students' acquisition of Hebrew vocabulary.**

Index Terms—**Arabic, Hebrew, phonetics, semantics, similarity**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Significance of Arabic Proficiency in Malaysian Muslim Society

Arabic is the predominant language in Islam, and Muslim Malaysian pupils usually learn Arabic starting in the first year of primary school or earlier. Secondary school students in the Islamic stream must attend advanced Arabic classes in the fourth and fifth years, and most obtain advanced-level proficiency in the language (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2018). In contrast, non-Muslim Malaysians seldom learn Arabic, and they tend to focus on their English proficiency due to economic globalization. Renganathan (2021) emphasizes that many Malaysian students expect advanced-level English proficiency to enrich and stabilize their future lives. Pillai and Ong (2018) highlight that many Malaysians, who speak Malaysian English or "Manglish," consider it part of their identity. Phoon et al. (2013) stress that Malaysians' first languages (L1), such as Malay, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Tamil, strengthen the original features of each ethnic group's English variety. However, few studies have suggested the advantages of Arabic knowledge for foreign language learning by Malaysian students. This study hypothesizes that knowledge of Arabic as a second language (L2) among Malaysian students has considerable potential benefits for learning foreign languages, particularly Hebrew, which shares an identical etymological root for its vocabulary.

B. Arabic Loanwords in Malay

There are thousands of Arabic words in Malay, such as the Malay *maklumat* "information" from the Arabic *ma'lūmāt* (IPA: [maʕluːmaːt]) "information," Malay *adat* "custom" from the Arabic *'āda(t)* (IPA: [ʕaːda(t)]) "custom," Malay *umur* "age" from the Arabic *'umr* (IPA: [ʕumr]) "age," Malay *sabar* "patient" from the Arabic *ṣabr* (IPA: [sˤabr]) "patience," and *kubur* "grave" from the Arabic *qubūr* (IPA: [qubuːr]) "graves," which are frequently used in daily communication in Malay. Several Arabic consonants, such as '(IPA: [ʕ]), *ṣ* (IPA: [sˤ]), and *q* (IPA: [q]), which do not exist in Malay, had previously been simplified. Uni (2015) conducted a survey on 40 basic Malay vocabulary items, including the Malay *adat* "custom," *kubur* "grave," and *sabar* "patient" with 20 Arabic-speaking students who were studying at a major Malaysian university but had almost no prior knowledge of Malay when answering the two-page questionnaire survey. The first page was a checklist to confirm each participant's prior knowledge about 40 questioned Malay words; the second page included multiple-choice questions about the listed words along with their etymology in Arabic. On average, the participants correctly identified 24.4 Malay words and learned 17.6 vocabulary items. A significant difference was observed between the number of words identified before and after the presentation of

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[*] Corresponding Author. Email: kazuhito.uni@gmail.com

etymological information. The participants' knowledge of Arabic as their first language (L1) considerably assisted their learning of the listed Malay words.

Uni (2022) administered a similar questionnaire survey with the same Malay words; however, the participants for this second study were 20 Persian-speaking university students. Historically, Persian also contains numerous Arabic words due to the Islamization of the Persians, so most Persian speakers have a basic Arabic lexical knowledge even without studying Arabic. More than half of the queried Malay words were similar to Persian words of Arabic origin. On average, the Persian-speaking respondents correctly identified 19.9 Malay words and learned 17.35 vocabulary items, and a significant difference was observed after an explicit presentation of etymological information on Page 2 of the questionnaire. Based on the results of the previous studies, this study hypothesizes that knowledge of Arabic might foster understanding of loanwords in Malay among those who speak the language as L2.

C. Similarities Between Arabic and Hebrew

Arabic and Hebrew belong to the Semitic branch of the Afroasiatic language family (Crystal, 2010). Modern Standard Arabic retains imperfect and perfect forms in the indicative, subjunctive, and jussive moods (Ryding, 2005). Similarly, the imperfect and perfect aspects are a major distinction in Biblical Hebrew, spoken more than 2,000 years ago; however, Modern Hebrew primarily uses the present, past, and future tenses (Glinert, 2015). Thus, few grammatical similarities are observed between Arabic and Modern Hebrew. In this article, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is used to indicate Arabic pronunciation accurately. Modern Standard Arabic and Modern Hebrew do, however, retain lexical similarities, such as Arabic *yad* (IPA: [jad]) and Hebrew *yad* "hand"; Arabic *yawm* (IPA: [jawm]) and Hebrew *yom* "day"; and Arabic *'ayn* (IPA: [ʕajn]) and Hebrew *'ayin* "eye". These words, which are phonetically and semantically almost identical, were not used for the questionnaire survey in this study.

Apart from loanwords, Hebrew words are generally derived from consonantal roots that are related to specific concepts. For example, the root with the three consonants *k/kh*, *t*, and *b/v* has a holistic meaning of "write," such as the Hebrew *katav* "he wrote," *katavti* "I wrote," *ktiva* "writing" as a noun, and *mikhtav* "letter" as a written message. The Hebrew letter *kaf* is pronounced *k* or *kh*, depending on the word. A similar phonetic alternation is observed between [b] and [v], which are spelled with the Hebrew letter *beth*. Similar to the group of Hebrew words mentioned above, the Arabic *kataba* (IPA: [kataba]) "he wrote," *katabtu* (IPA: [katabtu]) "I wrote," *kitāb* (IPA: [kitaːb]) "book," and *kitāba(t)* (IPA: [kitaːba(t)]) "writing" are derived from the Arabic consonantal root *k-t-b*, which is related to acts of writing. However, the Hebrew word *sefer* "book" is not related to the Hebrew root *k/kh-t-b/v*. While Arabic-speaking learners cannot coin Hebrew words reflexively, Arabic and Hebrew vocabularies show considerable resemblance in terms of semantic scope. Furthermore, the Hebrew nouns *limud* "learning, study" and *bikur* "visit" as a noun include the roots *l-m-d* "learn" and *b-k-r* "visit," respectively. The Hebrew *talmid* and Arabic *tilmīdh* (IPA: [tilmiːð]), both of which mean "pupil," also retain phonetic and semantic similarities.

D. Benefits of Hebrew Lexical Knowledge for Arabic Speakers

Malaysian Muslims study Arabic for religious purposes; however, most of them do not frequently analyze the etymology of Arabic vocabulary. Languages do not exist in isolation but retain etymological associations. When given the opportunity to compare Hebrew words that share an etymology with their Arabic equivalents, Malaysian Arabic learners can become more aware of the similarities between Arabic and another foreign language, as well as deepening their understanding of the morphological, phonetic, and semantic aspects of Arabic. These two points would be the primary benefits of enriching Hebrew lexical knowledge among Malaysian Muslims.

E. Significance of Relativizing Own Thought

English and many other international languages are learned regardless of learners' thoughts, viewpoint, and identity. Non-Muslims also learn Arabic for academic, commercial, and cultural purposes. When learning a foreign language, learners can often compare different viewpoints and relativize their thoughts and values. This process enhances learners' linguistic and cultural consciousness, as well as increasing respect for other languages, cultures, and religions.

F. Objective

This study investigated the benefits of Arabic knowledge among Malaysian university students in learning Hebrew vocabulary that shares semantic and phonetic similarities with Arabic terminology of identical origin.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Significance of Hebrew for Judaism and Christianity

Hebrew is inseparably associated with Judaism because it is the primary language of the Hebrew Bible (also called the Old Testament by Christians), Judaism's holy scripture (Goodman, 2018). Although their religious practices vary, Jewish people around the world learn Hebrew to maintain their religious, cultural, and ethnic identity (Walters, 2019). In addition, Jewish academic institutions in America, Europe, and other regions have also encouraged their students, depending on their interests, to deepen their understanding of Hebrew and Jewish culture. Furthermore, Mintz (1993) described the development of Hebrew education in America, including an increase in Hebrew courses in tertiary

institutions. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and other linguists have contributed significantly to the establishment of Modern Hebrew (Sáenz-Badillos, 1996). In Israel, intensive Hebrew courses for adult immigrants are offered at schools called *Ulpan* (plural *Ulpanim*). There, learning Hebrew as the lingua franca strengthens new immigrants' ethnic identity and their solidarity with other Jewish citizens (Glass, 2018).

Hebrew courses are offered in various Christian academic institutions, including American universities, such as Texas Christian University and Southern Methodist University in Texas, Wheaton College in Illinois, Pepperdine University in California, and Harding University in Arkansas. Biblical Hebrew is a crucial field of study to accurately analyze linguistic, historical, and cultural contexts in the Bible. Joosten (2005) analyzed syntactic characteristics of Classical and Late Biblical Hebrew and demonstrated its primary differences. Anderson and Widder (2018) concisely explain the essence of critical biblical analyses. Reading of the Old Testament's Hebrew version enables students to compare identical texts in different languages and deepen their comprehension of grammatical, morphological, and semantic features of the Hebrew language (Kelley & Crawford, 2018). English word concepts, for instance "love," "mercy," and "generosity," partially differ from their Hebrew equivalents: the Hebrew term *chesed*, *khesed*, or *ḥesed* is translated as "mercy," "loving kindness," "kindness," or "love" in a classical English version. Hebrew learners who can recognize terms' original spelling can more deeply comprehend the whole concept as a unit, regardless of a translator's choices that conform to each sentence's biblical context.

B. Recent Studies on Hebrew Vocabulary and Phonology

Uni (2018) investigated high-frequency Modern Hebrew vocabulary of Latin and Greek origins, examining its advantage for learning basic Hebrew. For example, the Hebrew nouns *biologiya* "biology," *psikhologiya* "psychology," and *sotsiologiya* "sociology" regularly contain the Greek-origin suffix *-logiya*, which corresponds to the English suffix *-logy*. Learners aware of such similarities can often manage their language learning more efficiently than those who are not familiar with them.

A considerable number of Hebrew words were loaned from European languages (Ringvald et al., 2015). Although Hebrew does not belong to the Indo-European language family, many international loanwords resemble their equivalents in English, Russian, German, and other European languages. Before the Holocaust, Yiddish, a variety of the German language, had been widely spoken among Jewish people in Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia, etc. (Shandler, 2020). Historically, it had loaned thousands of Hebrew words; in the modern age, however, Yiddish contributed considerably to the revival of the Hebrew language by Yiddish-speaking Zionists (Kriwaczek, 2006).

Studies on language acquisition of Hebrew speakers are increasing in Israel and several other countries. Segal et al. (2016) examined the influence of the listening experience of 128 Hebrew and Arabic-learning infants on the distinction between [ba] and [pa]. The consonant [p] is not included in conventional Arabic phonemes, and [b] is included in loanwords such as [biːtzaː] "pizza" and [ʔabriːl] "April." Among the participants in Segal et al.'s study, 4- to 6-month-old infants could distinguish between [b] and [p] regardless of their native language, whereas 10- to 12-month-old babies learning Arabic ceased to distinguish the two phonemes. The comparative observation in Segal et al. (2016) is an excellent example of research that connects Hebrew and Arabic studies.

C. Utility of Similarities Between L1 and L2 for Language Acquisition

Corder (1993) highlighted the value of learners' L1 as the foundation for L2 learning, hypothesizing that, during their acquisition process, L2 learners accelerate their learning by frequently borrowing their L1 vocabulary and grammar. Ringbom (2007) emphasized that orthographical and phonetic similarity effectively fostered the lexical learning of an etymologically related language. Ringbom (2012), who contrastively analyzed the language output by Finnish and Swedish speakers, suggested that lexical studies with a focus on cross-linguistic similarities that include etymological associations can suggest various improvements to current practices of foreign language instruction. Poort and Rodd (2017) examined the usefulness of etymologically shared Dutch and English words (hereafter "cognates") for the English vocabulary identification of 41 native Dutch speakers who are fluent in English and statistically compared their average decision time for cognates and noncognates. Their results showed a statistically significant difference in decision time records between the two lexical categories, and the use of cognates was deemed effective for English language instruction to speakers of an etymologically close L1.

Most Hebrew letters, such as *gimel* ([g]), *daleth* ([d]), *zayin* ([z]), *teth* ([t]), *mem* ([m]), and *nun* ([n]), are phonetically transparent because they indicate the sole consonant sound. In addition, several letters, such as *daleth* and *mem*, which may originate from the Hebrew *delet* "door" and *mayim* "water," respectively, retain phonetic resemblance to their etymology. Treiman et al. (2007) compared difficulties faced by 645 Israeli children around the age of 5 when learning Hebrew and English letter names, and the results highlighted that the lesser phonetic similarities among Hebrew letter names compared with those among English ones facilitated the participants' learning. Ashkenazi et al. (2016) explored the acquisition of Hebrew verbs, which are mainly conjugated based on a root of three consonants; their findings provided an extensive description of root types and temporal categories. Arabic words are also derived based on similar consonant roots, and thus, their research may contribute to Arabic vocabulary instruction. Bar-On and Ravid (2011) analyzed the role of morphology in primary school pupils' learning to read unvocalized Hebrew. The participants were 171 Hebrew-speaking primary and secondary school students. Its results clarified that ages 7 and 8 are crucial for

learning an effective recognition of unvocalized Hebrew words. Their findings may provide useful suggestions applicable for Arabic instruction.

Abu-Rabia (2002) examined social and cognitive factors that influence the reading comprehension of Arabic-speaking students learning Hebrew in Israel. The participants were 74 Arab students aged 14 or 15, and their degree of comprehension frequently diminished with culturally unfamiliar topics. The majority of Hebrew texts in Israel may be written by Jewish citizens and may convey thoughts and values with which Muslims cannot agree. Furthermore, cultural, social, and political issues in Israel are hardly described from a neutral standpoint. Selecting culturally neutral L2 texts might allow learners to concentrate on the content. The main purpose of L2 reading comprehension should be distinguished from production activities, including writing exercises and oral discussions.

Although the abovementioned studies regarding native Hebrew or Arabic speakers are significantly beneficial, few studies focus on Hebrew learning among non-native Arabic speakers with an intermediate or advanced level of knowledge of Arabic vocabulary. This research gap is a major factor that inspired the author of this study to examine Hebrew vocabulary learning among Malaysian Muslim students.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The first group of participants contained 30 Malaysian students, who had completed the subject advanced Arabic during secondary school. The second group contained 40 Malaysian students, who had learned basic Arabic during secondary school. The participants were studying at two different Malaysian universities.

B. Hebrew Words Used in the Present Study

The Hebrew words used for the present study share certain phonetic or semantic similarities to their Arabic counterparts. For example, Hebrew *'olam* and Arabic [ʕaːlam] both mean "world". The voiced pharyngeal fricative [ʕ] is pronounced in Modern Standard Arabic but is often omitted or pronounced as a glottal stop (IPA: [ʔ]) in Modern Hebrew. Another example would be Hebrew *katavti* and Arabic [katabtu], which both mean "I wrote." The Arabic consonant [b] usually corresponds to [b] or [v] in Hebrew, depending on the word. The Arabic ending [tu] and Hebrew ending *-ti* both indicate an action by a singular first person that was completed in the past. The *s* sound in many Arabic words corresponds to the *sh* sound ([ʃ]) in Hebrew—for example, the Arabic [sana(t)] and the Hebrew *shana*, both of which mean "year." Moreover, the voiced velar plosive [g] in Hebrew corresponds to the Arabic [dʒ] (*j*)—for example, the Arabic [dʒaliːd] "ice" and the Hebrew *glida*, meaning "ice cream." The Hebrew letter *vav*, which corresponds etymologically to the Arabic letter *wāw*, is pronounced [v] in Modern Hebrew. For instance, the Arabic [mawt], meaning "death," is equivalent to the Hebrew *mavet*, which has the exact same meaning. It may therefore be relatively easy for advanced-level Arabic speakers to analyze and recognize phonetic and semantic correspondences in Hebrew words. Arabic counterparts were not shown on the questionnaire to prevent cuing the participants and to maintain the reliability of the test results.

C. Details of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study consisted of two pages, as shown in Tables 1 and 2. Page 1 was a checklist with Yes/No columns about 30 Hebrew words to examine participants' prior knowledge. If they answered yes, they were asked to write the meaning of the word in English or Malay. After the participants completed the items on Page 1, they were provided with a brief explanation of the phonetic similarities between Hebrew and Arabic in Table 3 and then answered multiple-choice questions on the 30 Hebrew words on Page 2. Each participant was given 50 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

TABLE 1
EXCERPT FROM PAGE 1 OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Checklist		
Do you know the meaning of the following words? If not, please circle No only. If you do know the word, please circle Yes and write its possible meaning in Malay or English. I would appreciate your kind cooperation.		
1. akhalti	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )
2. katavti	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )
3. ahavti	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )
4. shavua'	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )
5. shana	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )
6. shemesh	Yes/No	Possible meaning: ( )

TABLE 2
EXCERPT FROM PAGE 2 OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Multiple-question quiz on fundamental Hebrew vocabulary			
Instructions: Please select a, b, or c and write your answer in ( ).			
1. akhalti	a. I saw	b. I drank	c. I ate	( )
2. katavti	a. I listened	b. I wrote	c. I spoke	( )
3. ahavti	a. I knew	b. I loved	c. I had	( )
4. shavua'	a. week	b. month	c. season	( )
5. shana	a. day	b. minute	c. year	( )
6. shemesh	a. star	b. moon	c. sun	( )
7. sheleg	a. rain	b. snow	c. cloud	( )
8. shamayim	a. name	b. sky	c. space	( )
9. 'etsem	a. body	b. head	c. bone	( )
10. glida	a. milk	b. ice cream	c. cream	( )

TABLE 3
BRIEF EXPLANATION OF PHONETIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN HEBREW AND ARABIC

The Hebrew letter *beth* is pronounced [b] or [v], depending on the word− for example, the Hebrew *av* or *aba*, "father."
The Hebrew letter *vav*, which corresponds etymologically to the Arabic letter *wāw*, is pronounced [v] in Modern Hebrew.
The *s* sound in many Arabic words corresponds to the *sh* sound ([ʃ]) in Hebrew− for example, the Arabic *sab'a(t)* and the Hebrew *sheva'*, both of which mean "seven."
The Hebrew letter *kaf* is pronounced as [k] or [x] (*kh*), depending on the word− compare the Arabic *-ka* and the Hebrew *-kha* [xa]; both are masculine suffixes, meaning "your."
The Hebrew letter *khet* is pronounced [x] (*kh*) and corresponds to the Arabic [ħ] (*ḥ*) and [x] (*kh*)− for example, the Arabic *ḥalīb* and the Hebrew *khalav*, both meaning "milk"; the Arabic *khamsa(t)* and the Hebrew *khamesh*, both of which mean "five."
The Hebrew letter *gimel* is pronounced [g] and corresponds to the Arabic [dʒ] (*j*)− compare the Arabic *zawj* and the Hebrew *zug*, both meaning "couple."

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

A. Respondents' Scores

The first group of participants, the 30 Malaysian students with advanced Arabic proficiency, learned an average of 23.07 Hebrew words; the second group, the 40 Malaysian students with basic Arabic knowledge, acquired 12.83 words on average. Microsoft Excel Version 2304 was used to perform statistical analyses of these data. At a 5% level, the two groups' scores showed statistically significant differences ($p < 0.001$, $df = 68$, $t = 14.26$). Table 4 presents the details of the respondents' scores. Tables 5 and 6 present the numbers of words learned by each respondent in Group 1 or 2, respectively.

TABLE 4
RESPONDENTS' SCORES

	Group 1	Group 2
Mean	23.07	12.83
Standard Deviation	10.13	7.89
Total Number	30	40
t-Value	14.26	
p-Value	< 0.001	

TABLE 5
NUMBER OF WORDS LEARNED BY EACH RESPONDENT IN GROUP 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	19	19	20	20	20	20	20	20	21	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	23	24
21	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**										
24	25	26	27	27	27	27	28	28	29										

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF WORDS LEARNED BY EACH RESPONDENT IN GROUP 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8	9	9	9	9	9	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	12	12	12	12	12	13
21	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**	**26**	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**	**31**	**32**	**33**	**34**	**35**	**36**	**37**	**38**	**39**	**40**
13	13	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	14	14	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	18	20

B. The Most Correctly Identified Words

All 30 participants in Group 1 had not known the meaning of *'olam* "world" prior to answering the questions on Page 2, but they correctly identified its meaning. In addition, 28 respondents from Group 1 successfully guessed the meaning of *katavti* "I wrote" and *mavet* "death," which are equivalent to Arabic [katabtu] "I wrote" and [mawt] "death," respectively; the phonetic differences between Hebrew [v] and Arabic [b]/[w] only hindered identification by two

participants. The words *melekh* "king," *moakh* "brain," *shabat* "Saturday," and *shen* ("tooth") were correctly identified by 27 students. The Hebrew noun *melekh* "king" and its Arabic counterpart *malik* end with *kh* and [k], respectively, which only confused three respondents. The Hebrew *moakh* "brain" and its Arabic equivalent [mu:x] "brain" share the consonants [m] and [x]; the vowels in these words were a major obstacle for three respondents. One participant correctly identified *shabat* "Saturday" while filling in the checklist on Page 1 as the Malay noun *Sabtu* "Saturday," of Arabic origin, may have been a clue. A further 27 people learned the words *shabat* "Saturday" and *shen* "tooth" through the quiz on Page 2. Similarities between the Hebrew *shen* and Arabic [sinn], both of which mean "tooth," encouraged most participants to guess the correct meaning. The Hebrew *shamayim* "sky" and Arabic [sama:ʔ] "sky" also retain certain similarities, as do the Hebrew *shana* and its Arabic counterpart [sana(t)] "year".

TABLE 7
HEBREW WORDS MOST CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS IN GROUP 1

Number of Correct Answers (*n* = 30)	Hebrew Words	Their Arabic Counterparts
30	*'olam* "world"	[ʕa:lam] "world"
28	*katavti* "I wrote"	[katabtu] "I wrote"
28	*mavet* "death"	[mawt] "death"
27	*melekh* "king"	[malik] "king"
27	*moakh* "brain"	[mu:x] "brain"
27	*shabat* "Saturday"	[sabt] "Saturday"
27	*shen* "tooth"	[sinn] "tooth"
26	*shamayim* "sky"	[sama:ʔ] "sky"
26	*shana* "year"	[sana(t)] "year"
26	*ahavti* "I loved"	[ʔaħbabtu] "I loved"
26	*ozen* "ear"	[ʔuðun] "ear"

The Arabic verb form [ʔaħbabtu] "I loved," corresponding to the Hebrew *ahavti* "I loved," facilitated identification by 26 participants. These cases indicate that the difference between Hebrew *sh* and Arabic [s] or between Hebrew *h* and Arabic [ħ] did not considerably confuse learners. The consonantal difference between *z* in Hebrew *ozen* "ear" and [ð] in Arabic [ʔuðun] also did not affect most participants.

TABLE 8
HEBREW WORDS MOST CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS IN GROUP 2

Number of Correct Answers (*n* = 40)	Hebrew Words	Their Arabic Counterparts
25	*mavet* "death"	[mawt] "death"
24	*shabat* "Saturday"	[sabt] "Saturday"
24	*khayim* "life"	[ħaja:(t)] "life"
22	*akhalti* "I ate"	[ʔakaltu] "I ate"
22	*khalom* "dream"	[ħulm] "dream"
21	*tsohorayim* "noon"	[ðˤuhr] "noon"
20	*'etsem* "bone"	[ʕaðˤm] "bone"
20	*shamayim* "sky"	[sama:ʔ] "sky"
19	*katavti* "I wrote"	[katabtu] "I wrote"
19	*ahavti* "I loved"	[ʔaħbabtu] "I loved"
19	*melekh* "king"	[malik] "king"

Among the Hebrew words in Table 8, *khayim* "life" (24 correct responses), *akhalti* "I ate" (22), *khalom* "dream" (22), *tsohorayim* "noon" (21), and *'etsem* "bone" (20) were not among the words most correctly identified by respondents in Group 1. Instead, Table 7 includes *'olam* "world" (30 correct answers), *moakh* "brain" (27), *shen* "tooth" (27), and *shana* "year" (26). Differences in Arabic vocabulary knowledge between the two groups affected the participants' identification of the listed Hebrew words. Semantic and phonetic similarities shared with the Arabic [ʕa:lam] "world," [mu:x] "brain," [sinn] "tooth," and [sana(t)] "year" may have more obviously helped Group 1 participants identify their Hebrew equivalents.

C. The Most Difficult Words

The Hebrew words that most commonly confused Group 1 were *'etsem* "bone," *se'ar* "hair," and *tsipor* "bird," which correspond to Arabic [ʕaðˤm] "bone," [ʃaʕ(a)r] "hair," and [ʕusˤfu:r] "small bird, sparrow," respectively. Phonetic differences in not only vowels but also consonants appeared to confuse half of the participants. First, the etymological correspondence between Hebrew *ts* and Arabic [ðˤ] made it difficult to guess the correct meaning. Although the correspondence between Hebrew *sh* and Arabic [s] in the most correctly identified words had limited negative effects, the correspondence between Hebrew *s* and Arabic [ʃ] confused 16 respondents.

The Arabic noun [ʕusˤfu:r] "small bird, sparrow," which corresponds to Hebrew *tsipor* "bird," is based on the consonant root [sˤ]-[f]-[r]; however, an etymologically irrelevant addition of [ʕ] to the first syllable of the Arabic word diminished participants' comprehension. The Hebrew word *lev* "heart" and its Arabic counterpart *lubb* "core" diverge

semantically, which negatively affected 15 respondents. The incorrect option "love" on the multiple-choice question on Page 2 also misled some participants.

The Hebrew noun *gan* "garden" includes a *g*, which corresponds to [dʒ] (English *j*) in Arabic; however, the broad semantic scope of the Arabic noun [dʒanna(t)] "paradise, garden" may have prevented their semantic identification. The Hebrew noun *glida* "ice cream" and its Arabic etymological counterpart [dʒaliːd] "ice" share an identical consonantal correspondence that enabled 20 participants to successfully identify the meaning of *glida*. The cross-linguistic pair *erets* "country, land" and [ʔardˤ] "land, earth" was comprehensible for 20 students, as these words retain a certain semantic similarity.

TABLE 9
HEBREW WORDS LEAST CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS IN GROUP 1

Number of Correct Answers (n = 30)	Hebrew Words	Their Arabic Counterparts
14	*'etsem* "bone"	[ʕaðˤm] "bone"
14	*se'ar* "hair"	[ʃaʕ(a)r] "hair"
14	*tsipor* "bird"	[ʕusˤfuːr] "small bird, sparrow"
15	*lev* "heart"	[lubb] "core"; (semantic equivalent) [qalb] "heart"
16	*gan* "garden"	[dʒanna(t)] "paradise, garden"; (semantic equivalent) [ħadiːqa(t)] "garden, park"
20	*glida* "ice cream"	[dʒaliːd] "ice"; (semantic equivalent) [buːðˤa(t)] "ice cream"
20	*erets* "country, land"	[ʔardˤ] "land, earth"; (semantic equivalent) [balad] "country"
20	*khayim* "life"	[ħaja:(t)] "life"
22	*khalom* "dream"	[ħulm] "dream"
22	*beytsa* "egg"	[bajdˤa(t)] "egg"
22	*merkaz* "center"	[markaz] "center"

The Hebrew noun *khayim* and its Arabic counterpart [ħaja:(t)] both mean "life." In addition to their semantic similarities, the existence of the Arabic-origin Malay word *hayat* "life" may have assisted 20 participants in identifying the meaning of *khayim*. The correspondence between Hebrew *kh* and Arabic [ħ] can also be observed between *khalom* and [ħulm], which share the meaning "dream." More obvious phonetic similarities are shared between *beytsa* and [bajdˤa(t)] "egg" as well as between *merkaz* and [markaz] "center".

TABLE 10
HEBREW WORDS LEAST CORRECTLY IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS IN GROUP 2

Number of Correct Answers (n = 40)	Hebrew Words	Their Arabic Counterparts
7	*lev* "heart"	[lubb] "core"; (semantic equivalent) [qalb] "heart"
7	*se'ar* "hair"	[ʃaʕ(a)r] "hair"
9	*ozen* "ear"	[ʔuðun] "ear"
10	*shavua'* "week"	[ʔusbuːʕ] "week"
11	*mafteakh* "key"	[mifta:ħ] "key"
12	*beytsa* "egg"	[bajdˤa(t)] "egg"
13	*merkaz* "center"	[markaz] "center"
14	*tsipor* "bird"	[ʕusˤfuːr] "small bird, sparrow"
15	*glida* "ice cream"	[dʒaliːd] "ice"; (semantic equivalent) [buːðˤa(t)] "ice cream"
16	*gan* "garden"	[dʒanna(t)] "paradise, garden"; (semantic equivalent) [ħadiːqa(t)] "garden, park"

Among the Hebrew words in Table 10, *ozen* "ear" (9 correct responses), *shavua'* "week" (10), and *mafteakh* "key" (11) were not included in the words that most commonly confused respondents in Group 1, which instead contained *erets* "country, land," *khayim* "life," and *khalom* "dream." When answering Page 2 of the questionnaire survey, most Group 1 participants successfully remembered the Arabic words [ʔuðun] "ear," [ʔusbuːʕ] "week," and [mifta:ħ] "key," so the identification of their Hebrew counterparts was relatively easy.

D. Other Words in the Vocabulary Survey

A total of 23 respondents in Group 1 accurately identified the Hebrew noun *mafteakh* "key", which corresponds to the Arabic word [mifta:ħ]. The root consonants of these two words remain almost identical, *p/f-t-kh* in Hebrew and [f]-[t]-[ħ] in Arabic. The same number of participants also chose the correct meaning for Hebrew *shavua'* "week," corresponding to the Arabic [ʔusbuːʕ]. The Hebrew *shama'ti* "I heard" received 24 correct answers. The

correspondence between *sh* and [s] appeared to benefit most participants. The Hebrew *tsohorayim* and its Arabic counterpart [ðˤuhr] "noon" share the consonants [h] and [r]. The Arabic-origin Malay noun *Zohor* or *Zuhur* "*Dhuhr* Muslim prayer" also helped the participants to identify the meaning. Four participants in Group 1 successfully guessed the meaning of *akhalti* "I ate," similar to Arabic [ʔakaltu] with the same meaning, when filling in Page 1 of the questionnaire. A total of 25 participants accurately guessed the meaning of *akhalti* "I ate," *etsbaʻ* "finger," *sheleg* "snow," and *shemesh* "sun." The cross-linguistic phonetic correspondence between *ts* and [sˤ] allowed most participants to identify *etsbaʻ* "finger".

TABLE 11
NUMBER OF GROUP 1 CORRECT ANSWERS FOR OTHER HEBREW WORDS

Number of Correct Answers (*n* = 30)	Hebrew Words	Their Arabic Counterparts
23	*mafteakh* "key"	[miftaːħ] "key"
23	*shavuaʻ* "week"	[ʔusbuːʕ] "week"
24	*shamaʻti* "I heard"	[samiʕtu] "I heard"
24	*tsohorayim* "noon"	[ðˤuhr] "noon"
25	*akhalti* "I ate"	[ʔakaltu] "I ate"
25	*etsbaʻ* "finger"	[ʔisˤbaʕ] "finger"
25	*sheleg* "snow"	[θaldʒ] "snow"
25	*shemesh* "sun"	[ʃams] "sun"

V. DISCUSSION

Phonetic similarities in the first and second syllables particularly helped most participants identify the correct word meaning, as, for example, in the Hebrew words *shamayim* "sky" ([samaːʔ] in Arabic) and *katavti* "I wrote" ([katabtu] in Arabic), for which the different syllables at the end did not impede most participants' identification. Moreover, regularity in phonetic similarity between Hebrew [v] and Arabic [b]/[w], [ʃ] (*sh*) and [s], [ts] and [sˤ], and [x] (*kh*) and [k]/[ħ]/[x] was significantly beneficial for the respondents to notice certain phonetic correspondences. However, the correspondence between Hebrew [ts] and Arabic [ðˤ] in the Hebrew *tsohorayim* "noon" and Arabic [ðˤuhr] "noon" did not considerably raise linguistic consciousness.

The Hebrew *lev* "heart," which etymologically corresponds to the Arabic *lubb* "core" and has *qalb* "heart" as its semantic equivalent, was successfully identified by only 15 and 7 participants in Groups 1 and 2, respectively. The meaning of *tsipor* "bird," whose Arabic etymological counterpart is [ʕusˤfuːr] "small bird, sparrow," was correctly guessed by 14 participants in both groups. The limited number of correct answers for these two Hebrew words indicates that semantic similarities are also essential for identification. The other 28 Hebrew words retained more obvious semantic similarity, and this assisted the participants in selecting the correct meaning.

The possible existence of other variables is a primary limitation of this study. Differences in socio-economic backgrounds between Groups 1 and 2 may have influenced the results. To allow a detailed analysis, more information could be sought from each participant, including the duration of Arabic learning, past travel experience in Arab countries, and other relevant experience.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study examined the benefits of Arabic lexical knowledge among Malaysian university students for learning Hebrew vocabulary that shares certain semantic and phonetic similarities to the Arabic equivalents. On average, the participants in Group 1, the 30 Malaysian students with advanced Arabic proficiency, learned 23.07 Hebrew words on average, while those in Group 2, the 40 Malaysian students with basic Arabic knowledge, acquired 12.83 words on average. The two groups' scores differed with statistical significance ($p < 0.001$, $df = 68$, $t = 14.26$). Based on these results, this study concludes that L2 Arabic knowledge significantly facilitates Malaysian students' learning of Hebrew vocabulary.

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Kazuhito Uni was born in Hyogo, Japan, in 1983. In 2010, he obtained his master's degree in human and environmental studies at Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan. In 2018, he received a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

In 2015, he was invited to make an academic presentation at the National Institute of Education, Singapore, and he has published research papers in SCOPUS-cited journals, including Connecting Kanji radicals with their Malay equivalents in Japanese Kanji instruction to native Malay-speaking students. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, *19*(4), 128–147. His research interests include teaching Japanese, English, French, German, Swedish, and Malay as foreign languages.

Dr. Uni obtained the Journal Publication Award in 2019 from the Islamic Science University of Malaysia. In addition, he received the best paper award at the Sixth World Conference on Integration of Knowledge 2020 on August 27, 2020, and at the Ninth International Conference on Social Science Research on November 30, 2020.

Heritage Language Maintenance Among Immigrant Youth: Factors Influencing Proficiency and Identity

Mona A. Alshihry

English Department, Faculty of Languages & Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, Faraa, 61421, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Focusing on the importance of family linguistic practices and social support, this study investigates the complex link between immigrant youths' heritage language competence and the development of their sense of self. The research, which makes heavy use of quantitative methods, looks at the interplay between fluency in one's heritage language and one's feeling of cultural and ethnic belonging. The results highlight the significance of language usage among families of immigrants. Positive and robust associations between family language use and legacy language competence highlight the central role of the family context in language transmission. Youth of immigrants who hear their heritage language spoken often at home benefit not just in linguistic but also in cultural and ethnic identity development. This, in turn, helps immigrant families feel more at home and strengthens their commitment to maintaining their cultural traditions. Although the favorable association between community support and heritage language competency is less, it is still considerable. Community support supplements family efforts by offering extra resources and opportunities for language development. Heritage language schools and cultural festivals are examples of community-driven projects that provide a framework for language study and cultural immersion. Youth who share a same language and cultural background benefit from the existence of welcoming immigrant communities, which strengthens their sense of cultural identification and fosters a feeling of belonging.

Index Terms—heritage language proficiency, identity formation, immigrant youth

I. INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that language plays an important role in human culture and identity, making it crucial that immigrant communities protect their heritage languages. Differences between the heritage language and the dominant language of the host country, as well as the continuity of the language from one generation to the next, are important factors in the maintenance of cultural traditions, the development of a sense of individuality, and the maintenance of ties to the homeland (Caloi & Torregrossa, 2021). However, there are several factors that influence how immigrant children keep their heritage languages alive (Kwon, 2017). The major goal of this study is to examine the often-overlooked relationship between immigrant adolescents' legacy language skills and their evolving senses of self. In particular, the numerous factors that have led to the development of this intricate relationship will be investigated.

According to De Haas et al. (2019) many countries have seen an increase in cultural diversity as a result of shifts in global migration patterns over the last few decades. As a result of their contributions to the cultural richness and economic vitality of their new homelands, immigrant groups have become integral to the countries that have welcomed them (Jones et al., 2019). Park (2022) stated that Language transmission across generations is crucial to the maintenance of immigrant communities' cultural traditions. The facilitation of intergenerational information transfer and the preservation of cultural customs are significantly enhanced by the use of heritage languages.

Adolescents who are immigrants, namely those who are the offspring of second-generation immigrants, have distinct difficulties in preserving their heritage languages (Shen & Jiang, 2021). Adolescents who have recently migrated face the intricate dynamics between their ancestral heritage, where they are exposed to the cultural customs and linguistic traditions of their family, and their host country, where the prevailing language and culture usually exert influence (Rubino, 2022). The linguistic and cultural proficiency of young immigrants in both their original language and the language and culture of their host country has a significant impact on their identity formation and self-perception (Puentes, 2021).

Despite the increasing recognition of the need of preserving legacy languages, there exists a noticeable deficiency in scholarly literature about the complex interplay between proficiency in heritage languages and the development of identity among young immigrants (Aalberse et al., 2019). Despite the extensive research conducted on language learning, bilingualism, and identity within immigrant communities (Mattheoudakis et al., 2017), there remains a dearth of comprehensive understanding regarding the factors that impact proficiency in heritage languages and the formation of identity. In order to bridge this existing knowledge gap, the present research endeavors to examine the intricate correlation between competency in a heritage language and one's sense of identity. The primary objective is to identify and elucidate the many elements that contribute to this multifaceted interaction.

The research places particular attention on an uncharted area due to the dynamic nature of immigration and the subsequent increase in linguistic diversity. There has been a significant increase in international migration in recent years, creating a larger and more diverse immigrant population in many countries. Young people's ability to maintain their heritage languages in the face of new opportunities and challenges is a hallmark of immigrant communities (Polinsky, 2018). As a result, it is more important than ever to look at this issue from a contemporary perspective.

Identity and cultural belonging are also receiving more attention in today's society as a result of its rapid transformation (Mossie & Wang, 2020). Debates concerning the role of language in the development of a sense of belonging have arisen in the context of discussions on multiculturalism, integration, and diversity (Ham et al., 2017). Within this context, investigating how immigrant adolescents navigate their identity in light of their heritage language skills is crucial. Multiculturalism and the peaceful coexistence of different cultural identities within a single community are topics that might benefit from more discussion, which our analysis helps to facilitate (Sanmee et al., 2021).

Objective of the Study

The central objective of this study revolves around exploring the impact of heritage language proficiency on the development of a young immigrant's self-identity.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

Many academic studies have looked at the factors that influence how well young immigrants learn their heritage languages. Particularly important are the lingua franca practices of the family unit. Previous research (Valdés, 2000) has shown that a person's linguistic proficiency is positively correlated with the frequency with which their heritage language is spoken at home. Schecter and Merecoulias (2023) study found that when immigrant adolescents spoke their heritage language at home, they were more likely to become proficient in that language.

The communal context is equally important in terms of preserving heritage languages. The existence of a heritage language community, say Suárez-Orozco (2017), is crucial in helping teenage immigrants keep their language abilities. Expertise may be stunted in the absence of a supportive network of peers, according to some research (Schleppegrell, 2007). There has been a lot of study on the topic of formal language training in both academic and non-academic settings (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Kondo-Brown (2005) claims that students' language proficiency may improve if they are exposed to heritage language programs and extracurricular activities.

The academic research has recognized peer relationships as an additional critical factor (Orellana, 2003). Adolescent immigrants who spend time with friends who also speak their heritage language are more likely to maintain and even improve their proficiency in that language, as stated by Phinney (2003).

The literature delves deeply into the central question of how fluency in one's ancestral language relates to the construction of one's own identity. Numerous academic studies have looked at how fluency in a second language impacts the way teenage immigrants develop their sense of cultural and ethnic identity. Adolescent immigrants who are fluent in their heritage language tend to have a stronger sense of ethnic identification, according to research conducted by Portes and Rumbaut (2001).

It is possible that the host country's language and culture have a role in the identity-negotiation process. Adolescent immigrants who struggled to assimilate their home language with the dominant language had identity challenges, according to research by Schwartz et al. (2013). Common points of contention were adjusting to a new culture and finding a place to call home.

The literature lays heavy stress on the complex interplay between several factors in the maintenance of legacy languages and the formation of personal identities. Since parents' views about language preservation may be impacted by the quantity of support they obtain from the broader community, there is a complicated link between family dynamics and community effects (Chao, 2006; Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Language rules and the breadth of the curriculum are two examples of institutional characteristics that have been shown to have a direct impact on students' levels of mastery of a subject area (Kondo-Brown, 2005; Wong-Fillmore, 1991). Immigrant families' financial status and the immigrant experience as a whole are two examples of socioeconomic factors that affect the relationship between language proficiency and identity (Suárez-Orozco).

Countless investigations on the same topic have yielded useful insights. Kanno and Harklau's (2009) longitudinal research is instructive in this regard since it looks at how immigrant children deal with their linguistic and cultural identities throughout time. Significant discoveries were uncovered from this study, which provided insight into the complex identity negotiation processes. The importance of formal education in preserving competence in the legacy language was also explored in Tse's (2001) research, which looked into the impact of heritage language schools on the maintenance of language abilities among Chinese immigrant teenagers.

III. METHODS

In this study, a quantitative research approach was utilized to analyse the associated phenomena of legacy language skills and a sense of self among adolescent immigrants. This was done to get a better understanding of how these abilities and senses are formed. The primary purpose of this study was to gather data from a diverse group of immigrant

adolescent participants, assess those data via the use of rigorous statistical techniques, and draw conclusions on the relationships that existed between the various variables and the results that were wanted.

1. Research Design

"Cross-sectional" research collects data from participants at a single moment in time and is known for its comparative nature. We were able to acquire quantitative data for analyzing important traits by means of a survey instrument, and these criteria included heritage language competency, identification, and related elements. The questionnaire included both open-ended and closed-ended questions, as well as some basic demographic data.

2. Participants

Different immigrant populations in the area were targeted for recruitment using purposeful selection techniques. The following requirements were put in place to ensure that only eligible participants took part: Individuals must satisfy the following requirements to participate in the study: They must (a) be between the ages of 14 and 24, (b) consider themselves to be immigrants or the children of immigrants, (c) speak a heritage language other than the official language of the host country, and (d) give their informed consent to take part in the study. After initially reaching out to 500 people, 450 of them agreed to take part, yielding a final sample size of 450.

3. Data Collection

The data collection procedure took place over the course of two months. Individuals were invited to take part in a survey and given the option of responding in person or online. In-depth interviews with members of immigrant communities were done in venues including community centers, schools, and cultural events. Email invitations and several social media platforms were used to disseminate the online questionnaires. Participants were encouraged to complete the survey on their own, without assistance from anyone else, to ensure the highest possible data quality and reliability.

4. Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was carried out using the statistical program SPSS version 25. The researchers computed descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages, in order to provide a summary of the demographic features of the sample and the primary variables under investigation. The study used bivariate correlations and regression analysis to investigate the associations between heritage language proficiency, identity, and a range of influencing variables.

IV. RESULTS

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years)		
- 14-17	120	26.7%
- 18-21	180	40.0%
- 22-24	150	33.3%
Gender		
- Male	210	46.7%
- Female	240	53.3%
Country of Origin		
- Country A	90	20.0%
- Country B	120	26.7%
- Country C	60	13.3%
- Other	180	40.0%
Total Participants	450	100%

In Table 1, we see a thorough synopsis of the study participants' demographic information. Age, gender breakdown, and place of origin are only few of the pieces of information that may be found in the dataset. The characteristics of the sample's 450 participants are detailed in the table provided. All ages are included, both sexes are equally represented, and people from many different nations are included in the sample.

TABLE 2
HERITAGE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Proficiency Level	Frequency	Percentage
Very Low	60	13.3%
Low	90	20.0%
Moderate	120	26.7%
High	120	26.7%
Very High	60	13.3%
Mean Proficiency Score		3.29

Descriptive data pertaining to the competency of the participants in their ancestral language are shown in Table 2. The presented data showcases the spectrum of proficiency levels, spanning from "Very Low" to "Very High," in terms

of both frequency and percentage. The chart further presents the mean proficiency score, indicating an average skill level of 3.29.

TABLE 3
IDENTITY FORMATION

Identity Component	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Cultural Identity	4.12	0.75
Ethnic Identity	3.88	0.82
Sense of Belonging	3.95	0.71

Observed participant data describing the identity formation process are shown in Table 3. Information on cultural identity, ethnic identity, and a sense of belonging is presented, along with mean scores and standard deviations. Findings from the mean scores provide interesting information about the participants' sense of cultural identity and belonging.

TABLE 4
FAMILY LANGUAGE PRACTICES

Frequency of Heritage Language Use at Home	Mean Frequency	Standard Deviation
Rarely	40	0.9
Occasionally	90	1.2
Sometimes	140	1.5
Often	120	1.1
Always	60	0.8

The descriptive statistics on the language preferences of families are shown in Table 4. The poll includes responses from those whose first language at home was not English, as well as those who spoke their heritage language at home on a regular basis. The average frequency and standard deviation for each level of language usage are also included in the table, offering more insight into the extent to which participants' families make use of heritage languages.

TABLE 5
COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR HERITAGE LANGUAGE

Perception of Community Support	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Strongly Disagree	20	0.6
Disagree	60	0.9
Neutral	100	1.1
Agree	160	1.3
Strongly Agree	110	1.0

The descriptive data pertaining to participants' assessments of community support for the conservation of legacy language are shown in Table 5. The dataset comprises mean scores and standard deviations corresponding to varying degrees of agreement with statements pertaining to community support. The presented table provides valuable information about the participants' perceptions of the help they get from their respective communities in the preservation of their heritage language.

TABLE 6
BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VARIABLES

	Proficiency	Cultural Identity	Ethnic Identity	Belonging	Family Language	Community Support
Proficiency	1.00	0.68**	0.63**	0.59**	0.45**	0.28**
Cultural Identity	0.68**	1.00	0.82**	0.65**	0.39**	0.21**
Ethnic Identity	0.63**	0.82**	1.00	0.54**	0.36**	0.18*
Belonging	0.59**	0.65**	0.54**	1.00	0.29**	0.15*
Family Language	0.45**	0.39**	0.36**	0.29**	1.00	0.27**
Community Support	0.28**	0.21**	0.18*	0.15*	0.27**	1.00

Bivariate correlations between the study variables are shown in Table 6. Throughout the table, you will find the Pearson correlation coefficient (r), which measures how strongly and in what direction two variables are related.

One's ability to speak a language of their ancestry is positively correlated with their sense of cultural (r = 0.68, p 0.01) and ethnic (r = 0.63, p 0.01) identity. This research hints to a causal link between fluency in the heritage language and strong feelings of cultural and ethnic belonging. The correlation between skill and feeling accepted is somewhat favorable and statistically significant (r = 0.59, p 0.01). Gaining fluency in the language of the host country is correlated with feeling more at home there. Using a language in the home is significantly associated with knowing how to use a heritage language (r = 0.45, p 0.01). More frequent use of a language at home correlates positively with higher levels of skill among its members. A slight positive correlation (r = 0.28, p 0.01) between community backing and heritage language competence is seen in the data. This data reveals that there is a modest correlation between rising levels of community support and rising levels of language competency.

TABLE 7
REGRESSION ANALYSIS PREDICTING HERITAGE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Variable	Beta (β)	Standard Error	p-value
Cultural Identity	0.45**	0.06	<0.001
Ethnic Identity	0.38**	0.05	<0.001
Belonging	0.22**	0.04	<0.01
Family Language Use	0.31**	0.03	<0.001
Community Support	0.14*	0.03	<0.05
Constant	0.21	0.15	0.14

The findings of a multivariate linear regression analysis predicting competency in heritage language are shown in Table 7. The study incorporates many independent factors.

The results of the study indicate that cultural identification ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$), ethnic identity ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$), and family language usage ($\beta = 0.31$, $p < 0.001$) have a substantial impact on predicting an individual's competency in their heritage language. These findings suggest that those with stronger cultural and ethnic identities, as well as those who use their family language more often, tend to have greater levels of language competency. The results indicate that both the feeling of belonging ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.01$) and community support ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.05$) have a substantial impact on heritage language competency, while the magnitude of their contributions is comparatively less. The intercept, symbolized by the constant ($\beta = 0.21$, $p = 0.14$), is observed to have a limited statistical significance. This postulation suggests that, in the absence of any alterations to other factors, there is an absence of substantial deviation from a null value in the expected proficiency level of the ancestral language.

V. DISCUSSION

Heritage Language Proficiency and Identity Formation

The study's results highlight a significant topic about the complex interplay between competency in the heritage language and the process of identity building among young immigrants. The present discussion part provides a comprehensive analysis of this pivotal element, using the findings and situating them within the current body of scholarly work.

The findings demonstrate significant positive associations between competency in the heritage language and both cultural identification ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$) and ethnic identity ($r = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$), underscoring the influential role of language in forming the self-perception of immigrant adolescents within their cultural and ethnic frameworks. The findings of this study align with the acculturation hypothesis proposed by Berry (1980), which suggests that people who keep a strong affiliation with their heritage language and culture are more inclined to achieve integration and develop a favorable sense of identity within the host community.

When immigrant adolescents possess a high level of fluency in their heritage language, they often exhibit an enhanced capacity to actively participate in cultural activities, traditions, and norms. People's sense of cultural identity is bolstered when they take part in cultural activities, which make it easier for them to take part in significant cultural events, forge relationships with older generations who primarily interact in the heritage language, and give them a platform from which to express themselves through their cultural heritage (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In addition, one's ability to speak one's native tongue has a major impact on one's ethnic identity. Ethnic identity refers to one's feeling of belonging to a certain ethnic group. According to Phinney (2003), strong ethnic group membership is positively correlated with the extent to which immigrant children retain their ancestral language. This occurs because language serves as a marker of group membership and facilitates friendships between people who share a common language and culture. A strong feeling of identity and appreciation for one's cultural roots is fostered via the identifying process (Suárez-Orozco).

A person's sense of belonging has been shown to correlate significantly with their level of fluency in their ancestral language. The results showed a moderate positive connection ($r = 0.59$, $p\ 0.01$), emphasizing the importance of language competence in encouraging a sense of belonging to the host nation. Creating opportunities for immigrant adolescents to feel accepted by their host society is essential to their development and integration (Berry, 2005).

Adolescent immigrants who are fluent in their ancestral language are better equipped to navigate the host culture while still maintaining and strengthening their own cultural identity. This facilitates interaction between persons with similar language backgrounds, such as families, communities, and social circles. When people are able to integrate into the social structure of their host nation while maintaining their own cultural traditions, a stronger feeling of community is fostered (Schwartz et al., 2007).

Furthermore, the feeling of acceptance and inclusion within the social structure of the host community is intrinsically linked to the concept of belonging. Among adolescent immigrants, keeping the native tongue alive has been linked to better communication, friendship building, and participation in school and communal life. Language ability is vital for helping social integration, and the aforementioned experiences all play a part in fostering a feeling of belonging.

Family Language Practices and Heritage Language Proficiency

According to the results of this study, teenage immigrants' success in learning their heritage languages is significantly influenced by the linguistic habits they see at home. In this section, the implications of these studies are thoroughly discussed, with special focus on the role that the home setting plays in preserving language competence.

This study used a bivariate correlation analysis to delve into the complex link between linguistic habits at home and fluency in a heritage language. The results showed a significant relationship (r = 0.45, p 0.01) between the aforementioned factors. The aforementioned group focuses heavy stress on the vital function of families in the maintenance of heritage languages (Valdés, 2000).

It is common practice for immigrant families to include language-focused activities into the daily lives of their children and adolescents. Fishman (1991) argues that parents and other relatives who regularly engage in conversational interactions using the ancestral language effectively supply the linguistic stimuli crucial for the acquisition and maintenance of linguistic proficiency in young children. According to Orellana's (2003) research, children who grow up in homes where their native language is spoken are exposed to a rich linguistic environment that promotes their natural acquisition of the language.

Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge that linguistic traditions within families include much more than just talking to one another; they cover a larger spectrum that includes cultural events, practices, and ideals. Immigrant adolescents benefit greatly from opportunities to participate in cultural events, festivals, and rituals if they are exposed to their heritage languages in the home. As a result of the aforementioned exposure, one's understanding of the historical foundations that define their story is enriched. Kondo-Brown's (2005) research shows that total immersion in a language fosters a strong identification not just with the language's grammar and vocabulary but also with its speakers' shared history and culture.

In immigrant families, a shared language serves as more than just a method of communication; it also acts as a uniting factor that helps keep the generations of newcomers together. The act of preserving the legacy language is frequently seen as a symbolic representation of a dedication to cultural conservation and a method of transmitting customs and principles to future generations (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Parents who are immigrants and place importance on maintaining their heritage language are actively engaged in ensuring that their children have a strong connection to their cultural origins.

In addition, the competence in one's ancestral language is closely linked with familial bonds. According to Orellana (2003), adolescents who possess adequate communication skills in their heritage language while interacting with their parents and grandparents tend to have more robust familial relationships and intergenerational ties. These relationships provide emotional and social assistance, fostering a feeling of inclusion and stability within the familial structure.

Acknowledging the importance of family language practices, policymakers and educators need to contemplate approaches that facilitate the preservation of heritage languages among immigrant families. Educational institutions and community-based entities have the capacity to provide parents with a range of materials, seminars, and educational sessions that elucidate the advantages of bilingualism and give ways for integrating the heritage language into the everyday familial context (Chao, 2006). Promoting language competency may be significantly enhanced by fostering the continued use of the heritage language at home and actively participating in cultural activities, therefore encouraging parents to participate in these endeavors.

In addition, educational institutions have the potential to fulfill a supplementary function via the implementation of heritage language programs that are in accordance with the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their student body. According to Tse (2001), these programs have the potential to enhance language abilities and cultural understanding, therefore establishing a connection between the home and school settings.

Several external variables, such as language-oriented rules, financial status, and the degree of cultural integration, might have an impact on whether or not a family maintains their native language. It is crucial, then, that immigrant families get all the help they can get in order to overcome the structural obstacles they may face in their quest to keep speaking their native tongue (Wright, 2004).

Community Support and Heritage Language Proficiency

This research shows that immigrant adolescents' competency in their native languages is significantly impacted by the amount of social support they get in their communities. This section looks at the fallout from the results in the preceding section, highlighting the important part that community involvement plays in the preservation of languages.

The current research employed a bivariate correlation analysis to look at the link between social support and fluency in a heritage language. While the effect size was somewhat small (r = 0.28, p 0.01), the results nonetheless demonstrated a statistically significant positive correlation. It is worth noting that when compared to other family traits, such language use, the strength of this association was rather weak. The correlation coefficient elucidates the complex relationship, revealing new features of public backing for the preservation of endangered languages.

Contributing to one's community may include a broad range of actions and assets, all of which contribute to the community's well-being as a whole. Building schools with a focus on archiving past tongues, hosting festivals honoring long-held customs, erecting community centers, and encouraging interpersonal connections are all examples of such endeavors.. According to Wright (2004), these tools often function as additional means of language exposure and cultural enrichment for immigrant adolescents. The availability and accessibility of those resources may exhibit

substantial variation contingent upon factors such as geographical location, community size, and the existence of a coherent immigrant community.

While family language practices have a more direct influence on heritage language competency, community support may serve as a complementing factor in this regard. According to Chu (2018), immigrant adolescents who actively participate in community resources are presented with supplementary prospects for language acquisition and cultural integration. An illustration of this may be seen in the provision of organized language instruction, cultural events, and chances for peer interaction via heritage language schools and extracurricular activities (Kondo-Brown, 2005).

The presence of community support services may serve as a means to address the deficiencies resulting from family language practices, particularly in cases when parents have difficulties in preserving their heritage language at home owing to external influences or acculturation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Community-driven initiatives that reinforce language skills and cultural knowledge may provide valuable support to immigrant adolescents, therefore facilitating a comprehensive approach to language retention.

The provision of community assistance is also a significant factor in the preservation of culture and the strengthening of cultural and ethnic identity. Immigrant communities often function as central nodes for the organization and dissemination of cultural festivities, festivals, and educational initiatives aimed at preserving and promoting their respective cultural heritages. Engaging in these activities cultivates a feeling of affiliation and satisfaction in individuals' cultural legacy (Schwartz et al., 2007).

Additionally, the existence of a cohesive heritage language group helps foster a collective feeling of cohesion and shared cultural identity among young immigrants. These communities often provide a platform for young individuals to engage with peers who possess a similar linguistic and cultural heritage, hence promoting the sharing of language skills and cultural knowledge (Phinney, 2003).

The significance of maintaining and enhancing community support networks becomes evident when examining their impact on the development of legacy language competency. It is imperative for policymakers, educators, and community leaders to acknowledge and appreciate the inherent value of community resources in facilitating language retention endeavors.

Investing in heritage language schools, cultural activities, and community events may provide significant avenues for immigrant youngsters to actively participate in and connect with their ancestral language and cultural heritage. Furthermore, it is possible for community groups to establish partnerships with educational institutions in order to provide smooth transitions between language learning programs that are based in the community and those that are offered inside the school setting (Tse, 2001).

Promoting a feeling of belonging and community among immigrants is of significant importance. The implementation of strategies aimed at promoting engagement in cultural activities and the establishment of peer networks that foster mutual support, as proposed by Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2008), can potentially have a significant impact on enhancing individuals' sense of identity and facilitating the maintenance of language.

VI. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Further research in this field might explore the nuanced interaction between familial linguistic practices and their enduring impact on the development of proficiency in heritage languages and the construction of personal identities. Longitudinal studies provide information on the impact of parental language patterns on the language retention abilities of their kids in a second language. This aspect has considerable importance when considering the manner in which immigrant kids navigate the escalating linguistic requirements in the dominant language as they transition into adulthood.

Scholarly investigations may also examine the many characteristics shown by immigrant families, including elements such as the countries from which these families originate, the duration of their stay in the receiving nation, and the existence or lack of extended familial connections. Gaining insight into the manner in which these attributes interact with language conventions within domestic settings may contribute to the development of enhanced therapeutic interventions and care systems.

VII. CONCLUSION

The results of this thorough research provide novel perspectives on the relationship between competency in heritage languages and the development of self-identity among young immigrants. This study provides significant contributions to the domain of language maintenance and cultural preservation by examining the influence of family language practices and community support, as well as their intricate interrelationships.

The use of family language practices significantly facilitates the linguistic proficiency in the heritage language and the development of self-identity among adolescent immigrants. The significance of the domestic setting in the transfer of language aptitudes is shown by the robust positive association between familial language practices and language competency. The practice of using the legacy language inside the household by immigrant parents has a dual purpose, extending beyond mere language acquisition to include the cultivation of a strong sense of cultural and ethnic identity

among their children. The significance of this relationship in promoting a feeling of belonging and reinforcing cultural roots among immigrant families cannot be overemphasized.

The support of communities has been shown to have a minor positive correlation with heritage language competency, hence enhancing families' efforts to promote language development. Participating in community-based initiatives might potentially facilitate linguistic proficiency, foster cross-cultural interactions, and enhance social networks for adolescent immigrants. One further advantage of immigrant communities lies in the cultivation of a collective sense of identity and a heightened attachment to one's cultural heritage via the preservation of language and traditions.

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Mona A. Alshihry, Assistant Professor, English Department, Faculty of Languages & Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia. She holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics in| May 2017 from the University of Texas at Austin, USA, and an MA in Sociolinguistic Studies from the University of Essex, UK. She worked in different positions, such as Member of the KKUExpo Supervisory Committee | Mar 2023 – present, Vice Dean of Student Affairs Deanship| Jan 2023 – present, Member of the Executive Committee of the Professional Certificates | Aug 2022 – present, Member of KKU Digital Platforms Board | Mar 2022 – present, and Member of the Flexible Learning Pathways Committee | Jan 2021 – present. She held the King Khalid University's Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of the performance of faculty members for the years 2011, 2017, 2018. She also has Project Management Professional (PMP), Project Management Institute | Aug 2021 Training of Trainers (TOT), Swaied Almustaqbal | Jun 2021.

A Comparative Analysis of Attitude Resources in Chinese and American English News Reports on "Roe v. Wade"*

Xia Dai

School of Foreign Languages, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, China

Hengxing Pan

School of Foreign Languages, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Chongqing, China

Abstract—In 1973, "Roe v. Wade" (hereinafter referred to as *Roe)* became one of the important judgements in modern American society because of its establishment of women's reproductive choice. In 2022, the US Supreme Court officially overturned the *Roe* case, which also caused an uproar at home and abroad. News media, as an important information dissemination medium, widely influences readers' attitudes and opinions. This paper mainly conducted by the application of the Appraisal Theory, which has developed by the linguist J. R. Martin covering three subsystems: attitude, engagement and graduation, to the study of news reports concerning the *Roe.* The study is focus on the perspective of the attitude system, and the research corpus consists of a total of 10 news articles selected from two mainstream media both in China and the U.S., *China Daily* and *New York Times*. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, this study has discussed in detail the attitude resources in the overturning of *Roe* in Chinese and American news discourse. Through analysis and comparison, the author finds that there are similarities and differences in the overall distribution of attitude resources between the two media. First of all, the distribution of attitude resources between the two sides is roughly in the same trend. Secondly, *New York Times* employs more attitude resources than that of *China Daily*, with a dominant air of negative attitude resources.

Index Terms—Appraisal Theory, attitude resources, Roe v. Wade, news discourse

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Roe Case

The 1960s were a time of significant social change in American history. With the end of World War II, social stability, and economic development, the United States experienced a proliferation of liberal ideas and a flourishing of the civil rights and women's movements within the country. In 1972, attorneys Sarah Waddington and Lynda Coffee attempted to challenge the abortion policy of the time. They selected a 21-year-old woman, Jane Roe, who wished to have an abortion, and then they took Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade to court to have the abortion ban lifted in Texas. On January 22, 1973, the United States Supreme Court finally voted 7-2 to confirm that women's right to decide whether to continue a pregnancy is protected by the constitutional provisions on personal autonomy and privacy, which is equivalent to recognizing the legalization of abortion in the United States.

The decision is one of the most significant and impactful Supreme Court verdicts in modern American history and also sparked a bitter abortion debate in American society. However, on June 24, 2022, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the *Roe v. Wade* abortion rights ruling, putting an end to almost fifty years of constitutional protection for abortion. When this case was overturned, it caused an uproar all over the world, and many media rushed to report. Conducting a linguistic analysis on the *Roe* news reports can help us know the usage of linguistic rules as well as achieve a better understanding in the views and attitudes of domestic and foreign media on women's right to abortion.

B. The Appraisal Theory Perspective

In the course of the evolution of linguistic theories, many influential linguistic theories have been developed, such as the Structural Linguistics, which was established by Saussure; the Generative Grammar, which was established by the American linguist Chomsky; the Cognitive Linguistics, which was established by the American linguist Lakoff; and the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which was represented by the British linguist Halliday.

Halliday proposed systemic functional grammar in the 1950s and studied interpersonal meaning from the perspective

of clause grammar. Interpersonal meaning, according to Halliday (1994), is the speaker's intentional expression of attitude, identity through language in a specific situation, which in turn affects the listener's attitude and conduct. Martin (2003) then studied systemic functional grammar in further details. The scope of the study has been widely expanded from the level of clause syntax to the study of the semantics of the discourse. Meanwhile, according to the interpersonal function of SFL, Martin (2003) proposed the Appraisal Theory, that is, attitude, engagement, and graduation are the three subsystems that are included in the appraisal system. It focuses on the speaker's attitudes in discourse from a lexical perspective, such as how words convey interpersonal meaning in discourse. The discourse resources, attitudes, views, and opinions expressed by speakers, as well as the connection between language and values, are the main topics of Appraisal Theory. The Appraisal theory has become an important instrument for scholars in various fields such as translation studies, discourse analysis and cross-cultural studies. In addition, the Appraisal Theory is frequently employed in news discourse.

This study contrasts the frequency use of attitude resources in Chinese and American news reports on the overturning of *Roe* by using Appraisal Theory as its theoretical framework and analyzing the differences due to cultural and political factors.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Overview of Appraisal Theory

For the past 40 years, the Systemic Functional Linguistics has primarily studied the conceptual function, interpersonal function, and textual function of language. The development of Appraisal Theory is based on SFL. Interpersonal function refers to the application of language to establish and maintain social relationships. It focuses on how the speaker or listener's attitude in the language affects the reader or listener's attitude and conduct. In interpersonal function, SFL only examines mood, intonation, and mood adverbs; it does not take into account the lexical level. In view of evaluative discourse, the Appraisal Theory differs from earlier studies, which primarily concentrate on the grammatical level and favor lexical level research.

Martin (2000) introduced the theory for the first time in *Beyond Exchange: APPRAISAL Systems in English*. Martin and Rose (2003) pointed out that appraisal system includes three major systems: attitude, engagement, and graduation, which are shown in Figure 1. Martin (2004) described how authors use language tools to negotiate with their audience. Then Martin and White (2005) introduced the theory systematically in *The Language of Evaluation*. The three subsystems of the theory's framework are further standardized and elaborated throughout the book. To be more precise, attitude has to do with how people feel, which includes their emotional responses, opinions, and appreciation. Engagement is concerned with the different discourse voices. Additionally, the categorization and exaggeration of people's emotions are influenced by graduation. Numerous connections exist among the three subsystems. In fact, based upon the Appraisal Theory, there are some previous studies on discourse. The scholars have developed or put forward their divergent opinions concerning the framework of Appraisal Theory. As a result, these debates have been recognized as a turning point in the evolution of Appraisal Theory, providing a firm platform for ongoing research in the area. Along with Martin and White, significant researchers in Appraisal Theory include Iedema, Eggins, Coffin, and Thompson.
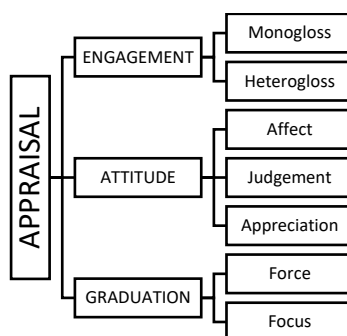
Figure 1 An Overview of Appraisal Resources (Martin & White, 2005, p. 38)

Engagement is the foundation of attitude. Engagement is concerned with evaluation resources, which are further separated into monogloss and heterogloss. The relationship between the author's voice and other voices in a particular discourse field, also known as intersubjectivity, is reflected by the engagement system proposed by Martin and his colleagues (Liu & Liu, 2010). People can use language to clearly express their opinions and attitudes, or they can adopt the viewpoints of others to subtly express their own. Monogloss means that no other viewpoints or voices are acknowledged; just the claims of speakers or writers are present. Dialogical contraction and dialogical expansion are two categories into which Martin and White (2005) split heterogloss. The illustration above shows the engagement system's basic architecture.

Graduation, according to Martin and White (2005), refers to the speaker's emotional power and the amount of

external voice in the discourse space. Gradability is a key factor in graduation. Graduation involves changing the level of engagement values and attitudinal meanings. According to Martin and White (2005), force can be defined as the magnitude as well as the quantity of the attitude and graduation system. Focus, unlike force, refers to an attitude that cannot be rated, but rather a precise or imprecise description of the semantic type's focus. As depicted in the picture, the graduation system comprises the concepts of force and focus.

Attitude subsystem is the primary one among the three subsystems in the Appraisal Theory. Attitude is concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, evaluations of behavior and evaluation of things (Martin, 2005). In next section, the attitude system's three subsystems will be described in depth and detail.

B. Detailed Introduction to Attitude

The central aspect of Appraisal Theory is the attitude system. According to Martin and White (2005), attitude is the psychological evaluation and analysis of human behavior, text, process, and phenomenon. Attitude includes affect, judgement and appreciation. The core of the attitude system, according to Wang (2001), is affect, and the institutionalized emotions are approval and judgement. Affect relates to emotions. Language users' emotional responses to acts, texts, processes, and events can be interpreted by the affect system. The essence of judgement is the evaluation of behavior. The judgement system is employed to describe the moral judgements that language users make on behavior based on moral principles or legal requirements, such as whether the act is honorable, trustworthy, brave, etc. Appreciation encompasses attitudes toward natural and semiotic phenomena. The appreciation system is used to explain the language user's appreciation of the text or process and the aesthetic quality of the phenomenon (Wang, 2001). Figure 2 depicts the framework of the attitude system proposed systematically by Martin and White (2005).
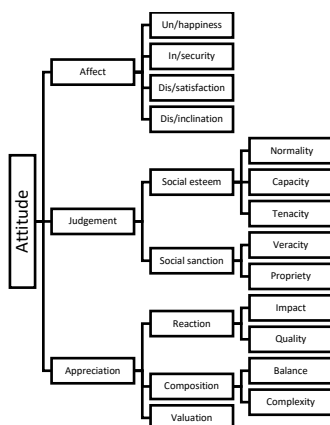
Figure 2. Attitude System

(a). Affect

According to Jiao (2020), affect is a psychology term used to describe our responses to things, behaviors, processes, and events. In other words, the speaker can use language resources to convey the expression of his emotions. In systemic functional linguistics, if the speaker contains some affect resources when evaluating an event, the audience will subtly accept this feeling, thus establishing some interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the audience. According to Martin and White (2005), affect can be conveyed positively or negatively, and it can be expressed directly or implicitly. There are four distinct categories of affect that can be defined by their content: un/happiness, in/security, dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination. Un/happiness encompasses feelings associated with interior issues which are related to a person's state of mind, and it can either refer to an individual's inner joy or sadness. (e.g., joy, happiness, sadness). In/security comprises feelings associated with eco-social well-being, that is, people's perceptions of the safety or insecurity of their environment. (e.g., anxiety, fear, confidence). Dis/satisfaction includes emotions that come with our pursuit of objectives (e.g., engagement, happiness, anger). Dis/inclination encompasses feelings related to anticipations of particular individuals or things (e.g., longing, craving, long for).

(b). Judgement

According to Martin and White (2005), the judgement system, as a subclass of the attitude system, judges behavior according to ethics and social norms. This judgement can be appreciation or praise, and it can also be condemnation or criticism. The two components that make up judgement are social esteem and social sanction, which both have distinctive positive and negative meaning, similar to the affect subsystem. Negative social esteem should be condemned, whereas positive social esteem should be appreciated. Social esteem evaluates a person's personality and conduct from the three vantage points of normality, capacity, and tenacity. Normality refers to whether or not individuals conform to convention or custom. Capacity refers to the abilities of the individual. Tenacity refers to a person's dependability and trustworthiness. Positive social esteem should be admired and negative should be criticized. Social respect is mild, so negative texts or processes are not evil and do not violate the law. Negative texts or processes are not against the law

because of the moderate social esteem. Social sanction is the process of evaluating a person's character and conduct from the viewpoints of veracity and propriety. The former entails honesty, sincerity, and kindness, whereas the latter specifies the moral behavior of the evaluation object. The evaluation of social sanction is dependent on legitimacy and morality. The legal significance and gravity of the negative implications of social sanction are evident.

(c). Appreciation

According to Martin and White (2005), appreciation is a subcategory of attitudes toward appraising objects and processes in which individuals can communicate their evaluations of things. It includes assessments of natural items, human-made objects, and even more abstract structures, such as a policy or strategy. Appreciation is within the aesthetics category and has both positive and negative meaning, consisting of reaction, composition and valuation. Reaction refers to whether something engages or emotionally affects the reader. It is associated with the psychological process of feeling and serves an interpersonal purpose. Reaction has two components: impact and quality. Impact refers to the extent to which a procedure or text catches our attention. A text's or a procedure's emotional affect is related to its quality. Impact covers *arresting, moving, intense, remarkable,* etc. Quality concerns *good, welcome, bad, ugly*, etc. Balance and complexity are both aspects of composition; the former relates to whether elements are balanced and coordinated, while the latter refers to whether elements are challenging to comprehend. Balance covers *balanced, logical, flawed, shapeless,* etc. Complexity covers *simple, lucid, ornate, plain*, etc. The valuation, which is concerned with cognition process and demonstrates ideational function, determines if the occurrence of items has worth or positive meaning. Valuation covers *deep, original, creative, shallow, reductive*, etc.

C. Previous Studies on News Discourse

There is no single standard for the classification of English news. News can be classified in several ways. Generally speaking, the purpose of news reports is mainly divided into three categories. One is to tell readers what it is, the other is to tell readers why, and the third is to publicize a truth to readers and have some positive effects on them. According to these three purposes, the genre of news reports can be divided into three categories: objective reports, critical reports and propaganda reports. It is possible to distinguish between hard news and soft news based on the many elements of news occurrences. The term "hard news" is also known as "spot news" or "straight news"; it refers to a more serious and objective report of recent events. Soft news is of more human interest, frequently taking the form of social news with a deep human touch and an easy writing style that slants the language of news to be less professional and gives them an air of conversational chattiness, which has become a trend in contemporary newspapers. Unquestionably, *Roe v. Wade*-related news can be classified as other forms of news due to differing opinions. A news item may belong to multiple kinds.

Li (2004) composed some applications of Appraisal Theory in diverse discourses, including historical discourse, advertisement discourse, and autobiographical discourse. Many theories based on stylistics, critical discourse analysis, and ecological discourse analysis have been utilized to analyze a variety of news articles. Appraisal Theory has also been applied to the examination of certain news reports. These studies can not only enlighten editors on how to write news articles but also help the general public better comprehend news articles. The following will introduce the information about news discourse in detail. There are numerous varieties of discourse in the human language. News discourse, as a common written or spoken language, has been explored from a variety of scholarly approaches. News, as a form of discourse, has both the commonness of discourse and the characteristics of news discourse, so it has always been one of the focuses of linguists.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Subject

The applied research of Appraisal Theory mainly involves three fields, namely translation, discourse analysis and teaching. In the aspect of discourse analysis, there is little research on the application of news reports based on Appraisal Theory. With the overturning of *Roe*, media organizations in different countries have given renewed attention to the case. This study focuses on the news reports of *Roe v. Wade* in Chinese media (*China Daily*) and American media (*New York Times*). Based on the Appraisal Theory, this study will address the three research questions:

1. How are attitude resources distributed in the Chinese and American media in the coverage of *Roe*? 2. What are the characteristics and similarities in the distribution of attitude resources used by Chinese and American media in their coverage of *Roe*? 3. What are the reasons for the differences in the use of attitude resources by the Chinese and American media in *Roe*?

B. Data Collection

These ten articles were selected from *China Daily* and *New York Times*. This study restricts the corpus's source, time period, and topic in order to eliminate the topic's sensitivity and to assure the comparability of the two media and the effectiveness of the research. The articles selected are all from the year 2022 to 2023. In order to avoid sensitive subject matter, the article's main focus is on the media's perspective on the occurrence. Based on the above conditions, the author selected five articles from *New York Times* corpus totaling 3,305 characters and five articles from the *China*

Daily corpus totaling 3,246 characters.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Overall Comparison of the Attitude Resources

In this section, the statistical data are presented following the annotation of all attitude resources used in all news articles. Due to the diverse characteristics of the attitude system and its subsystems, the results are presented in two stages. Initially, the general distributed characteristics of the two national media reports' attitude resources are summarized.

Among the 10 pieces of news reports on *Roe v. Wade* in Chinese media (China daily) and American media (*New York Times*) annotated in this thesis, there are attitude resources in each piece. The total number of words of the selected news reports in *China daily* and *New York Times* are respectively 3,246 and 3,305. In terms of the length of the Chinese media, the average number of words is 649, while 661 words are contained in each American report on average. The total number of attitude resources identified in this thesis is 95 in Chinese media and 108 in American media. The general distributions of the frequency of the attitude resources are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
OVERALL FREQUENCY OF ATTITUDE RESOURCES IN *NYT* AND *CD*

	NYT		CD	
Feature	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Affect	48	44.4%	40	42.1%
Judgement	32	29.6%	38	40%
Appreciation	28	25.9%	17	17.9%
Total	108	100%	95	100%

According to Table 1, there are 95 total attitude sources in the Chinese media (CM) database. The overall number in the American media (AM) is 108, which is slightly less than the previous figure. In CM, there are 48 affect resources, 32 judgement resources, and 28 appreciation resources, which account for 44%, 30% and 26%, respectively. For the AM, the figures are 40, 38, and 17, representing 42%, 40%, and 18%, respectively. The affect resources comprise the largest proportion of the overall attitude resources in both CM and AM (42% and 40%), followed by the judgement resources (40% and 30% in CM and AM), and the appreciation resources (18% and 26% in CM and AM).

Thus, the total amount of distributed attitude resources in AM and CM are comparable. Next, both judgement and affect resources predominate in the general distribution, whereas appreciation resources are used the least in both the CM and AM, Specifically, affect resources and appreciation resources are employed somewhat more frequently in AM than in CM, whereas judgement resources are employed slightly more frequently in CM than in AM. According to Table 1, there is no significant variation in the general distribution of attitude resources between CM and AM.

According to the general distribution of attitude resources in Chinese media, the proportion of affect resources and judgement resources are of equal status, ranking first and second respectively and appreciation resources occupy the least space. It shows that Chinese media coverage of *Roe v. Wade* is dominated by affect and judgement rather than appreciation resources. In the general distribution of American media, the proportion of affect resources are the highest, the proportion of judgement resources are the second-highest, and the proportion of appreciation resources are the lowest. Hence, the overall distribution characteristics of the sub-resources are roughly the same in Chinese and American media.

The study found that both the American media (AM) and the China media (CM) have a negative attitude towards the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*. It can be found that AM employs more negative attitude resources than CM. Additionally, American media maintains a more negative stance towards the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* than Chinese media. Meanwhile, they assess the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* negatively and frequently based on judgement resources and affect resources. There are numerous negative attitude resources in both. Specifically, the amount of negative affect resources exceeds the number of positive affect resources. The majority of the judgement resources are negative, while there are little positive elements. Specifically, in the distribution of appreciation resources, the number of negative resources approaches half the total. In other words, although the Chinese and American media should have tried to minimize the use of affect resources, they still could not avoid the presence of a large number of affect resources, which shows that the media on both sides are opposed to the overturning of *Roe*.

B. Distribution Features of the Attitude Resources

There are parallels and differences in the frequency distribution based on the following broad statistical analysis. In this section, comparative research is conducted on the specific distribution and utilization of attitude resources in Chinese and American media. In addition, the process of analysis is undertaken based on the classification of the three subsystems.

(a). Analysis of Affect Resources

Affect is the core of attitude resources and the foundation of judgement and appreciation. It refers to an individual's emotional reaction. Affect can be split into positive and negative emotions, which express primarily as four types:

un/happiness, in/security, dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination.

Based on the Table 2, in NYT and CD, the NYT prefer to use un/happiness resources and dis/inclination resources, accounting for 13%, 12% and CD prefer to use dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination resources respectively. Table 3 displays affect type and typical expressions

TABLE 2
SPECIFIC FREQUENCY OF AFFECT RESOURCES IN *NYT* AND *CD*

Feature	NYT		CD	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Affect Type (Total)	48	44.4%	40	42.1%
Un/happiness	14	13.0%	8	8.4%
In/security	12	11.1%	9	9.5%
Dis/inclination	13	12.0%	11	11.6%
Dis/satisfaction	9	8.3%	12	12.6%

TABLE 3
AFFECT TYPE AND TYPICAL EXPRESSIONS

Affect Type	Typical Expressions
Un/happiness	*sad; dystopian; good; helpless*
In/security	*tremendously endangers; attacked; worried*
Dis/inclination	*not viable; believes; disapprove; wanted*
Dis/satisfaction	*cruel and inhumane; extremely dissatisfied*

The following are examples of the un/happiness resources employed in CM and AM:

(1) Massive protests against the ruling have broken out in many US cities. President Joe Biden lamented the court decision as a "***sad [unhappiness]*** day" for the nation". (CD, 7.8, 2022)

(2) In this ***horrifying [unhappiness]*** story, the woman should not have had to wait so ***helplessly [unhappiness]*** for the medical care she needs. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(3) "I knew it was coming but I got hysterical," said Ms. Kostmayer, of the Upper West Side. "It's just a real hard time, it's a real ***hard time*** [***unhappiness]*** in this country. This country is going downhill." (NYT, 6.24, 2022)

The example (1) from CM adopts the "sad" to express the unhappiness of the American people and the President with the Court's decision. The example (2) from CM adopts the "helplessly" to express the dire straits of the American people after the overturning of *Roe*. The example (3) from AM adopts the "hard time" to express people's pessimistic attitude towards the future. Basically, the CM and AM adopt negative personal feelings towards the overturning of *Roe.*

The following are examples of the in/security resources employed in CM and AM:

(4) The lack of health exception in abortion bans ***tremendously endangers [insecurity]*** women's health. Abortion bans ***greatly violate [insecurity]*** the rights to life and health. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(5) "This was the first time I personally felt ***attacked [insecurity]*** by a government decision," said Ms. Coiro, of Williamsburg, Brooklyn. (NYT, 6.24, 2022)

In the example (4), "tremendously endangers" expresses how the abortion ban is a serious threat to the lives of American women. The "attacked" in example (5) reflects that the health of American women is being negatively affected. Both Chinese and American media have expressed that the overturning of *Roe* will do great harm to women in American.

The following are examples of the dis/satisfaction resources employed in CM and AM:

(6) Hours after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled to overturn *Roe v. Wade* on Friday, thousands gathered in New York City to voice their ***fears and anger [dissatisfaction]*** over the historic decision to eliminate the constitutional right to an abortion. (NYT, 6.24, 2022)

(7) It is ***cruel and inhumane [dissatisfaction]*** that in many states like Alabama, Ohio and Texas, exceptions are not allowed even for a pregnancy that is the product of sexual assault after the first 6 weeks of pregnancy. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

In the example (6), "fears and anger" expressed T the dissatisfaction and anger of the American public against the verdict. In the example (7), the "cruel and inhumane" is adopted to express it is an inhumane act that women who have been sexually assaulted cannot have an abortion.

The following are examples of the dis/inclination resources employed in CM and AM:

(8) Senator Josh Hawley, a Republican from Missouri, said he ***believes [inclination]*** the Supreme Court's ruling could reshape US politics and force people affiliated with one party to relocate to states that better support their views. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(9) By contrast, a slightly smaller but also still sizable majority of Republicans — 59.2 percent — said they wanted the Supreme Court to overturn Roe, while 40.8 percent of Republicans said they were ***opposed [disinclination]***. (NYT, 6.24, 2022)

In the example (8), the "believes" refers to the overturning of *Roe* is beneficial to the development of the United States. In the example (9), "opposed" presents the minority of Republicans who oppose overturning *Roe*. The above shows the different attitudes of those in power in the United States and the public toward overturning *Roe.*

(b). Analysis of Judgement Resources

The Judgement system of Appraisal Theory is related to evaluating the ethical behavior of humans and also incorporates positive and negative emotions. It consists of "social esteem and social sanction" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 42). In this section, we will compare the use of judgement in the news reporting of two countries. Table 4 displays the statistics of judgement resources in *NYT* and *CD*. Table 5 displays judgement type and typical expressions

TABLE 4
SPECIFIC FREQUENCY OF JUDGEMENT RESOURCES IN *NYT* AND *CD*

	NYT		*CD*	
Feature	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Judgement Type (Total)	32	29.6%	38	40%
Social Esteem	17	15.7%	22	23.2%
Social Sanction	15	13.9%	16	16.8%

TABLE 5
JUDGEMENT TYPE AND TYPICAL EXPRESSIONS

Judgement Type	Typical Expressions
Social Esteem	*convenient; surprising speed; enable*
Social Sanction	*hypocrisy; discrimination; exaggerating*

The following are examples of the normality resources employed in CM and AM:

(10) As for the Democrats, though claiming their opposition to abortion bans, they also focus ***heavily [normality]*** on abortion issues because they need to use this as a campaign strategy. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(11) The anti-abortion position that was so ***convenient [normality]*** for Republican politicians for so long is, with ***surprising speed [normality]***, coming to seem like an encumbrance. (NYT, 1.19, 2023)

In the example (10), the "heavily" is used to describe the Democrats taking *Roe* so seriously, but actually as a campaign strategy. Example (11) demonstrates that for Republican politicians, the heightened attention to the *Roe* is in fact a political maneuver. The Chinese and American media share the same attitude towards politicians who care so much about the overturning of *Roe*.

The following are examples of the capacity resources employed in CM and AM:

(12) At the very least, without a one-stop service system to fully protect the rights of women and newborns, the verdict to end the constitutional right to abortion is ***ill-considered[capacity]***. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(13) Not only did Dobbs-motivated voters ***enable [capacity]*** the Democrats to hold the Senate, but they also given the chance to express themselves directly, accounted for abortion rights victories in all six states with an abortion-related question on the ballot. (NYT, 1.19, 2023)

Example (12) shows how overturning *Roe* is actually ill-considered without corresponding abortion protection regulations. Example (13) reveals that the motivation for overturning *Roe* may have more to do with politics than women's rights

The following are examples of the tenacity resources employed in CM and AM:

(14) At the very least, without a one-stop service system to ***fully protect [tenacity]*** the rights of women and newborns, the verdict to end the constitutional right to abortion is ill-considered. (CD, 6.30, 2022)

(15) It seems an unthinkable scenario in 2022. That's because in 1967 the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that barring interracial marriage, as 16 states still did, violates the 14th Amendment's ***guarantee [tenacity]*** of equal protection. (NYT, 1.19, 2023)

Example (14) reveals the failure of the U.S. to put in place measures to adequately protect the rights of American women and points out that this behavior is not credible.

In the example (15), the "guarantee" refers to the current law can't protect women's rights as well as before. In short, AM and the CM both believe that overturning *Roe* would be irresponsible.

The following is example of the propriety resource employed in CM and AM:

(16) Otherwise, they will once again expose their double standards and ***hypocrisy [veracity]***. (CD, 6.27, 2022)

In the example (16), the "hypocrisy" reveals that the United States has double standards for itself and other countries, accusing other countries of not having human rights, and overthrowing the *Roe* case. It shows that CM pointed out that this behavior is hypocritical.

(17) Abortion bans ***greatly violate [propriety]*** the rights to life and health. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

(18) And while all the justices in the Dobbs majority were raised in the Catholic Church, nearly two-thirds of American Catholics believe that abortion should ***be legal [propriety]*** in all or most cases. (NYT, 1.19, 2023)

"Greatly violate" in example (17) points out abortion prohibitions violate the rights to life and health in egregious way. It belongs to positive propriety resources. Example (18) expresses the fact that abortion should also be legal in Catholic culture.

In summary, AM and CM agree that it is unconventional to prohibit abortion.

(c). Analysis of Appreciation Resources

Evaluation of products and procedures is a function of appreciation. It comprises of reaction, composition, and valuation. It can also be differentiated into positive and negative attitude, just like affect and judgement resources. In

this section, we will conduct an in-depth investigation of appreciation resources in *China Daily* and *New York Times*. In this section, Table 6 presents an overall comparison of appreciation in news reports from two countries. Table 7 displays appreciation type and typical expressions.

In Chinese and American news discourse, the number of appreciation resources is the smallest when compared to the other two categories of attitude system. From the above table, it is obvious to see that in the selection of appreciation resources, NYT and CD tend to choose more reaction resources with 17.6% and 12.6% respectively. In NYT, the reporters prefer valuation, accounting for 6.5%, followed by compositions resources with 1.9%. In CD, reporters use valuation resources with 4.2%, followed by composition resources with 1.1%.

TABLE 6
SPECIFIC FREQUENCY OF APPRECIATION RESOURCES IN *NYT* AND *CD*

Feature	NYT		CD	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Appreciation Type (Total)	28	25.9%	17	17.9%
Reaction	19	17.6%	12	12.6%
Composition	2	1.9%	1	1.1%
Valuation	7	6.5%	4	4.2%

TABLE 7
APPRECIATION TYPE AND TYPICAL EXPRESSIONS

Appreciation Type	Typical Expressions
Reaction	*restrictive; good*
Composition	*disproportionately; issue; complex*
Valuation	*important; milestone*

The following are examples of the reaction resources employed in CM and AM:

(19) The US Supreme Court's ***seismic [reaction]*** ruling on Friday to overturn Roe vs Wade that has guaranteed women the constitutional right to abortion since 1973 has sent shock waves across the United States and around the world. (NYT, 6.24, 2022)

(20) But the justifiable focus on the role of abortion in the country's politics has crowded out much talk about what this ***unexpected [reaction]*** political turn actually means for the future of abortion. (NYT, 1.19, 2023)

Example (19) demonstrates that the overturning of Roe has made quite a splash around the world. The "unexpected" in example (20) also confirms that was unanticipated worldwide.

The news reports in the corpus employ compositional resources infrequently and lack evident trends. The following examples will provide a foundational comprehension of composition. The following are examples of the composition resources employed in CM and AM:

(21) It should also be noted that the harms brought on by abortion bans ***disproportionately [composition]*** affect women of color, who have less access to medical care due in large part to systemic discrimination, exclusion from the workforce and expensive health care. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

In the example (21), "disproportionately" implies that the overturning of *Roe* can affect women of color to varying degrees.

The following are example of the valuation resources employed in CM and AM:

(23) From then on, anti-abortion policies have become an ***important [valuation]*** card for Republicans to attract more voters. (CD, 2.16, 2023)

The word "important" in example (23) highlights the great importance of anti-abortion policies.

C. Reasons Causing the Differences

A number of variables, including society, culture, etc., obviously influence news discourse. Consequently, the analysis of news discourse should incorporate the aforementioned elements (Richardson, 2007). This paper suggests that the nature of media, along with the cultural aspects and the socio-cultural context should be taken into account in the process of understanding the differences between the use of attitude resources in the Chinese and American media. In terms of the media itself, *China Daily* has long been tasked with guiding public opinion and conveying authoritative voices on time. Therefore, in its reporting related to the case, *China Daily* has been more likely to quote local journalists from a responsible perspective and to report from a personal perspective. Whereas the *New York Times* is in a rather independent position with less control from the officials. In addition, individualism and freedom of speech are celebrated in the United States. So, *New York Times* usually reports from multiple perspectives. And in order to attract readers, *New York Times* reports in a dramatic way through the strife and conflict between different interest groups in order to increase its attention and circulation. In relevance, readers can see that *New York Times* focuses more on presenting risky facts and people's influence, and therefore uses more negative attitudinal resources.

In terms of cultural aspects, evaluation is essential (Samovar et al., 2009). Due to cultural identity, mass media choose to portray emotions through language. Members of China's transparent inclination culture strive to avoid uncertainty at all costs. In contrast, American culture is a culture of ambiguity. Members of the culture will not be terrified of the unknown because uncertainty has been a part of their life, and they will accept the occurrence of

uncertainty. As a result, *New York Times*' reporting will not purposefully avoid dangers when the risk level changes. Thus, cultural differences will have a significant effect on the idea of communication in reports.

China adheres to collectivism in terms of social environment. Because of this, it is frequently stated in selected stories in the *China Daily* that the government respects the will of the people and listens to public opinion. In addition, they actively work with foreign nations, believing that the safety of any nation is interdependent on the safety of the world as a whole. The United States, in contrast, promotes individualism. Individualism, which promotes personal interests, is the dominant cultural model in the United States. Hence, the news media is generated in a particular cultural environment, and its news stories must include social and cultural aspects.

V. CONCLUSION

Using Appraisal Theory and a corpus of 10 news articles concerning reports on the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, this study has sorted out the comparative coverage of *China Daily* and *New York Times* primarily, and sought to elaborate the similarities and differences in the distribution, and conducted a qualitative analysis. The first finding is that the attitudes in the news reports are well expressed. The editors use resources that can provide different evaluations as well as make the news reports dramatic and thoughtful, thus to draw in more readers and arouse their interest to read more articles. The second finding is that both CM and AM use a lot of attitude resources in their news reports. Additionally, the principal media of the aforesaid countries share a similar distribution of each sub-system. In the news discourses, they both employed a greater proportion of affect and judgement resources and a lesser proportion of appreciation resources.

APPENDIX

SELECTED REPORTS FROM CHINA DAILY:

	Title	Date
1	From choice to crime: Facts about abortion bans in the US	2023-02-16
2	Abortion ban sign of times in US	2022-10-20
3	Overturned abortion ruling may reshape state politics	2022-07-08
4	Women's rights sacrificed at the altar of US judiciary	2022-06-30
5	Fatal backslide on women's rights	2022-06-27

SELECTED REPORTS FROM NEW YORK TIMES:

	Title	Date
1	Does the War Over Abortion Have a Future?	2023-01-19
2	The decision to overturn Roe clashes with the views of a majority of Americans	2022-06-24
3	America Is Not Ready for the End of Roe v. Wade	2022-05-06
4	Thousands Protest in New York After Supreme Court Overturns Roe v. Wade	2022-06-24
5	Overturning Roe Is a Radical, Not Conservative, Choice	2022-05-03

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Xia Dai, born in Chongqing in 1986, received her PhD in Laws from Chongqing University, China, MA in Psycholinguistics from University of York, U.K. and is currently associate professor at Southwest University of Political Science & Law, China.

Her research interests include second language acquisition and legal languages. Her most recent book publication is Researches on Environmental Impact Assessment of Major Commonwealth Countries (2018, Wuhan University Press). Address for correspondence: School of Foreign Languages, Southwest University of Political Science & Law, No.301 Baosheng Ave., Yubei District, 401120, Chongqing, China. Email: daixia@swupl.edu.cn.

Hengxing Pan, born in Chongqing in 2001, received his Bachelor degree in Translation from Southwest University of Political Science & Law, China, and is currently a Sales Engineer at Keyence, Shanghai. His research interest is Legal English and Legal Discourse.

Insights Into Challenges Faced by Interpreting Trainees and Their Error Patterns

Reema S. AlDayel
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia

Hind M. Alotaibi[*]
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**This study explored the challenges faced by trainees in Arabic and English interpreting by analyzing prevalent errors and investigating their underlying causes. A cohort of 31 female students underwent simultaneous interpretation tests in both languages. The data were used to identify challenges encountered during the interpretation process and analyze participants' performance using Musa and Al-Maryani's (2021) eclectic model. The study also examined the impact of L2 level on interpreting output. The findings show that omission is the most common error in interpreting both English and Arabic speech and is often employed as a coping technique for challenges such as speech speed, specialized terminology, structural differences, and numerical information. Hesitation was more pronounced when interpreting English into Arabic, indicating difficulties in directionality and language fluency. Regardless of language proficiency or level, all participants made similar errors when interpreting Arabic and English speech. These findings highlight the importance of developing comprehensive interpreter training that focuses not only on L2 proficiency, but also on strategies for managing the challenges encountered during interpretation, such as speech speed, specialized terminology, and directionality.**

Index Terms—**interpreting, error analysis, interpreting training, interpreting challenges, Arabic**

I. INTRODUCTION

Interpretation is critical in bridging communication gaps across languages and cultures, and its significance in various domains cannot be overstated (Pöchhacker, 2008). However, the field of interpreting is not without challenges, particularly for Arab undergraduate students in the early stages of developing their interpreting skills (Alhiyari, 2013; Al-Jarf, 2022a; Al-Jarf, 2022b).

Given the increasing demand for skilled interpreters in various sectors such as business, diplomacy, and education, the Saudi Arabian context presents a unique setting for studying interpreting challenges. Although there have been significant advancements in the field of interpreting, a research gap remains regarding the specific challenges faced by students and the factors influencing their interpretation performance. Existing studies have predominantly focused on interpreting challenges in general or have focused on professional interpreters, overlooking the unique experiences and needs of Arab interpreters (Alhiyari, 2013; Al-Jarf, 2022a; Al-Jarf, 2022b).

Thus, in this explanatory case study, we investigated the notable challenges faced by students in interpreting and the impact of L2 proficiency on their performance to shed light on the specific challenges that students face in interpreting. Understanding these challenges is essential for developing targeted interventions and strategies to enhance interpreting capabilities. In the next section, we explore the relevant literature on interpreting, interpreter training (IT), and assessment, followed by the methodology section, which describes the participants, data collection methods, and procedures. Next, we present a detailed description of the analysis and results, followed by a discussion of the results and their implications. Finally, this paper concludes with recommendations and directions for future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The terms "interpreting" and "interpretation" are used interchangeably, and there is a connection to the concept of translation. Pöchhacker (2008) highlights the advantages of interpreting as a form of translation, which allows for a definition based on general translation principles and the unique characteristics of interpretation. According to Kade (1968; as cited in Munday, 2009), interpretation is defined as a form of translation in which the source language (SL) text is presented once and cannot be reviewed, and the target language (TL) text is produced under time pressure with limited chances for correction.

Viezzi (2013) categorized interpretation practices based on mode and setting. Pöchhacker (2008) identifies three primary interpretation modes: simultaneous interpretation (SI), consecutive interpretation (CI), and sight translation (ST). SI involves a real-time spoken translation from SL to TL, whereas, in CI, the interpreter waits for the speaker to

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[*] Corresponding Author. Email: hialotaibi@ksu.edu.sa

complete the translation before rendering it. ST is a form of SI that involves the oral translation of written texts. Additionally, Cui and Zhao (2015) introduce the concept of "ad hoc interpreters," who are untrained individuals performing interpretation tasks, such as family members, bilingual staff, or students.

Viezzi (2013) explains that this setting refers to the context in which interpretation is provided, such as courts, conferences, healthcare, or the media. Cui and Zhao (2015) shed light on the perspective of non-professional interpreters, commonly known as "ad hoc interpreters," who perform interpretation tasks without formal training. This brief discussion of interpretation practices and the identification of various modes and settings lays the foundation for understanding the challenges that interpreters face.

A. Interpretation Challenges

Interpreter performance is affected by many factors. Jones (1998) noted that interpreters constantly analyze and resynthesize speech and meaning, which is cognitively demanding. Cognitive load is comparable in consecutive interpretation (CI) and simultaneous interpretation (SI), according to Lin et al. (2018). In SI, interpreters use microphones and headphones to deliver real-time speech with a slight delay, which is cognitively demanding and often done by a team that takes turns (Dawrant & Setton, 2016). According to Liang et al. (2017), CI requires more cognitive effort than SI.

Language proficiency and formal training affect interpreting performance. Language proficiency and training affected SI performance and working memory (WM), according to Tzou et al. (2012). Language competency affects interpreting performance and WM, and formal interpreting training may improve language processing. Lin et al. (2018) found that language competency, WM, and directionality affected SI fluency. WM is more important than language for fluent output. Al-Jarf (2022b) found that advanced students were better at English-Arabic interpreting, while beginners showed comparable competence in both directions.

Speech speed and accent pose challenges. Shirinzadeh Bojnourdi et al. (2013) found a correlation between interpreters' native language-speaking speeds and SI quality. Li (2010) emphasized the impact of fast speech delivery on SI quality. Eraslan (2020) noted that a strong non-native accent can affect interpreter performance. Vogler et al. (2019) suggested the use of intelligent computer-assisted interpreting (CAI) technologies to analyze spoken words and predict keywords that are likely to be left untranslated by an interpreter to minimize translation errors and enhance interpreter performance.

The structural differences between languages and difficulties with numbers, proper names, idioms, and culturally specific terms present additional challenges. Al Zahran (2021) suggested restructuring utterances to overcome the structural challenges caused by the differences between English and Arabic. Shamuratova (2022) recommends notetaking to help interpret numbers and suggests transcoding proper names and decoding idioms and cultural items. Russo (2010) emphasized the complex cognitive abilities required for interpretation and highlighted the importance of training, including developing general knowledge, comprehension, production of foreign languages, and the coordination of listening and speaking skills.

Understanding the common challenges faced by interpreters can inform the development of training methods that address these issues (Eraslan, 2020; Vogler et al., 2019; Al, 2021; Shamuratova, 2022; Russo, 2010). Several training approaches are described in the following sections.

B. Training Approaches

Gile's (2009) effort model is prominent in interpreting training and helps interpreters balance mental and cognitive efforts and select optimal strategies. This model categorizes effort into four stages: listening and analysis, memory, production, and coordination. Interpreters begin by receiving and analyzing speech, using their memory to retain information, and employing notetaking as a temporary aid. They then render their recollections and notes into the target language (TL). The effective coordination of these efforts leads to efficient interpretation, allowing trainee interpreters to regulate their energy and avoid mental overload and poor performance.

Cokely (1992) developed a sociolinguistic model to explain how spoken language is interpreted as sign language. This seven-phase model identifies potential miscommunication points during interpretation. Lee (2019) further elaborated on this model by categorizing it into SL- and TL-related phases, providing one-word reminders for each phase, and suggesting related exercises for classroom applications.

The effort models of Cokely and Gile share certain similarities. However, Cokely extends Gile's first effort by emphasizing the interpreter's understanding of the speaker's intended meaning, aiming to bridge the gap between the receiving and producing stages and to prevent miscommunication. Unlike Gile, Cokely focuses on understanding semantic intentions to avoid misinterpretation, rather than coordinating mental efforts. These models provide valuable insights for training future interpreters.

Other approaches include the semantic (Seleskovitch, 1978), interpretive (Lederer, 2010), psychological (Gerver, 1975), information processing (Massaro, 2014), and neurolinguistic approaches (Ahrens, 2011). These models and approaches can be utilized in interpretation classrooms to provide students with the theoretical foundations necessary to support their practices.

Integrating theories in interpreting classrooms can be challenging. However, research and scientific contributions provided instructional strategies, fundamental perspectives on interpretation, and best practices (Gile, 2009). As

technology, globalization, and business practices evolve, the translation and interpretation of pedagogy must be adapted (Kiraly, 2003). New technologies and instructional aids such as corpora- and machine-assisted teaching methodologies can be introduced into translation classrooms (Zhu & Wang, 2011). Incorporating technology such as text-to-speech (TTS) software can enhance interpreting training by exposing students to various accents and adjusting the reading speeds. Additionally, student collaboration and feedback can improve interpretation education, and theoretical frameworks such as Gile's effort model can help students comprehend and address interpreting challenges (Takeda, 2010).

Discourse-based research has identified practical exercises for improving students' SI skills, such as summarization, paraphrasing, clause relation, and anticipation exercises, to enhance comprehension (Atari, 2018). Incorporating ST into translation and interpretation programs has also shown benefits such as rapid source text analysis, improved note-reading and public-speaking skills, and increased expression flexibility (Li, 2014).

Assessing interpretation quality is essential for evaluating student learning outcomes. Interpretation quality assessment approaches are described in the next section.

C. Interpretation Quality Assessment

The assessment of interpretation pedagogy is crucial for evaluating students' learning outcomes and ensuring high-quality education (Sawyer, 2004). However, interpretation quality assessment (IQA) is complex and often subjective (Arango-Keeth & Koby, 2003). Researchers have proposed different models and methods for IQA. Pöchhacker (2008) emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the communicative needs and expectations of the intended audience when evaluating interpreters. Communicative competence focuses on understanding grammar and appropriateness in social situations and is commonly used to assess spoken language skills (Savignon, 2017).

A holistic assessment is a widely used method for interpreting evaluations (Lee, 2019; Chen et al., 2022). It provides a general impression of the overall performance but lacks specific feedback on areas of difficulty. Ding (2017) suggested a propositional analysis focusing on the smallest complete meaning units to evaluate interpretation quality. Although useful for examining correctness and errors, this method may overlook other important components of interpretation. Peer assessment can also be employed to actively involve students in the evaluation process and promote learning (Han, 2018; Su, 2019); however, it may lack consistency and impartial judgment.

Several models and rubrics have been developed for IQA (Al-Jarf, 2022b; Clifford, 2002; Goff-Kfouri, 2004; Ibrahim Ahmad Ibrahim & El-Esery, 2014; Wu, 2011; Al-Maryani & Musa, 2021). Al-Maryani and Musa (2021) proposed an eclectic model based on Riccardi's (2002) and Na'ja and Abu Mighnim's (2012) frameworks. Riccardi's model measures errors at the intertextual and disfluency levels, including pauses and other errors. Na'ja and Abu Mighnim's model focuses on intratextual errors, particularly syntactic errors. Although these models have been validated and are effective in diagnosing difficulties, their application in IQA requires further exploration.

In conclusion, the complex nature of interpretation poses several challenges, especially for Arab interpreters; however, research addressing these issues is scarce. This study aims to bridge this gap by answering the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the common interpretation errors made by Saudi translation students?

RQ2: What is the impact of L2 proficiency on their interpretation performance?

Through this research, a better understanding of the challenges and factors affecting interpretation quality could be obtained, ultimately informing the development of effective pedagogical strategies for Arab interpreters. The methodological approach used to accomplish the research objectives is outlined below, including descriptions of the participants, materials, data collection instruments, and procedures.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A mixed-methods approach that utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data analyses was adopted. The data collection method involved the following:

A. Simultaneous Interpretation Test (SIT)

An SIT was used to address RQ1 by investigating the interpretation errors made by translation students. The SI mode was selected because it presents significant challenges to students and is commonly used at conferences and international events. The validity and reliability of the test materials were confirmed. Three professional evaluators (PEs), interpretation experts with PhD degrees in translation and 5–10 years of academic experience, validated the materials. They evaluated several types of speech based on language suitability, sound clarity, speech length, and speed. The most suitable speech was selected for the SIT (see Appendix).

For the English speech, a two-minute and 12-s speech by Her Royal Highness Princess Reema Bint Bandar was chosen that consisted of 345 words and had an approximate speech speed of 156 words per minute (WPM). The Arabic speech, delivered by His Royal Highness Prince Muhammed bin Salman, has a duration of two minutes, 188 words, and an approximate speed of 94 WPM. The selected speeches included linguistic elements and challenges relevant to the aims of this study. The accents of the speakers were taken into consideration and speeches delivered by well-known Saudi speakers were chosen to prevent any influence of the speaker's accent on interpretation output.

B. English Proficiency Test (EPT)

Given that L2 proficiency might affect interpretation performance (Dimitrova & Hyltenstam, 2000), the sample was further stratified using an English proficiency test (EPT). This study used the online Cambridge General English Test (n.d.), which is a shorter version of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This test is widely used for assessing and testing 33 languages (Little, 2007); consequently, it can be regarded as an efficient research instrument for a broad assessment of participants' language proficiency levels. The participants completed the test online by responding to 25 questions. One point was assigned for each question. Participants' English proficiency levels were automatically determined based on their test scores (Table 1).

TABLE 1
CAMBRIDGE GENERAL ENGLISH TEST SCORES AND CORRESPONDING PROFICIENCY LEVELS (CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT ENGLISH, N.D.)

Proficiency level	CEFR level	Score
Beginner	A1	5–11
	A2	12–17
Intermediate	B1	18–20
	B2	21–22
Advanced	C1	23–24
	C2	25

C. Participants

A purposeful sample of 31 senior translation undergraduates from the English Language Department of the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University was selected to participate in this study. The participants were female students enrolled in the Simultaneous Interpretation II course, who were native Arabic speakers. They were in their final academic year and had completed three interpretation courses: Consecutive I, Consecutive II, and Simultaneous I. The choice to exclusively include female participants was driven by logistical difficulties in accessing male sections for test administration.

Although the sample size may not be large, case studies often prioritize in-depth analyses and detailed examinations of specific contexts or phenomena. This study focused on understanding the challenges faced by students in interpreting. A sample of 31 participants was considered appropriate for this study. The researchers coordinated with the instructor teaching the Simultaneous Interpretation II course during the third semester of the academic year (2022–2023) to recruit participants.

D. Procedures

The data collection process used in this study comprised four phases. First, approval to conduct the study and access the sample was obtained from the Standing Committee for Scientific Research Ethics at King Saud University at the beginning of the semester.

Second, permission was obtained from the instructor teaching the Simultaneous II course to the enrolled students. This involved attending three sessions in three sections of the course. The sessions took place over three days in the second week of the semester and were conducted in the interpretation laboratory of the College of Language Sciences. The laboratory is equipped with 40 personal computers and microphone headsets and integrates Sanako[1] software, a language learning tool suite that allows students to record their interpretations, and teachers to monitor and assess students' progress, track attendance, and provide personalized feedback.

During the sessions, the purpose of the study was explained to the students, who were assured that their participation would be voluntary and would not affect their grades. Volunteer participants signed an informed consent form and were instructed to complete an English proficiency test (EPT) on their PCs. After completion, they were briefed on the first speech and interpretation task. English audio was played and the participants began interpreting simultaneously. The recordings were paused to provide a brief description of the Arabic speech. Once the participants were ready, the Arabic speech was played and the recording resumed. After completing the interpretation task, the participants' recordings were collected and analyzed, as described in the following section.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A. Analysis Framework

To analyze the participants' interpretation performance, the model of Al-Maryani and Musa (2021) was adopted. This is a validated eclectic model integrating two existing frameworks, specifically the model proposed by Riccardi (2002; as cited in Al-Maryani & Musa, 2021) and the model by Na'ja and Abu Mighnim (2012; as cited in Al-Maryani & Musa, 2021). Riccardi's model consists of two parts and focuses on measuring errors at different levels: the intertextual level, which includes omission, addition, and substitution errors, and the disfluency level, which encompasses unfilled and filled pauses. On the other hand, Na'ja and Abu Mighnim's model examines intratextual

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[1] https://sanako.com/lab-100

errors made by interpreting students, specifically addressing various syntactic errors. The main syntactic errors in this model pertain to the improper use of gender: singular, dual, and plural (SDP) errors, vernacularism, inflection, and pronouns. This model was selected because it fit well with the analyzed materials, consisting of English and Arabic outputs with different linguistic characteristics (e.g., SDP errors, gender, and other features). The types of errors in the model are listed in Figure 1 below:

Error type	Definition
Omission	Refers to information loss because of insufficient comprehension of the ST or difficulties in reformulating the utterance (Riccardi, 2002).
Substitution	Refers to the mistranslation of an utterance "which is seen as meaning destructive" (Al-Maryani & Musa, 2021).
Hesitation	This includes all vocalized expressions of hesitation, which have been transcribed as äh, ähm, mm regardless of their duration (Tissi, 2000).
Inflection	Refers to the negative change in the form of a word (i.e., wrong use of form or tense) (Na'ja & Abu-Mighnim, 2012).
Vernacular	The use of informal language (Na'ja & Abu-Mighnim, 2012).
Pronoun	Refers to the incorrect translation of pronouns (Na'ja & Abu-Mighnim, 2012).
Correction	Refers to self-correction (i.e., reconstructing) (Al-Maryani & Musa, 2021).
Addition	Refers to the unnecessary addition of extra-linguistic items that are not included in the ST (Riccardi, 2002).
Repetition	Repeating a specific linguistic item (a type of hesitation); these occurrences include non-semantic repetitions of a phrase, word, or even part of a word (Tissi, 2000).
Gender	Refers to the inaccurate interpretation of gender (Na'ja & Abu-Mighnim, 2012).
SDP errors	Wrong translation of singular, dual, and plural (Na'ja & Abu-Mighnim, 2012).
False Start	False starts occur when the speaker interrupts an utterance and begins a new one without having completed it (Tissi, 2000).
UFPs	Refers to pauses of more than 3 s and not present in the ST (Riccardi, 2002).

Figure 1. Error Type Definitions

B. Analysis Procedure

The analysis involved the following six steps: First, an analysis sheet was designed to facilitate the analytical process and ensure consistency. This sheet included the error types derived from the model, along with abbreviations for each type. It also contained a transcript of source speech divided into translation units (TUs), following Ding's propositional analysis approach (Ding, 2017). Each TU represents a small unit expressing its complete meaning. Second, the recordings were individually played, transcribed, and analyzed by marking each error with an abbreviation. The third step involved separately calculating the sum of the error types for each participant.

Next, the analysis sheet for each participant was combined with the corresponding consent form to categorize the participants according to their language level (LL). The total error type is calculated separately for each LL. Finally, a random sample of three recordings from each LL, along with analysis sheets containing error-type definitions, was submitted to two professional evaluators (PEs), who were interpretation experts with Ph.D. degrees in translation and 5–10 years of academic experience, for blind analysis to assess inter-rater reliability.

To test the inter-rater reliability, a Cohen's Kappa Inter-rater reliability test was conducted using an online calculator (IDO statistics, 2023). Cohen's kappa value was 0.68, indicating "substantial agreement" between the ratings based on the interpretation of Cohen's kappa results (Landis & Koch, 1977). This ensured the reliability and accuracy of the scoring system used in the analysis.

C. Analysis Results

(a). Interpretation Errors

Figure 2 shows the total number of errors found in English speech interpretation compared to Arabic speech interpretation, categorized according to error type.
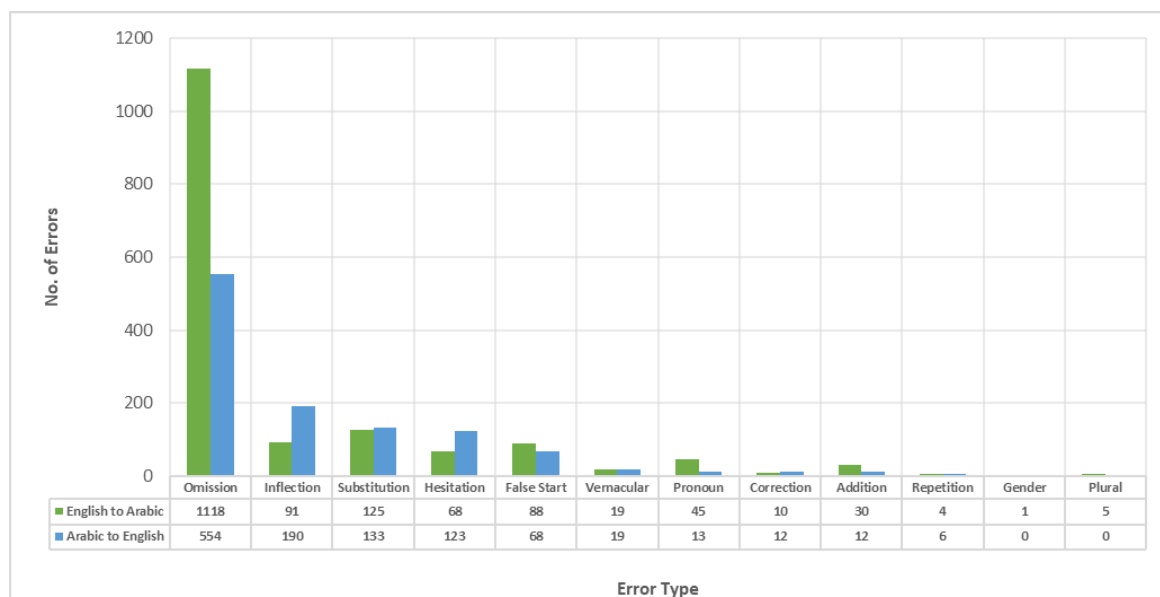
Figure 2. Total Number of Errors in English and Arabic Speech Interpretations

In interpreting the English speech, omissions were committed 1118 times, 815 of which were related to the omission of full TUs. Terminologies (e.g., sustainable development, renewable energy, women's empowerment, and entrepreneurship) were omitted 293 times. In contrast, the numbers included in the speech were only omitted 10 times, representing the lowest occurrence of omission. Substitution occurred 125 times, 16 of which were related to incorrect interpretation of numbers. However, most of the substituted utterances were related to full TUs. Inflection errors occurred 91 times. This refers to the incorrect use of Arabic to render TUs and terminologies. False starts occurred 88 times when the participants interrupted their interpretations and started a new TU. These cases occurred during the interpretation of several TUs. The participants also made 68 vocal hesitations and sounds (e.g., ǎhm, mm) in several cases, both within one TU and between two TUs.

In addition, various pronouns were rendered incorrectly 45 times, and unnecessary linguistic items were added 30 times. Vernacular, that is, informal Arabic, occurred 19 times when participants rendered several words and phrases (e.g., *we*, *tomorrow*, *working with*, *lives*, and *believe in them*) using a Saudi dialect. The participants made 10 self-corrections while interpreting their English speech. Three of these corrections were related to replacing informal phrases with formal ones and one was related to fixing the form of an Arabic word. Another three were used to correct the conveyed meaning and one was used to correct the translated number. Finally, two participants transferred two English words as they were and then made corrections to say them in Arabic. SDP errors were made 10 times, where singular words were rendered plural. In four cases, a few participants repeated the words once or twice as a form of hesitation. Errors related to gender were also observed.

When interpreting Arabic speech, omissions occurred 554 times, 477 of which were related to omitting full TUs, and 37 terms and 40 numbers were omitted. Inflections (the incorrect use of English) occurred 190 times. Incorrect interpretations occurred 133 times, where numbers ranked the highest with 43 incorrect renderings. Terms were also interpreted inaccurately 34 times. The full TUs were substituted four times. In several cases, the participants made 123 vocal hesitation sounds (e.g., ǎhm, mm). False starts occurred 68 times when the participants interrupted their interpretations and started a new TU. These cases occurred during the interpretation of several TUs. Vernacular use (i.e., the use of informal English) occurred 19 times. Pronoun-related errors occurred 13 times. Self-correction occurred 12 times when some participants attempted to correct the pronunciation or form of words (e.g., *pollution*, *population*, and *transportation*). Unnecessary additions appeared 12 times, whereas a few participants repeated words once or twice in six cases as a form of hesitation. No errors related to the incorrect renditions of singular or multiple items were observed. In addition, no errors related to incorrect renditions of gender were observed. This may be attributed to the fact that the English language system does not have many gender-related forms.

As for the UFPs, the silent pauses that exceeded 3 s were counted based on Riccardi's (2002) and Cecot's (2001) definitions and categorizations of UFPs mentioned earlier. Tables 2 and 3 show the UFPs used to interpret English and Arabic speech.

TABLE 2
UFPS IN INTERPRETING ENGLISH SPEECH

UFPs category		Number of Participants	Average (per second/s)
Initial décalage		31	3.16
UFPs		31	21.32
Final décalage	Stop before speaker	5	13
	Stop with speaker	10	0
	Stop after speaker	16	1.9

TABLE 3
UFPS IN INTERPRETING THE ARABIC SPEECH

UFPs category		Number of Participants	Average (per second)
Initial décalage		31	2.93
UFPs		31	9.19
Final décalage	Stop before speaker	4	17.5
	Stop with speaker	12	0
	Stop after speaker	15	2.13

When interpreting the English speech, the counted UFPs indicated that the participants' UFPs represented 12% of the original speech duration, whereas the deleted TUs represented 54.5% of the total TUs of the original speech. When interpreting Arabic speech, the counted UFPs indicated that the participants' UFPs represented 12% of the duration of the original speech, whereas the deleted TUs represented 54.5% of the total TUs of the original speech, which is elaborated further in the next section.

(b). Impact of English Proficiency on Error Count

To examine interpretation challenges, it was essential to analyze the impact of L2 proficiency on the participants' performance. The average total error count of each language group was compared to test the impact of LL on the participants' interpretations of English speech (Figure 3). Notably, the three groups had comparable levels of committed errors. Furthermore, omission was the most common error type committed by all groups and appeared most frequently among the A2 group.

	Omission	Substitution	Hesitation	Inflection	Vernacular	Pronoun	Correction	Addition	Repetition	Gender	Plural	False Start
A2	43	4.3	3.5	2.5	0.9	1	0.16	0.6	0.1	0	0	3
B1	37.5	3.8	1.5	3.3	0.4	1.5	0.4	1.2	0.2	0.1	0.25	3
B2	33	3.6	0	2.6	0.3	2.6	0.3	1	0	0	1	10
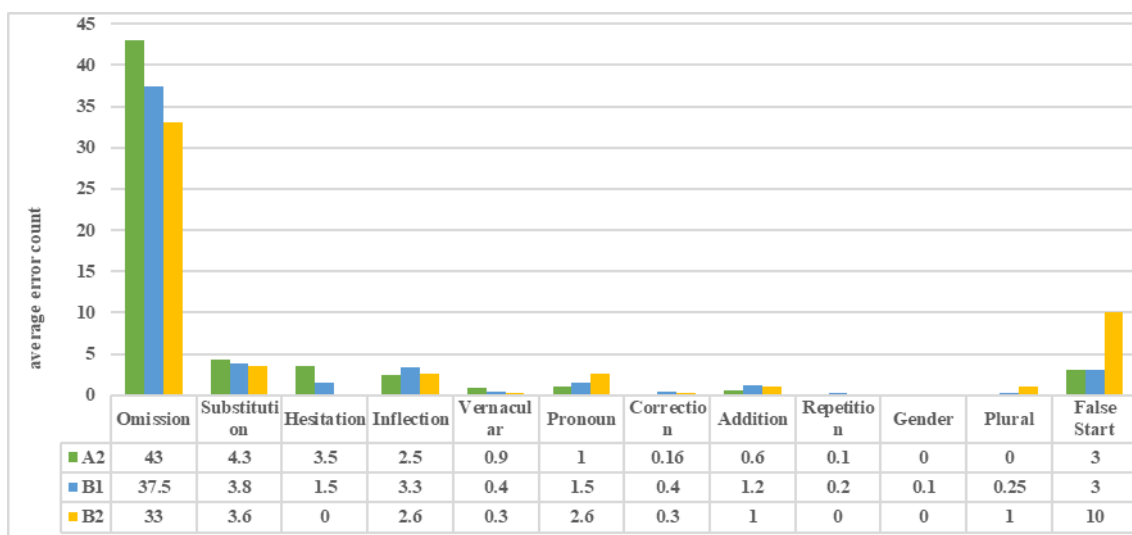
Figure 3. Average Error Count in Interpreting English Speech Based on LL

To investigate the significance of the differences in the participants' errors based on their LL, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results in Table 4 show that the value of the F statistic = 0.043 and the p-value = 0.958 > 0.05, indicating no significant difference in the number of errors committed by the three groups based on their LL at the significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ when interpreting the English speech into Arabic.

TABLE 4
SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN PARTICIPANTS' ERRORS BASED ON THEIR LL IN INTERPRETING THE ENGLISH SPEECH

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value (Sig.)
Between Groups	9.568	2	4.784	0.043	0.958
Within Groups	3199.302	29	110.321		
Total	3208.871	31			

Furthermore, the average total error count of each language group was compared to test the impact of LL on the participants' interpretations of Arabic speech (Figure 4). Notably, the three groups had comparable levels of committed errors. In addition, omission is the most common error type committed by all groups but seems to be less common among the B2 group than the A2 and B1 groups. Hesitation appeared to be more frequent among the A2 participants than the other groups, whereas inflection errors were less frequent among the B1 participants.

	Omission	Substitution	Hesitation	Inflection	Vernacular	Pronoun	Correction	Addition	Repetition	Gender	Plural	False Start
A2	17.75	3.8	5.8	7.4	0.25	0.25	0.5	0.08	0.25	0	0	3
B1	18.5	4.5	3.1	4.8	0.5	0.56	0.3	0.5	0.2	0	0	2.2
B2	14.4	4.6	0.6	8	2.3	0.3	0.3	1	0	0	0	1.6
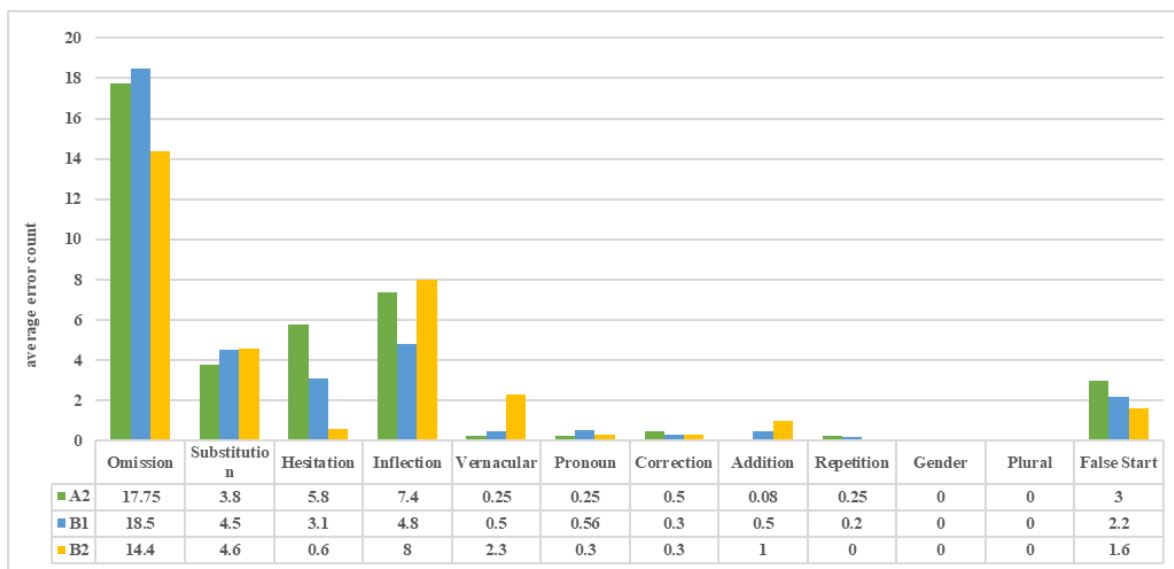
Figure 4. Average Error Count in Arabic Speech Interpretation Based on LL

To investigate the significance of the differences in the participants' errors based on their LL, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results in Table 5 show that the value of the F-statistic = 0.011 and the p-value = 0.989 > 0.05, which indicates no significant difference in the number of errors between three groups of participants in the Arabic speech interpretation at the significance level $\alpha \leq 0.05$.

TABLE 5
SIGNIFICANCE IN THE DIFFERENCES IN PARTICIPANTS' ERRORS BASED ON THEIR LL IN INTERPRETING THE ARABIC SPEECH

Sources of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value (Sig.)
Between Groups	0.676	2	0.338	0.011	0.989
Within Groups	744.602	24	31.025		
Total	745.278	26			

Thus, it may be concluded that specialized terms, numbers, some TUs, language fluency, and interpretation direction were among the main challenges encountered by the test participants. This finding emerged from the analysis of common errors committed by the tested sample. For instance, the omission was heavily adopted to handle some TUs and specialized terminologies in English-Arabic interpreting and vice versa. Additionally, the numbers were repeatedly omitted and substituted when interpreting Arabic into English. Hesitation also appears to be higher when Arabic speech is interpreted in English. Overall, the tested samples exhibited other significant errors related to substitution and inflection. Minor errors were observed, including in SDP, sex, addition, correction, vernacular, and repetition. However, no significant impact on language proficiency was found since participants at all proficiency levels committed similar errors. A detailed discussion of the results is presented in the following section.

V. DISCUSSION

This case study examined students' interpretation issues and how L2 proficiency affects them. Data showed that omission was the most common error in interpreting Arabic and English speeches, with the latter being higher. Full TUs, terms, and numbers were omitted, indicating that participants were more likely to omit certain elements during interpretation, especially when interpreting English speech. Omission errors were more common when interpreting English speech, suggesting that participants had trouble conveying its content and details. This contradicts Lin et al.

(2018), who found that interpreting students interpret nonnative to native language speech better. Different sentence structures, specialized terminology, and speech speed might be the effecting factors in such a context, which will be explained hereafter. According to the percentages of UFPs and total omitted TUs in English and Arabic speech, the latter were twice as high as the former. Thereby, participants may have relied on omission because they couldn't keep up with speech speed. This supports Barghout et al. (2015), who found that interpreters make more omissions at higher speeds. The study found that speech speed affected SI, suggesting that omission is a speed-coping technique.

Omissions of full TUs, terms, and numbers reveal the errors' nature. Omitting full TUs suggests participants struggled to maintain speech coherence and completeness. These findings support Atari (2005), who suggested practical exercises to help Arabic-speaking undergraduates in SI overcome their challenges, including summarization, which can help students deconstruct source speech and separate the main ideas from the details. Students can better understand the speech and avoid omitting important information by focusing on its main point. Paraphrasing helps students identify main and minor themes and rephrase content in their own words, improving comprehension of speech elements. Additionally, understanding how linkers work within an extract or across paragraphs helps interpreters quickly understand the semantic relations of an utterance to avoid interpretation delays by recognizing the connections between parts of a speech.

Atari (2018) suggested a clause relation exercise to help students understand textual relationships between phrases, sentences, and words. This exercise helps students analyze their speech's structure and organization to improve their interpretation. These practical exercises help interpreter trainees overcome delays and omissions in SI. Technology can be incorporated into these targeted exercises. Al-Jarf (2022c) suggested using TTS software in interpretation training. However, investigating why English speech interpreters make more omission errors than Arabic speech deserves attention.

Omitting terms and numbers suggests the need to learn more specialized terminology and number interpretation techniques. Our study agrees with Dawrant and Setton (2016) that interpreters may not be familiar with technical terms. Interpreters may struggle to accurately interpret specialized terms due to a lack of technical knowledge or experience. Vogler et al. (2019) suggested using intelligent CAI technologies to reduce translation errors and improve interpreter performance. CAI technologies help interpreters predict untranslatable keywords and improve accuracy.

As numbers are important in certain contexts, omitting them can cause significant translation loss. Interpretation trainees must focus their training on numbers interpreting, understanding number systems, and being aware of cultural differences in number representations to accurately interpret and convey numerical information. Practicing note-taking can help in such contexts. Shamuratova (2022) addressed numbers, proper names, idioms, and culture-specific term interpretation issues. Our study found similar results, especially when participants had trouble with numbers and proper names. Notetaking for numbers and transcoding or decoding for proper names and idioms can help interpreters overcome these challenges.

Many inflection and substitution errors were found. Substitution errors often change meanings. Specifically, misinterpreting numbers was higher when translating Arabic speech into English. This suggests that participants struggled to capture the intended meaning or form of certain elements during interpretation. These substitution errors must be investigated and addressed during interpretation training. According to Shamuratova (2022), this could include explicit instructions on how to accurately interpret and convey numerical information and practicing specific procedures for handling numbers, such as notetaking. In addition, most participants misinterpreted the abbreviation at the beginning of the English speech (FII), even though they were informed of its translation before playing the speech but did not write it down. Thus, Cokely's (1992) interpretation training model advises interpretation instructors to stress notetaking before or during the task.

Verb and noun tenses are typical inflection errors. These errors can make interpreted speech unclear and they suggest participants struggled with grammatical accuracy in their interpretations. According to Al-Jarf (2022c), interpretation training should focus on linguistic skills. Interpreters must know SL and TL grammar, vocabulary, and language structures to produce accurate interpretations.

The finding that terms, numbers, and full TUs are difficult for participants to interpret and reproduce is important. Technical terms and specialized vocabulary require precise understanding and translation. Targeted vocabulary-building exercises and exposure to specialized texts or materials related to interpreted subject matter can help interpreters learn domain-specific terminology.

Some full TUs were challenging, suggesting that participants struggled to keep the interpreted speech coherent and complete. The meaning and content of longer speech segments may be difficult to capture and reproduce. Training programs should improve note-taking, active listening, and memory retention to address these issues. These findings suggest targeted training and practice to address terms, numbers, and full TU challenges. Interpretation trainees must provide ample opportunities to practice interpreting texts with these elements, using specific exercises and strategies to improve students' understanding, reproduction, and performance.

The results also show that hesitation was greater when Arabic was interpreted in English. A good command of English was needed because some participants had trouble pronouncing English words like pollution, which delayed them. Since Arabic is the participants' first language, they may have struggled to recall equivalent English expressions or structure their thoughts to accurately convey their original meanings. Linguistic complexity and differences between

languages may also contribute to higher hesitation. English and Arabic have different grammar, vocabulary, and cultural nuances that make interpretation difficult. According to Al-Rubai (2004) and Al Zahran (2021), difference in English and Arabic word order is challenging. Our findings support this, especially when participants struggled with omissions or restructuring utterances. Interpreters can struggle to convey the meaning and structure of a speech due to language structural differences. To overcome structural challenges, Al Zahran (2021) advises interpretation trainees to focus on restructuring utterances rather than waiting for verbs.

Interpretation training programs should improve participants' TL fluency, provide extensive practice, and offer strategies to improve fluency and spontaneity to address this issue. ST and shadowing exercises (Al-Jarf, 2021) can help participants produce clear interpretations without hesitation. Student's confidence and self-assurance are also crucial. When they doubt their language skills or make mistakes, interpretation students may hesitate. Thus, a supportive and encouraging learning environment that boosts confidence can reduce hesitation and improve performance.

UFPs were higher in English-to-Arabic interpretation, which is interesting. The higher occurrence of UFPs in this direction of interpretation suggests that the participants may have faced challenges in finding appropriate Arabic words or expressions to convey the intended meaning of their original English speech. This could be due to speech speed, linguistic structures, vocabulary, and cultural references between the languages. Al-Jarf (2022b) explored how directionality affects interpreting competence between beginners and advanced students. Al-Jarf (2022b) found that advanced students were better at English-Arabic interpreting than beginners. The present study found that advanced students made more omissions and UFPs in English-to-Arabic than in the opposite direction, indicating that it is harder. The direction of interpretation can affect interpreters' performance and competence.

Thus, interpretation training programs should improve students' language fluency and proficiency in TL, provide extensive practice, and offer strategies to improve fluency and spontaneous speech production. As mentioned, exercises that encourage quick thinking, ST, and active listening can reduce UFPs and improve interpretation performance.

Another intriguing finding was that English language proficiency did not affect participants' interpretations of English or Arabic speech. Students with different language skills made similar mistakes. This contradicts Dimitrova and Hyltenstam (2000) and Tzou et al. (2012). However, this study's context and participant characteristics are noteworthy. According to the LL, most participants were "intermediate" learners and the rest were "beginners". A possible explanation for this finding is that interpretation training or experience strongly influenced participants' performance, as Tzou et al. (2012) found that formal interpreting training may improve language processing. Therefore, future studies must consider these factors and their potential interactions with language proficiency.

Liang et al. (2017), Dawrant and Setton (2016), and Jones (1998) have noted interpreters' cognitive load. This study found that cognitive load, particularly omission errors, and difficulties with terms, numbers, and full TUs, affected performance. According to Jones, interpreters must constantly analyze and resynthesize speech, which is cognitively demanding. Lin et al. (2018) showed that CI and SI modes have a similar cognitive load. This study's findings, particularly SI's challenges and higher rates of hesitation and UFPs in specific language directions, match Dawrant and Setton's (2016) findings that microphones, headphones, and multichannel equipment in SI mode are challenging. Thus, SI training requires such equipment for real-time interpretation with minimal lag to bring it closer to real-life practice.

Lin et al. (2018) examined language, WM, and SI fluency. Their findings that language competency, WM, and directionality affect interpretation fluency match this study. This study found disfluency and SI quality violations in hesitation and UFPs. Atari's (2018) practical exercises can improve WM's role in interpreting fluency, which is crucial to fluent output.

In summary, the findings obtained from analyzing the SIT results indicate that specialized terms, numbers, speech speed, and structural differences between the two languages pose challenges for interpreting students. Rendering Arabic numbers into English was another challenge, and a higher rate of hesitation was observed when interpreting Arabic into English, owing to differences in the language systems and pronunciation difficulties. Additionally, the participants were not committed to notetaking during interpretation, which resulted in some translational errors. Finally, the findings suggest that the language level of the participants did not play a significant role in the interpretation errors made by the tested group. In other words, regardless of language proficiency or level, all participants made similar errors when interpreting Arabic and English speech.

VI. CONCLUSION

This case study examined the challenges faced by undergraduate students in the field of interpretation and explored the impact of L2 proficiency on their performance. A simultaneous interpretation test was administered to analyze the prevalent errors committed by a cohort of 31 Saudi interpreting trainees. The interpretation performance was analyzed using Al-Maryani and Musa's (2021) eclectic model. Results revealed that the participants relied heavily on omissions, substitutions, and inflection errors, in addition to hesitation and a significant number of UFPs, to tackle the challenges they encountered in interpreting. These errors can be attributed to several factors such as speech speed, specialized terms, numbers, structural differences, and issues related to pronouncing English words. The findings also revealed that participants' language level was not a significant factor, as all participants committed similar errors.

This study discusses several pedagogical implications and suggests recommendations for enhancing IT programs. Recommendations involve prioritizing practical training and practice opportunities for ST within specialized translation

courses, providing students with comprehensive glossaries, utilizing equipped labs and technologies, and offering optional training courses that can significantly enhance their interpretation skills. Additionally, focusing on teaching coping strategies as well as linguistic and notetaking skills can help students overcome their challenges and improve their performance.

However, this study has some limitations that might have affected the results' generalizability. First, it involved a cohort of 31 Saudi female interpreting trainees. The relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of our findings to a broader population. A larger and more diverse sample could provide a more representative understanding of the challenges undergraduate students face in interpreting. Furthermore, the study focused on female Saudi interpreting trainees, which might have introduced a gender bias, limiting the applicability of the findings to male interpreting trainees. Future studies should investigate the impact of sex on the interpretation challenges among male and female trainees. Finally, long-term assessments or follow-up studies could provide insights into the effectiveness of the recommended pedagogical implications and the impact of training programs on students' interpretation skills over time.

APPENDIX. TRANSCRIPT OF THE ENGLISH AND ARABIC SPEECH

I want to thank the FII for the opportunity to join you today and to share with you one of both my personal and our country's highest priorities. Working with supporting empowering our youth. The generation that will carry on the work started by Vision 2030 and making sure it touches the lives of everyone in the Kingdom and across the region. We, as Saudis, are a young nation, 75 percent of our population is under the age of 35, and the canvas for our young people is not the past; it's not even the present; it's the future. The change in progress reshaping our nation. Economically, building a stronger private sector job growth and creation, entrepreneurship, sustainable development, renewable energy, and building a global leading digital infrastructure. Socially, women's empowerment, greater equality and equity, diversity and inclusion. Culturally, placing the Kingdom's arts and entertainment community on front stage. Our natural preservation efforts sharing our traditions and our heritage with others and the world and the key to our long-term success. The Guardians will ensure that this future society matches our dreams and honors. Our ambition is to create a place for everyone. It's our young people, their success tomorrow depends on our success today, and if our young people are to be the architects of the future, they need the right tools, and they need us to prioritize their interests. They need us to believe in them, and that means providing opportunity and investing in the future so that their creativity and genius can overcome the challenges that they will face. We cannot close our eyes, and we must begin the work now. That's what our young people will be able to finish, but we must construct the foundation upon which they can reach the clouds. I firmly believe our priority must be our young people because they are the stewards of the future. Building the future is never complete. Each generation chairs that responsibility of doing its share, empowering and paving the way for the next that's how the future is built, together.

على مدى العصور والحضارات كانت تُبنى المدن لحماية الانسان بمساحات ضيقة وبعد الثورة الصناعية بنيت المدن التي تضع الآلة والسيارة والمصنع قبل الانسان. المدن التي تَدّعي أنها هي الأفضل في العالم يقضي فيها الإنسان سنين من حياته من أجل التنقل. وسوف تتضاعف هذه المدة في ٢٠٥٠ . في ٢٠٥٠ سوف يُهَجّر مليار إنسان بسبب ارتفاع انبعاثات الكربون وارتفاع منسوب مياة البحار. ٩٠٪ من البشر يتنفسون هواء ملوث لماذا نقبل أن نضحي بالطبيعة في سبيل التنمية؟ ولماذا يتوفى ٧ مليون إنسان سنوياً بسبب التلوث؟ ولماذا نفقد مليون إنسان سنويا بسبب الحوادث المرورية؟ ولماذا نقبل أن تُهدَر سنين من حياة الإنسان في التنقل؟ لذلك نحن بحاجة لتجديد مفهوم المدن إلى مدن مستقبلية. اليوم بصفتي رئيس مجلس إدارة نيوم أقدم لكم ذا لاين مدينة مليونية بطول ١٧٠ كيلو تحافظ على ٩٥٪ من الطبيعة في أراضي نيوم. صفر سيارات وصفر شوارع وصفر انبعاثات كربونية. تستطيع أن تقضي حوائجك اليومية بمدة مشي أقصاها خمس دقائق وتستطيع أن تصل من أبعد نقطة إلى أبعد نقطة في عشرين دقيقة بتكلفة بنية تحتية أقل ٣٠٪ وبجودة افضل للمنتجات التي سوف تقدم ب ٣٠٪ بطاقة متجددة ١٠٠٪. مشروع ذا لاين هو ثورة حضارية للإنسان تضع الإنسان أولاً.

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Reema S. AlDayel is a researcher with an MA in Translation from the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University in Riyadh. A Skilled translator experienced in simultaneous interpretation and translation. Her research interests include translation and interpretation pedagogy and practice.

Hind M. Alotaibi a Full Professor at the College of Language Sciences at King Saud University in Riyadh. She holds a Ph.D. in Education from The University of Manchester, UK, with a specialization in Computer-Assisted Language Learning. Her research interests include Computer-Assisted Translation, ICT in Education, E-learning, and Mobile-Assisted Learning.

Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* and Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City*: A Panoramic View of the Occident

Ahmed Shalabi[*]

Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan

Yousef Abu Amrieh

Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Jordan, Jordan

Abstract—**Contemporary Anglophone diasporic Arab writers have initiated an "Occidentalist discourse" through which they depict a complete image of the Occident. Their narratives are not meant to distort or misrepresent the "other", but to provide the reader with nuanced accounts about what an Arab immigrant/ refugee may experience in the "West". These narratives are deemed consistent because contemporary Anglophone diasporic Arab writers have become part of their host countries' sociocultural tapestry since they are, in most cases, part of European countries' population. By applying Zahia Salhi's definition of Occidentalism to Arab-British novelist Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* (2021) and Arab-American novelist Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City* (2021), this paper aims to illustrate how both writers paint a three-dimensional panoramic picture of the Occident by exploring triumphant as well as depressing journeys of Arab individuals in America. This study is also an attempt to demonstrate, by using these two novels as examples, that Occidentalism cannot be defined as "Orientalism in reverse" since Occidentalist literature, as Salhi proposes, represents Western life and culture with a great sense of impartiality.**

Index Terms—**Occidentalism, The Fugitives, The Arsonists' City, Anglophone diasporic Arab writers**

I. INTRODUCTION

In *Arab Representations of the Occident: East-West encounters in Arabic fiction* (2006), Rasheed El-Enany traces the early encounter between Arabs (East) and Europeans (West). His book illustrates how Arab intellectuals approached the Western colonizer in the late eighteenth century and produced many fictional and non-fictional accounts about different aspects of the life of the "Other". According to El-Enany, Arab intelligentsia was mainly divided into two groups: those who were fascinated with the Western culture and called for the need to emulate it in order to have better living conditions, and those who saw "the European other [as] an object of love and hate, a shelter and a threat, a usurper and a giver, an enemy to be feared and a friend whose help is to be sought" (El-Enany, 2006, p. 2). The latter group adopted an ambivalent attitude towards the "West". They projected it as both "malady and . . . remedy" (El-Enany, 2006, p. 3) for their belief that European countries were the colonizers who held hegemonic power over Arab territories, and at the same time they brought with them a more developed lifestyle that Arab intellectuals saw as a role model to be emulated since they believed that "to gain freedom from Western domination, the western life model had to be adopted" (El-Enany, 2006, p. 4). El-Enany's remark implies that Arab scholars, by looking up at the Western model of life, had initially promoted the notion that the "West" can bestow the East some of its blessings if the former's culture and life had been properly imitated. However, this optimistic view of the "West" was not the controlling ideology of all Arab intellectuals. Some paralleled their optimistic view with that of their pessimistic one.

In the twenty-first century, Anglophone diasporic Arab writers adopt almost the same ambivalent attitude towards the Occident. Their narratives depict the pros and cons of resettling in or traveling to the "West". They introduce the reader to different experiences within the same plotline. The diversity of their characters' educational, social, and economic statures in a text can show that their aim is to depict the various possible ends of an Arab immigrant's/ refugee's journey in the "West". This panoramic, albeit ambivalent, view of the Occident adds another dimension to our understanding of Occidentalism. That is, in the case of having different possible ends of the lives of Arab immigrants/refugees, Occidentalism becomes then an objective representation of the Occident established by Arab intellectuals who have first-hand experiences of the West, not as travelers, but settlers. This chimes with Zahia Salhi's definition of Occidentalism as "a diverse set of relationships of Orientals who have experienced the Occident in a variety of manners" (Salhi, 2021, p. 205). Unlike the orientalists' misrepresentation of the "Other" (Al-Ghalith & Shalabi, 2021), these representations are free of prejudice, antagonism, stereotyping, and distortion of the image of the "Other". Consequently, "Occidentalist discourse" is of great value since it offers Arab audiences free visas to the

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[*] Corresponding Author. E-mail : shalabi87@yahoo.com

"West" to momentarily live an accurate Arab immigrant's/refugee's experience of surviving or thriving in the "West". Moreover, Occidentalist literature acts like travel guides who take their clients on a tour around their destination and provide them with important facts about sites and places they are visiting.

Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City* (2021) and Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* (2021), establish a panoramic view of Arabs' experiences in the United States. The two narratives trace the journey of Arab individuals who either settle in or travel to the United States for the sake of achieving fame and economic prosperity. The journey of Mazna, a female Syrian immigrant to the United States, is largely the focus of Alyan's novel. Mazna represents Arabs whose belief in the 'myth of the West' drives them to do whatever it takes to gain access to the so-called lands of opportunities without thinking of the consequences of their decision. In flashbacks, the narrative reveals that she has always dreamt of becoming a Hollywood famous actress like those she is used to watching on TV. Her confidence in her acting talent and aptitude drives her to accept Idris's proposal and travel to the USA so that she could achieve her dream of becoming a Hollywood star. However, her disillusionment with the Western film industry eventually causes her to give up her dream of becoming a well-known Hollywood actress. She finally finds herself as a mere housewife and grandmother whose past haunts her form now and then as a reminder of her naiveté when she believed and sought the embellished image of the USA as well as Hollywood. Still, if Mazna represents Arab immigrants who have failed to thrive in the "West", Idris, her husband, is the representative of those who could make it in America. Idris's success can denote that there is hope for Arab immigrants to flourish if they seize the opportunities the "West" may offer.

In *The Fugitives*, Rushdy and his band's success as well as their quest to preserve their integrity after being stigmatized as opportunist asylum seekers in America can evince Mahjoub's propensity to draw a complete picture of what an Arab immigrant/refugee can experience in the United States. As an observer, Rushdy, the protagonist, reflects on America as a savior that could offer him what his home country has failed to and as a country that stereotypes Arab immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers as a threat to the Americans' welfare.

II. HALA ALYAN'S *THE ARSONISTS' CITY*: A DREAM DEFERRED, A DREAM FULFILLED

Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City* (2021) sheds light on the failure of a diasporic female Arab, Mazna, to achieve her dream of becoming a movie star or a Hollywood actress. In flashbacks, the narrative reveals Mazna's past insatiable desire to leave Syria and persuade her dream of becoming a movie star in the "West". As a schoolgirl, she has been sure that is a gifted actress since her teachers have always encouraged her to perform, on different occasions, Shakespearian tragedies in her school's theater. She believed that her performance skill could qualify her to later become a movie star like those she used to watch on TV or in cinemas. Her meeting with Idris, the wealthy Lebanese young man, paves the way for her to achieve her dream and arrive in the USA. After their marriage, Mazna and Idris move to California for Idris has received a letter of acceptance to complete his medical studies and work as a doctor at a hospital. As incidents unfold, the reader learns about Mazna's disappointment the moment she realizes that the theater roles she used to perform in Syria can boost her as a perfect actress only in her country, not in America. Her several attempts to have a chance to act in front of a camera appear to be with no avail; either she is rejected or assigned racial roles in which she is a representative of the Middle Eastern repressed woman. However, the narrative also unveils Idris' success in the same country. Idris arrives in America as a newly married student who lives with his spouse in a small rented apartment and ends up as a professional cardiologist who owns a house and has another in Lebanon. The novel ends when the family collectively decides to preserve their legacy by settling in Lebanon and keeping their house in Beirut.

Literature on the novel is scarce because it was only recently published. In "Acting Across Diaspora: Transnational Spaces and Voices in Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City*" (2022), Majed Aladylah states that "Mazna needs to be recognized, heard and praised, and she believes that there is a future for her in acting" (Aladylah, 2022, p. 4). If we were to modify Aladaylah's statement, we would replace "in acting" with "Hollywood and America". Hence, Mazna's process of self-realization is interrupted or further blocked by her disillusionment with America. She realizes that only a few routes are open for a diasporic Arab to survive in the "West" when "filmmakers and movie directors want [her] only to act in movies related to terrorism, extremism and violence" (Aladylah, 2022, p. 7). In his article "Photographs, Diaspora, and Identity: Homecoming in Hala Alyan's *The Arsonists' City*" (2022), Yousef Abu Amrieh accentuates the important role of photography in the novel as he states that "photographs play a crucial role in unveiling a person's identity" (Abu Amrieh, 2022b, p. 634) and "a crucial role in the development of the plot" (Abu Amrieh, 2022b, p. 62); Ava, by deciphering the family's photographs, could finally discover her true identity.

Watching movies repeatedly is the main cause of Mazna's infatuation with acting. It has been the time for her to watch movies that mainly revolve around Western women's emancipation. Also, her teacher, later, assigns her different roles and encourages her to study the performances of different American actresses so that she can learn their craft. Thus, she immerses herself in viewing Western movies by dedicating most of her time to watching and re-watching popular Western movies of the mid-twentieth century. She meets a new kind of liberated women who are free to "get pregnant and run away… marry . . . divorce. . . scream at their reflections" (Alyan, 2021, p. 119). As a young girl, Mazna is somehow not fully aware of the effect of such movies on her perception of the world as she is only keen on copying the actresses' performance. However, when she grows up with such scenes engraved in her memory, she becomes more determined to persuade her dream in the "West". The reflection of characters' inner feelings through watching is a technique Alyan repeatedly uses (see Abu Amirah, 2020c).

As a coming-of-age text, the narrative explores different phases in Mazna's life. Her talent is remarkably enhanced, and she develops a stronger attachment to acting. Naturally, this goes hand in hand with her growing desire to move to the "West", where her dream of becoming a Hollywood star can come true. Her plan to travel to California begins when she remembers that her former teacher, Madame Orla, "has put her in touch with a theater school in London" (Alyan, 2021, p. 130). She decides to save money so that she can afford travel expenses and, most importantly, "be closer to California" (Alyan, 2021, p. 130). She meets Tarek Haddad, the theater director who has been to New York, with whom she becomes a close friend. In one of their conversations, he asks her: "Why on earth would you want to go to America?" and further comments: "They will cast you an exotic woman, a terrorist. Here you get to play everything" (Alyan, 2021, p. 132). Mazna simply replies: "That's because there is no competition", but he replies: "They won't even see you there" (Alyan, 2021, p. 132). Their dialogue implies Mazna's oblivion to the other image of America as she does not believe what Tarek says. Furthermore, it shows her unquestionable belief in the opportunities America offers for immigrants. She stands in for the Arabs of the twentieth century who built and embraced a romanticized picture of the "West" at that time. She has become more convinced that America is the only place where she can achieve her dream. She appears to carry this dream with her to the extent that she imagines herself returning from California "transformed . . ., a few years older and triumphant" (Alyan, 2021, p. 141); a wishful thinking that never materializes.

As a young Arab girl, Mazna is obsessed with her imaginative version of her future life in America. Such recourse to imagination can affect people's perception of the world as they live in their own imaginative realms (Shalabi & Khoury, 2022). Mazna seems to be certain that her perfect life cannot be lived in her country, but in the United States where she aspires to be a well-known actress. This is evident when she, Idris, and Zakaria, the Palestinian young man with whom she falls in love with and later is killed, play a game in which each one stands in front of a camera and makes a wish. When it is her turn, she subconsciously envisions her future with Zakaria in America as "an actress, successful, Zakaria running his own restaurant in Los Angeles" (Alyan, 2021, p. 171). In another instance, as she and Zakaria discuss their affair and future plans, she confidently assures him that everything will be fine saying: "We'll move to London. We'll work and save money for America" and "you can apply for asylum" (Alyan, 2021, p. 192). Her confidence alludes to her inexperience as she thinks of a taken-for-granted success in the "West". This sureness is instigated by a long time of exposure to Western movies and, most importantly, her belief that her talent will not let her down in America. Her optimistic view of her future in the "West" makes her a prototype of Arabs in the twentieth century as they adopted and propagated a glamorized image of Western life. Furthermore, after the death of Zakaria, Idris persuades Mazna to marry him by breaking the news of his acceptance to a surgical-residency program in a university hospital in California. At this moment, he knows exactly what excites her and can drive her to accept his proposal. Speaking to her, he states: "We'll be in California. You can drive up to Los Angeles whenever you want. You'd be just a couple of hours from *Hollywood*. . . you could audition for movies. You'd become a star" (Alyan, 2021, p. 211, italics in original). His words imply that he is sure that Mazna will not relinquish such a golden opportunity to move to America since her poverty and the difficult political situation in her country are real barriers to her dreams. Thus, her acceptance of Idris' proposal can be mainly motivated by her desire to live her dream in California.

The second phase of Mazna's life begins in 1978 when she arrives with Idris in America. It is the time when her fantasy collides with reality. She is now married to a medicine student and lives in a small, shabby apartment that the university allocates to its international students. Henceforth, Mazna gradually begins to realize that real life in America mismatches her imagined promising life. Idris is a student who can barely make ends meet although he descends from a Lebanese wealthy family. The fact that "Wealthy in Lebanon, wasn't wealthy" (Alyan, 2021, p. 311) in America shocks Mazna as she has never expected to lead such a life in California. However, her meeting with Cal, the head of Film Studies at the university where her husband is a student, marks the begging of her journey to demystify her preconceived notions about Hollywood. The first time Mazna stands before a camera happens when Cal nominates her for a role in one of his student's film projects. She enthusiastically prepares herself for the audition and drives to the location. She appears to be upset when Pen, the director, informs her that she would be playing the part of a broken woman; nonetheless, she accepts it. Although she is sure that her performance is not that good, Pen "unconvincingly" (Alyan, 2021, p. 325) praises her. Pen's attitude makes Mazna pretty sure that "Cal had something to do with it" (Alyan, 2021, p. 325) since she knows that she has not done well.

After many attempts, Mazna takes minor parts that are "always ethnic, often a line or two . . . , commercial roles for hijabis or two-liners in movies with terrorist plots" (Alyan, 2021, p. 325). This is the time when her expectations collide with reality. Her experience exactly reflects what Jack Shaheen illustrates about the representation of Arabs in the American TV during the 70s and 80s of the twentieth century as he states that "television tends to perpetuate four basic myths about Arabs [one of which is that] they revel in acts of terrorism" (Shaheen, 1984, p. 4). Her aspirations to be a star evaporate when she realizes that Hollywood welcomes her only as an extra whose complexion and identity serve the purpose of stereotyping Arabs as terrorists and backward hijabis. It is the truth that she, like many other Arabs, has always been unaware of. She cannot have a major role since she is "too dark for American parts" (Shaheen, 1984, p. 363). Furthermore, as the agent reminds her, she is given these stigmatized roles as "a favor to Cal" (Shaheen, 1984, p. 363), not because of her talent. Such a reminder implies that Mazna is likewise unaware of the distinction between performing on the stage of a theater and acting for the big screen. She might be a talented stage actor, but not a movie

one. Moreover, the audience she is performing for is different; she is celebrated in Syria as a gifted stage actor, but obscured in America.

Mazna's last hope to fulfill her dream is revived when she does the audition for the part of a heart-broken Arab; another stereotype of Arab women in Hollywood who are always deemed persecuted by their Arab male partners. In his book *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (2009), Shaheen underlines such a stereotype as he states that "[i]n countless films . . . Arabs are brute murderers, sleazy rapists, religious fanatics, oil-rich dimwits, and abusers of women" (p. 8). The agent promises her that the producer will call soon, and she has to be alerted near the phone. Without telling Idris, she decides to abort her child since pregnancy may be a challenge for an actress. Her obsession with the mysterious yet-to-come surely drives her to sacrifice her maternal affection. However, her decision to miscarry the child is not purely hers. It is instigated by her reading of the biographies of Hollywood actresses who repeatedly had abortions since pregnancy is a challenge for them. One of these actresses is Ava Gardner who "had probably had a couple of abortions" (Gardner, 2013, p. 214). Nonetheless, her trauma reaches its peak when Idris informs her that the producers "went with someone else" (Gardner, 2013, p. 370). Thus, Mazna represents the Arab self who has adopted an enchanted image of the "West" and never thought of what the reality is. Via cinema and TV, she has always lived in an imaginative world in which beautiful young women live a completely different life from hers.

Mazna's failure to achieve the "American Dream" parallels Idris' success as a cardiologist. The couple travels to America with different plans, aspirations, and expectations. Unlike Mazna, Idris represents the wealthy Arabs who can gain access to proper education and enjoy a prosperous life in their natal country. He is satisfied with his status as a medicine student at the American University and considers applying for "a few residencies at hospitals in the United States" (Alyan, 2021, p. 147) as a luxury or a second option. He clearly declares to his friends that he "won't go, of course" for "[his] mother would be devastated, and my life is here" (Alyan, 2021, p. 147). As one of his audience, Mazna feels confused and asks him: "So why apply?", "I don't know, . . [m]aybe I wanted to see if I'd get in?", he replies (Alyan, 2021, p. 148). Idris' attitude implies his lack of interest in starting a new life in America since he has a flourishing one in Lebanon. Additionally, it reveals that he has no interest in or aspirations to resettle in the "West". This is opposite to Mazna's insatiable desire to move to America because she believes that her dream will only come true if she leaves Syria. Moreover, unlike Idris, she has already embraced great expectations about the "West" and adopted the inherited 'myth of the West'.

Unlike what Mazna has anticipated, she and Idris being their life in California in a small apartment with a little income that barely "covers their food and maybe a restaurant meal or two" (Alyan, 2021, p. 311). Thus, contrary to her expectations, she is disappointed with such a reality since she believes she is now stuck in a labyrinth of misery; a life that offers and will offer her nothing. Conversely, Idris is "more cheerful about it, sheltered with his lab coat that has his name stitched onto it. He is in his new life" (Alyan, 2021, p. 311). His busy life in America changes his way of thinking. He is now more attached to the "American Dream". His first-hand experience of American life makes him turn a blind eye to returning to Beirut as he tells Mazna that "Beirut feels dead. Doesn't it?" (Alyan, 2021, p. 313). Such an experience influences him to adopt a new perspective on his future. He finds himself gradually fulfilling the "American Dream" as "[h]e is in America and he believes in it, believes his wife will become a star, that the hospital will support him. That they will have a long, good life here" (Alyan, 2021, p. 313). All of his expectations come true but for the one involving his wife.

With the passage of time, the narrative reveals that Idris could achieve the "American Dream" as he and Mazna "finally … have their own money coming in. Real money. Unattached money. Idris has been accepted to the cardiothoracic-surgery residency at the hospital at a salary twice his current stipend. Mazna nearly cried when he told her the number. They could move into a new apartment, send Ava to a better preschool" (Alyan, 2021, p. 338). His outstanding success is a major reason for his determination to continue the rest of his life in California. Mazna, however, comes to detest her life at the same time because of her failure in and disappointment with America.

III. JAMAL MAHJOUB'S *THE FUGITIVES*: AMERICAN UNDER THE LENS OF A TRAVELER

Jamal Mahjoub's *The Fugitives* (2021) traces the journey of the Kamanga Kings, a Sudanese music band who are invited to play in the United States. Rushdy, the son of the ceased founder of the band and the protagonist of the novel is eager to revive the Kamanga Kings and travel to the United States. In a first-person point of view, Mahjoub explores the Sudanese individuals' dreams, aspirations, ambitions, and infatuation with the US. What matters in the novel are aspirations of the Sudanese who are keen to travel to the country of freedom and escape a turbulent country in which dreams have no place. In this regard, Emmanuel Omodeinde agrees that "[w]hilst Rushdy struggled with his personal integrity, reconciling the legacy of his father and the reputation of his country, the book's most poignant examples were to be found in its other characters" (Omodeinde, 2022). We argue that through Rusdy's eyes, Mahjoub draws two images of the United States. The first image is that of a country of safety, freedom, democracy, and opportunities. The second one is the image of the United States as a place where danger is also present and in which Arabs are stereotyped as opportunist asylum seekers and terrorists. This duality of portrayal, we contend, indicates that Mahjoub captures a panoramic picture of the "West" through which the reader can perceive both the dark and bright sides of American life.

El-Enany denotes that some accounts of Arab intellectuals of the previous centuries contained "self-flagellation coupled with the apotheosis of the other" (El-Enany, 2006, p. 146). This act of self-contempt was due to their belief that

Western culture was way more advanced in comparison with theirs. It was also the result of Arabs' disillusionment with their regimes and the consecutive war defeats the Arab world witnessed (see also Abu Amerih, 2022a). However, the Self in contemporary Anglophone diasporic Arab literature does not practice such an act. In *The Fugitive*, Mahjoub presents what can be called "self-criticism" rather than "self-flagellation". Through Rushdy's narrative and experience, Mahjoub implicitly condemns the Sudanese regimes and governments' policies and, at the same time, extols the Sudanese individual, that is, the dysfunctionality of the community is its government's fault, not the individuals'. Accordingly, the success of Rushdy and his band in the USA suggests that Arab individuals have the potential to make great achievements if they are properly sponsored or supported by their governments.

Mahjoub's self-criticism is apparent when Rushdy reflects on how the Sudanese government is reluctant to financially support the band's trip. Rushdy mentions how "lethargic civil servants" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 78) are hesitant to help the public for the lack of censorship which leads to different forms of corruption. In this context, Yassin Bashir Hamid et al. affirm that Sudan "is classified among the poorest and most corrupted countries in the world" (Hamid et al., 2018, p. 145). Rushdy's statement also complies with Omer Hashim Ismail's remark that "cases of corruption have become one of the main features of the society; corrupt actions have become a common practice in government offices in Sudan" (Ismail, 2011, p. 44). What matters for these corrupt officials is not the welfare of the country's people, but their own personal interests.

After all, the government fails to support the band financially which leaves them with no choice but to accept Suleiman Gandoury's, a Sudanese businessman, offer to sponsor their trip to America. In their first meeting, Gandoury assures the band that supporting them is an honor and he "seek[s] no reward" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 87). However, he later proves to be an opportunist as he asks the band to make a tour across the States so that he can gain money. Gandoury represents those connected to wealthy Sudanese who are part of the Sudanese corruption system. Conversing with Rushdy about the possibility of his return to Sudan, Gandoury says: "The fact is I can't go home. I'm too close to the men who have been in power all those years, and their time is up" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 263). He is now determined not to go back since those who he used to have common interests with are no longer in their positions. Hence, Gandoury represents the Sudanese wealthy elite who can buy political immunity and security with money. A recent example of such people is Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo (Hemdeti), the leader of Rapid Support forces, who according to BBC News has been expected to run the country since " By the time Mr. Bashir was ousted in April, Hemedti was one of the richest men in Sudan - probably with more ready cash than any other politician" (Sudan Crisis, 2019).

Rushdy's experience as a teacher insinuates that the teaching profession in Sudan is no longer an option for educated individuals since teachers receive low salaries and students lack motivation (Elsuuni, 2015). Thus, he has become a part of the Sudanese community in which the quality of education is constantly deteriorating, and people like him can never gain access to a prosperous future. Moreover, doing what he is eligible for, that is teaching, can add nothing to him in a country plagued with corruption and lacks the proper infrastructure as he notes that "This was home. Everything we had known for as long as either of us could remember. The dusty streets, the flooding water, the crumbling houses. I couldn't say that I was unhappy about living there. It was all I had ever known, but I also knew that it had its limitations" (Mahjoub, 2021, pp. 38-39). His statement clearly evinces his awareness that his country can offer him some things, which seem to be nothing in comparison with what other countries offer. However, other essential matters are still beyond its reach.

Because of the depressing living conditions Rushdy and his band experience in their home country, they view the invitation they receive as an unmissable opportunity to travel to America, the dreamland. This is what Hisham, Rushdy's best friend and companion, tells him when the former knows about the letter; he says: "This is it, our one chance, our only chance. The best chance we will ever have. The chance to start a new life in America" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 31). Hisham is the Arab young man whose embedded romanticized image of the "West" instinctively drives him to believe that America is the place where dreams are easily fulfilled. He, like many others, sees the invitation as his savior that helps him get out of the hell of his country and puts him in the "heaven" of America. He tells Rushdy about his plan to marry Zeina, a Sudanese-American singer who used to live in the same neighborhood, but went to America years ago, when they arrive in America. He is sure that he will be granted American citizenship once he is married to an American, and consequently, all doors of fame and fortune will be wide open before him. He is after "[a] common myth about immigration law", that is "marriage to a United States citizen will correct an immigrant's unauthorized status" while "[i]n reality, U.S. citizens have limited options to correct their spouses' status" (Mercer, 2007, p. 293). By believing so, he is a perfect example of those Arabs who have undeniably believed and adopted the notion that the first step to achieving the "American dream" is doing whatever it takes to marry an American woman even if it goes against one's traditions, ethics, or religion. Another example of such dreamers is Tiberuis, the Sudanese young man who has converted to Judaism and is about to marry a white woman ten years his senior. He confesses that his life has become better once her family and friends have taken care of him and "showered [him] with money" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 278). Thus, he believes his conversion is a thank you for them and a gate to a new burden-free life.

Mahjoub draws a panoramic picture of America through the quest of Rushdy and his friends to find Gandoury and prove their honesty to the American government. This panoramic picture is different from the ambivalent attitude of Arab intellectuals in previous centuries. Unlike those Arab intellectuals whose "representations of the West evince a sense of dichotomy, of ambivalence, of simultaneous attraction and repulsion towards their object "(El-Enany, 2001, p.

8), Mahjoub's text draws an impartial, kaleidoscopic image of America through which the reader perceives what America really offer. It is an unbiased attempt to introduce the audience to the full image of the Occident to demonstrate that even in the "West", failure and success, safety and insecurity are possible.

Mahjoub highlights the advancement of America in comparison with Sudan. During the band's quest, Rushdy is impressed by the American infrastructure, highways, and other facilities; things that his country lacks. Subconsciously, he contrasts what he sees in America with his poor country:

> I saw trees and buildings, rows of houses off in the distance. It was as if the whole country was in motion. All of it threaded together by the smooth black strip of tarmac held in place by white lines. We were totally unprepared for such a world. Where we came from the main road through the city was still known as Sharia al-Zalat, on account of the fact that it used to be the only asphalted road in town. Our roads came with added potholes and cracks to provide variety. Here, it felt as though we were zipping along a vast web. Around us, people moving north, south, east and west. Along the roadside there were places to eat, to sleep, to shop twenty-four hours a day. I was drowning, lost in absorbing what we were seeing. (Mahjoub, 2021, pp. 184-185)

His reflection illustrates his enchantment with the developed American life. The place is totally different and new for people like him. It is like a fairyland that he has never imagined. It is the first time for him, as well as his band, to have a first-hand experience of America that "All [they] knew about. . . comes from films" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 185). He lives the dream of breathing the air of America, of personally experiencing the fanciful scenes he has seen on TV. It echoes the first time he opens his eyes to see what real America is when he is on his way to the hotel from the airport. Speaking to himself, he admits: "It looked like the America I knew from television, but it was different somehow. The people, their clothes, big thick coats that turned them into unrecognisable creatures, and the signs everywhere telling you where to go and what to do. It all looked strange. . . I saw wide open tracts of forest. There was a gentle sprinkling of white across the landscape and a golden blade of sunlight arched back sharply from a river" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 112). America sounds like a wonderland for a Sudanese from the desert.

By sending the invitation letter to the late Kamanga Kings, America becomes the proper place in which the Kings can be revived. It is America that appreciates the band's long history of playing music and is keen to let the world know it. Before traveling to America and performing at Kennedy Center, Rushdy has been an obscure teacher of English who lives in a labyrinth of poverty and monotonous life while, following the performance on the Kennedy Center stage and audience's applause, he enthusiastically notes: "People we passed along the way nodded and greeted me. Suddenly I was a celebrity" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 148). At this moment of contrasting his miserable past with his glorious present, he confesses: "I had been thinking of my life a couple of months ago. The misery of my days in school seem to have taken place on a distant planet far away on another galaxy" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 148). His statements substantiate the notion that his home country could not offer him what he, like many others alike, has always dreamt of while America could. Almost at the end of his story, Rushdy expresses his gratitude to America stating: "We were lost and America helped us find ourselves" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 330). Their performance in America has been the gate to fame and success.

Mahjoub completes the image of America by underlining the strict American policies towards immigrants and refugees. This is salient when Rushdy and his band are suspected to be asylum seekers and interrogated by the FBI and ICE. The agent who investigates the case informs the group that a phone call has been received reporting that "a certain visiting ensemble invited to play at the Kennedy Center tonight was planning to seek political asylum in the United States" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 164). It is not a surprise for the band as Wad Mazaj, a member of the band, states: "these people think that everyone in the world dreams only of becoming Americans" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 166). His remark denotes that the American government is certain that people all over the world seek American citizenship for the privileges it offers. Accordingly, in the United States, individuals like Rushdy and his companions who are from Third-World nations are immediately regarded as asylum seekers. Thus, even though Rushdy and his band are officially invited to perform at the Kennedy Center, they are viewed as immigrants, travelers, and refugees who are labeled as opportunists who endanger the economic and social well-being of the United States.

Furthermore, Mahjoub stresses the role of American media in stereotyping Arab immigrants/refugees. While Rushdy and his group are after Gandoury, who exploits them and takes all of their money, to prove their good intention and innocence, they watch a news report on the screen at the restaurant where they have a break. The news reporter asks a Senator: "Do you believe these people constitute a threat? I'm afraid we have no choice but to assume that to be the case" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 215), the Senator replies. His reply clearly categorizes them as a group of criminals instead of artists. The Senator's reply accords with the immigration policies of Donald Trump's administration as it imposed strict restrictions to reduce the number of immigrants to America. To justify the imposition of these restrictions, American media has played a major role in framing Arab immigrants as a threat to the United States as Aditi Bhatia and Christopher J. Jenks note that "conservative media negatively represents refugees as a dangerous Other in a fairly dichotomous narrative, which transforms these individuals into one dimensional beings (e.g. monsters and statistics) that threaten the American way of life" (Bahtia & Jenks, 2018, p. 16).

This incident also raises issues related to how refugees and immigrants are portrayed in the media. Due to media portrayal (see e.g., Alkhawaja et al., 2020), Rushdy and his band are identified as terrorists by the public. This is exactly what happens when Rushdy is at a diner and hears someone telling others: "They're here! I'm telling you. All of them. The terrorists. Which ones? The ones on television, of course" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 254). In this regard, Abdulrahman

Elsamni attributes the misperception of Arab immigrants/refugees in the "West" to "the negative frames of Arabs and Muslims disseminated by the media [which] help sustain a set of negative perceptions and aggressive attitudes toward these groups in the West" (Elsamni, 2016, p. 2). Therefore, American media has turned a group of African musicians into a bunch of fugitives looking for a way out of their trouble.

Like any other country around the world, American life has dark as well as bright sides. It is a country in which one can simultaneously lead a luxurious life and worry about his safety. It could be the nation of liberty and democracy, but it is also tainted with corruption and insecurity. Rushdy and his fellows unveil the less-alluring image of America while on their quest to find AlKanary, the old female singer who suddenly disappears. As he is looking for her, Rushdy enters a menacing place that is:

> Hemmed in by a chain-link fence and flanked on both sides by burnt out buildings, the broken concrete was crisscrossed by weeds, twisted wire and abandoned furniture; a charred sofa, a refrigerator, a smashed television. It looked like a war had played out here not so long ago. As we stood there trying to decide what to do a car rolled slowly by along the street, the air shuddering to the heavy bass beat. Three men inside studied us as they cruised slowly by. (Mahjoub, 2021, pp. 290-291)

His depiction of the place suggests how terrifying it is. Also, it proposes his shock to realize that such a place can ever exist in the glorious United States. From the ruins he observes, he guesses that there has been a war-like fighting that left the place in this mess. As they continue inspecting the place, Rudy, who has recently met Rushdy and joined the band, notices graffiti painted on a wall and informs Rushdy that "this is gang territory. Not a good place to be in" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 290). Rushdy continues describing the terrible condition of the area noting: "The street was dark and deserted. There were sirens in the distance. The houses around us looked as though they had been ripped apart. Windows were covered with plywood sheets that in turn had been painted over with graffiti messages. It was hard to believe anyone actually lived here (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 290). His insight exposes the reader to an alternate aspect of life in America. He has been fascinated with the advanced kind of life America offers, and now he is taken aback by the urban spaces which gangs mark as their dens. Rushdy's observation of the gang is not meant to distort the image of America but to project a complete picture of American life. Regarding gangs in the United States, according to Susan A. Phillips, they are "small-scale social groups associated with criminal behavior, violence, and drug dealing" and they use graffiti "to define neighborhood space, to create lists of members, to signal affiliation, identity, enmity or alliance with other individuals or groups, and to create memorials" (Phillips, 2016, p. 48). This is to substantiate that the romanticized image of America remains an incomplete piece or half the truth about the kind of life an immigrant/refugee may encounter or lead.

For Arabs, Western politics is associated with democracy, honesty, and integrity while its Arab counterpart is tainted with corruption, abjection, and dishonesty. The Sudanese dystopia which is tainted with corruption, unemployment, deteriorated infrastructure, and lack of opportunities always drives individuals to think of the Western "utopia" in which they find all means of prosperity. It is exactly what Rushdy complains about as he speaks with Waldo, the American who takes the band in his van to pursue Gandoury, about the kind of life in Sudan, he remarks: "Where I come from, Waldo, politics is a mess. Politicians are corrupt. They care only about making themselves rich. Nobody cares about the common people" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 187). Rushdy bitterly admits such a truth for his embedded belief that America is surely the country that offers its people what Sudan fails to. Nevertheless, and opposite to Rushdy's, as well as Arabs', expectations, Waldo replies: "It's the same here. The big corporations fund the politicians so that once they get into congress they can change the laws to suit their friends. We're so dumb we can't see what they're doing. Our current president claims to be on the side of the working man, but he's basically only helping his rich friends" (Mahjoub, 2021, p. 187). He refers to the former president Donald Trump who according to Ryan Zamarripa and Seth Hanlon has broken the promises he gave to the American working class, and "[i]n virtually every policy sphere, his administration has favored powerful corporations and the wealthy at the expense of middle- and working-class Americans" (Zamarripa & Hanlon, 2020). As an American, Waldo's words affirm that America is like any other country on Earth. He says this to remind Rushdy, and the reader, that corruption has no nationality, and as it is present in Sudan, it can be simply found in America.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study has illustrated that contemporary Anglophone diasporic Arab writers have established an "Occidentalist discourse" through which the Occident is objectively represented to the audience. Their discourse is different from that of Arab writers from previous centuries as they do not call for emulation or adoption of Western culture. Through their narratives, Anglophone diasporic Arab writers paint nuanced picture of what the Occident is to deglamorize its idealized image Arabs have perpetuated for centuries. Their representation is impartial and valid for what they depict is based on their personal first-hand experiences of the Occident as they are settlers and, most of the time, citizens of the countries that contextualize their narratives. Accordingly, there is a pressing need for Occidentalism to fill the gap between Arabs' great expectations and fancies about the Occident and reality. Also, the exploration of Mahjoub's and Alyan's novels has substantiated that Occidentalism cannot be defined as "Orientalism in reverse" for it does not entail a distortion or misrepresentation of the "Other". It is then an objective representation of the Occident established by Arab intellectuals who have first-hand experiences of the West, not as travelers, but citizens.

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Ahmed Shalabi has been an instructor of English literature at Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Jordan since 2018. He obtained his PhD from the University of Jordan. His research interest is contemporary Anglophone diasporic Arab literature and the emerging Occidentalist discourse.

Yousef Abu Amrieh is a previous dean of the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at the University of Jordan and a professor of contemporary English literature. He obtained his PhD from the University of Manchester in 2011. Since then, Prof. Abu Amrieh published several critical articles that explore a wide range of themes and aspects such as cultural translation, cultural identity, and multiculturalism. In addition, Prof. Abu Amrieh frequently publishes articles on Arab adaptations and appropriation of Shakespeare. With more than 60 publications in peer-reviewed journals, Prof. Abu Amrieh is the head of a research group on contemporary diasporic literature.

Request Strategies in Saudi ESL Learners' Email Communication: A Pragmatic Analysis

Nuha K. Alsalem

English Language Department, College of Science and Humanities, Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Growing research on intercultural communication has highlighted the importance of both linguistic and pragmatic competence among learners of English as a second language (ESL). Emails serve as a preferred means of communication between university students and professors. This study investigates Saudi ESL learners' pragmatic competence in creating email requests to their professors, addressing questions about greetings, directness, request strategies, and information sequencing. The goal is to show the need for explicit pragmatics instruction. The naturalistic data comprised 50 emails written by Arabic-speaking ESL graduate students in academic contexts, covering requests regarding deadline extensions, retaking exams, lecture absences for various reasons, and letters of recommendation. The analysis was guided by the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka et al., 1989). The findings suggested that explicit pedagogical guidance in speech act performance could benefit non-native English speakers. This study contributes to the growing body of research on institutional email practices, politeness conventions, and interlanguage pragmatics.

Index Terms—request, speech act, politeness, pragmatic competence, intercultural communication

I. Introduction

Speech acts involve not only words but also behaviors (Austin, 1962). These acts reflect diverse norms for expressing such concepts as requests, gratitude, apologies, compliments, and refusals. While speech acts are universal, the specific forms they take vary across cultures (Gass & Selinker, 2008). A growing emphasis on intercultural communication has highlighted the significance of pragmatic competence alongside linguistic skills. Students often grapple with email etiquette due to limited language skills, despite its increasing use in university communication (Biesenbach-Lucas, 2007). This is particularly noticeable in hierarchical relationships, like those between students and faculty, where conveying intended meaning in a text-only medium is a struggle.

Email is the preferred mode of communication between students and professors. This type of interaction has introduced both challenges and opportunities for educators and learners alike (Bloch, 2002). It transcends linguistic communities, reshaping social relationships within academia and society. For some students, traditional classrooms can be intimidating, making virtual platforms more comfortable and conducive to interaction.

The present study contributes to the growing body of research on email use in institutional settings, exploring politeness conventions, interlanguage pragmatics, and the need for pedagogical support in e-politeness. To examine Saudi English as a second language (ESL) learners' ability to use politeness strategies in email requests to their professors, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1) How do Saudi ESL learners structure their forms of address, including email openings and closings, when making requests to professors?

2) What are the levels of directness and request strategies employed by these learners in email requests to professors?

3) How do these learners typically structure email requests?

II. Literature Review

A. Politeness and Communicative Competence

Brown and Levinson (1987) introduced universality to cross-cultural speech act research, with Kadar and Haugh (2013) supporting politeness theory as a universal basis for pragmatics. Lakoff (1973, 1977) proposed universal politeness rules (e.g., "don't impose," "give options," and "make someone feel good"). Leech (1983) defined politeness as minimizing the cost and increasing the benefits for the hearer while raising the speaker's cost, focusing on conflict avoidance. Hymes' (1972) concept of communicative competence emphasizes the connection between language and culture and the need to use language contextually and culturally for successful communication, echoed by Morkus (2009). Pragmatic awareness, as important as grammatical knowledge, enables appropriate interaction in foreign speech communities while respecting social and cultural norms. Pragmatic failure, as explained by Thomas (1974), emerges from misunderstandings rooted in cultural or personal differences. It is often observed in second language learners who may not be fully aware of the socio-cultural norms of the target language.

B. Politeness Strategies in Language Learning

Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) shed light on interlanguage pragmatics in email requests made by native and non-native English-speaking graduate students to faculty at an American university. The study employed Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) speech act analysis framework to distinguish levels of directness, lexical politeness devices, and request perspectives. The study revealed that requests were often realized using direct strategies and hints, rather than conventional indirect strategies. Native speakers showed greater proficiency than non-native speakers in the conventions of polite email writing. The results implied that explicit pedagogical instruction on appropriate speech act performance could benefit non-native English speakers. In an academic setting, Bloch (2002) showed the importance of email communication between students and faculty. The study explored the social dynamics of Internet discourse, emphasizing how email could provide a comfortable platform for students who might find traditional classroom settings intimidating. Bloch agreed with Biesenbach-Lucas (2007) regarding the importance of email etiquette in academia.

C. Cross-Cultural Studies of Politeness Strategies

In a cross-cultural study, Alakrash and Bustan (2020) compared the politeness strategies employed by Arab and Malaysian students in making requests, applying Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) theoretical framework. In Alakrash and Bustan (2020), Malay respondents preferred indirect strategies, including hints, query preparatory questions, and hedged performatives. In contrast, Arab respondents often opted for explicit and direct request strategies, such as want statements and hints. These cultural variations have a profound impact on politeness strategies, demonstrating the interplay of culture and politeness.

Hendriks (2010) investigated learners' ability to understand and employ indirect and polite language in speech acts. While previous research has extensively explored this topic, Hendriks focused on the effect of non-native modification of speech acts in English email requests written by Dutch learners of English. The results demonstrated that underusing request modification in emails negatively affected the evaluation of the sender's personality.

In a study on pragmatic competence, Tseng (2015) explored Taiwanese English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' production of email requests to their university professors. By applying Blum-Kulka et al.'s (1989) framework, Tseng examined the use of politeness strategies, encompassing requestive head acts, internal and external modifications, and the sequencing of information in email messages. Through questionnaires and interviews, the study revealed that students from different language proficiency levels preferred direct strategies as the primary requestive head acts. However, high-intermediate students demonstrated a more extensive range of internal and external modifiers, reflecting their inter-pragmatic development stage.

Set in a retail context, Alshakhi (2019) investigated Saudi students in the United States and did not find a substantial correlation between language proficiency and politeness in requests. However, it identified specific factors contributing to politeness, such as intonations and politeness markers, demonstrating that linguistic proficiency is not the sole determinant of politeness in speech acts.

D. Explicit Instruction in Language Learning

Qari (2021) explored the effect of explicit instruction on the linguistic and pragmatic competence of Saudi EFL learners. The study built on previous research that revealed a lack of awareness among second language learners about specific request strategies employed by native speakers. Through a pre-test, instruction, and post-test approach, Qari found a significant improvement in students' understanding of request forms in their second language. This demonstrated the value of explicit instruction in addressing gaps in pragmatic competence.

Burgucu-Tazegül et al. (2016) studied politeness in the email communication practices of Turkish EFL university students when corresponding with non-native professors. The study revealed a preference for direct strategies, such as direct questions and want statements. Despite some underuse of query preparatory questions and mitigation, the study showed the need for integrating EFL instruction on email etiquette into textbooks and curricula, with a focus on recipient-oriented communication to improve overall effectiveness.

Elmianvar and Kheirabadi (2013) summarized previous studies, emphasizing the significance of teaching speech acts to ESL or EFL learners. They argued that such learners may produce accurate grammatical forms and lexical items but still struggle to convey their intended messages due to a lack of pragmatic or functional knowledge.

The above studies collectively emphasize the importance of politeness strategies in language learning and intercultural communication. While linguistic proficiency is important, cultural context, explicit instruction, and the medium of communication (e.g., email) significantly impact the strategies used. Politeness is therefore a multifaceted aspect of language learning that extends beyond mere linguistic proficiency. As the body of research in this area continues to expand, there is a need for a more comprehensive understanding of politeness in language education and intercultural communication.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data Collection

This study included a set of 50 real-world emails written by university students encompassing various types of requests directed at faculty members. A crucial consideration in these emails was that the power dynamic remained consistent throughout the messages, with professors (the recipients of the emails) holding a position of authority over students (the senders) due to their institutional roles. Another consideration was that the social distance between the two parties remained relatively low, given the frequent and regular interactions between students and professors in the institutional setting. What varied in the study was the nature and extent of the requests students made.

The analysis revealed eight types of requests in the data: requests for documents, exam postponements, course additions, feedback on work in progress, course materials, face-to-face appointments, course changes, and extensions for assignment submission deadlines.

B. Participants

The participants consisted of 19 female non-native English speakers studying at a Midwestern U.S. university as graduate students. All participants originated from Saudi Arabia and spoke Arabic as a native language. Their academic majors covered a range of fields, including biology, chemistry, computer science, fashion design, special education, and statistics. Most of these students had not received English instruction in Saudi Arabia. They had, however, taken ESL courses prior to enrolling in their graduate programs. As a prerequisite for admission to these programs, they were considered advanced English learners. All participants were familiar with email technology, although their previous experience may not have been predominantly in an academic context in English. The professors, both male and female, had communicated to the students that email was an acceptable mode of communication by providing their email addresses on the course syllabi at the beginning of the semester.

C. Analysis Procedures

The analysis of email requests was carried out using the original Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) framework, established by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). The CCSARP framework has been used to investigate requests and apologies in eight languages, employing a uniform coding scheme to examine differences in speech acts across cultures and contexts. The main goal of this project was to investigate discrepancies within the same language, discrepancies linked to situations, and differences across languages in the use of requests and apologies.

The initial phase of analysis involved identifying the primary request, known as the request head act, within each email message. This required pinpointing the exact sentence in each message that contained one of eight types of requests. Subsequently, the author examined and categorized these identified requests. This categorization encompassed assessing aspects such as the form of address (including the greetings and closings used), determining the level of directness (whether requests were direct, conventionally indirect, or non-conventionally indirect), evaluating the strategies employed in making requests, and analyzing the sequencing of information.

As noted by Biesenbach-Lucas (2007), the degree of directness corresponds to the level of clarity with which requests are communicated. The present study employed the framework proposed by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989) to analyze levels of directness and request categories. Additionally, the author recorded the frequency of each request type and converted these frequencies into percentages for a comparative analysis of strategies.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question explored the forms of address students used in opening and closing their emails. The analysis revealed a range of forms. Greetings such as "hi" and "hello" were used 56% of the time, while "dear" was employed 26% of the time. The most common greetings used by the students were "hi" or "hello" followed by an academic title and the professor's last name (28%) and "dear" followed by an academic title and the professor's last name (18%).

Notably, 14% of students addressed their professor by an academic title followed by their first name. This choice reflected a cultural norm, particularly among Arab students, who commonly address their professors by their first name preceded by their academic title. Some of these address forms may not necessarily lead to pragmatic issues but are less formal and might be considered inappropriate in an academic context in the U.S.

Additionally, some forms of address were acceptable but overly direct and possibly abrupt, often due to the omission of the deference form "dear" or the use of an incorrect academic title, such as "Mrs." instead of "Dr." or "Prof." Furthermore, some emails included a combination of "dear" and "hello" or used only the academic title of the faculty member. To gain a better understanding of the preferred address constructions among Saudi ESL students, the forms of address are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
FORMS OF ADDRESS

Form of address	Frequency
Use of "dear"	**Total: (26%)**
Dear + Title	1/50 (2%)
Dear + Title + First Name	1/50 (2%)
Dear + Title + First Name + Last Name	1/50 (2%)
Dear + Title + Last Name	9/50 (18%)
Dear + H + First Name	1/50 (2%)
Use of greetings (e.g., hi, hello)	**Total: (56%)**
Hi/hello	3/50 (6%)
Hi/hello + Title	1/50 (2%)
Hi/hello + First Name	2/50 (4%)
Hi/hello + Title + First Name	4/50 (8%)
Hi/hello + Title + Last Name	14/50 (28%)
Hi/hello + Honorific + First Name	3/50 (6%)
Hi/hello + Honorific + Last Name	4/50 (2%)
No form of address	**Total: (2%)**
Other	**Total: (16%)**

A statistically significant portion of students (54%) omitted the traditional email opening and instead immediately addressed the professor and delved into the main purpose of their email. Additionally, 22% opted to introduce themselves at the outset of their emails, providing their first and last names, major, and the course information. This finding underscores the potential influence of students' native language and cultural background on their email writing conventions. In Saudi Arabia, where college classes often comprise a large number of students, instructors frequently emphasize the importance of self-introduction in emails to expedite communication. Furthermore, 10% of the students demonstrated a courteous approach by inquiring about their professor's well-being and expressing their hope for a good day. Table 2 provides a summary of the opening approaches observed in the emails along with their corresponding frequencies.

TABLE 2
EMAIL OPENINGS

Type of opening	Frequency
"I hope you have had a good day"	3/50 (6%)
"How are you today?"	2/50 (4%)
Introducing themselves/their majors	11/50 (22%)
Combination	7/50 (14%)
No opening	27/50 (54%)

Omitting traditional email openings and emphasizing a self-introduction could be related to the concept of communicative competence proposed by Hymes (1972). The influence of native language and cultural practices on communication strategies was evident in the findings, suggesting that understanding language in a context-sensitive and culturally appropriate way is vital for successful communication.

For email closings, 86% of students effectively concluded their emails using a range of closing expressions, varying in degree of formality. A statistically significant number of emails were concluded with expressions of gratitude such as "thank you" or "thanks". This outcome was anticipated, as the emails contained requests made to professors. Table 3 provides a summary of the various email closings and their respective frequencies.

TABLE 3
EMAIL CLOSINGS

Type of closing	Frequency
"Thank you/thanks"	24/50 (48%)
"Respectfully yours"	1/50 (2%)
"Best regards/best"	6/50 (12%)
"With respect"	1/50 (2%)
"Best wishes"	3/50 (6%)
"Sincerely"	3/50 (6%)
"Have fun"	1/50 (2%)
"Have a nice day"	2/50 (4%)
Combination	2/50 (4%)
No closing	7/50 (14%)

The second research question explored the directness and request strategies apparent in the emails, adopting the classification system established by Blum-Kulka et al. (1989). Three directness levels were identified: direct (34%), conventionally indirect (58%) and non-conventionally indirect, characterized as hints (8%). The request strategies associated with a direct request were direct questions, want statements, need statements, and expectation statements. Want statements emerged as the most common request strategy within the direct level, accounting for 20% of cases. Notably, no imperatives were found within the direct level.

Among the conventionally indirect requests, query preparatory modals indicating ability, willingness, or permission, such as "may," "can," "could," and "would," were the most common request strategies. This aligned with studies such as Hendriks (2010) and Alshakhi (2019), which explored learner ability to employ indirect and polite language in speech acts. The findings corroborate the importance of such competence in language learning and its application in email communication. Conversely, the non-conventionally indirect level was the least common, accounting for only 8% of cases. Table 4 provides a summary of the directness levels and request strategies, along within their frequencies and examples from the data.

TABLE 4
LEVEL OF DIRECTNESS

Directness level	Request strategy	Example	Frequency
Direct	Direct questions	• "Do you have any pervious samples of reflections?" • "Where can I find the article?	3/50 (6%)
	Want statements	• "I **would like** you to change what I wrote" • "I **would like** to have a letter for SACM" • "I **want** a letter for SACM like the letter in the attachment"	10/50 (20%)
	Need statements	• "I **need** your answer about a question that is…." • "I **need** your permission first to register" • "I **need** to get your approval"	3/50 (6%)
	Expectation statements	• "I wish you accept my excuse and I will bring paper from the hospital"	1/50 (2%)
Conventionally indirect	Query preparatory (ability, willingness, permission)	• "**Can** you tell me when you are available tomorrow?" • "**May** I have an appointment to see you tomorrow?" • "**Could** you please write a recommendation for me?" • "Is it possible to help me out on this?" • "I **was wondering** if there was anyway I could take the exam on Monday instead"	29/50 (58%)
Non-conventionally indirect (hints)	Strong hints/mild hints	• "I have an idea if you want to help us to increase our grade" • "I don't know when I send [the link] to make it public" • "I do my best in the last question for assignment 1. I attached it in this email"	4/50 (8%)

The third research question examined the sequencing of information in students' email request messages. Two predominant patterns emerged: (a) head request followed by clarification (22%) and (b) head request preceded by clarification (28%). To illustrate these patterns, examples are given below, with the head requests in italics.

Example 1
> Dear Dr. First Name,
> I would like to make an appointment with you. Could you tell me when you are available tomorrow because i have some questions about academic classes and how i register for spring classes.
> Have a nice day
> Student's First Name

Example 2
> Hi Dr. First Name Last Name,
> I am XX, can i sand my homework about summary of chapter 4, and take an appointment on Monday to discuss it, because today my younger son has fever and the day care didn't accept him. Or can give me an appointment today to discuss it after 3 p.m because I need to go to the hospital.
> Have a good day
> Student's First Name Last Name

Example 3
> Hello Dr. First Name,
> I'm still not feeling good, and still trying to finish studying the exam's materials.
> I'm not sure if I will be able to take the exam tomorrow. I'm very scared to fail.
> *I'm wondering if you will allow me to take it another time*?
> Best regards,
> Student's First Name

Example 4
> Hi Dr. Last Name,
> Since I had with you SPCE 558 in fall and I love Your way of teaching and dealing with students I'm interested in taking SPCE 556 in the spring when I saw your name as A lecture for it; however, I found that it's full and I want to take it with you so *could you please give me a permission?*
> Sincerely
> Student's First Name

Examples 1 and 2 follow the pattern of beginning with the head request and subsequently providing an explanation or clarification, while Examples 3 and 4 adhere to the second pattern of offering clarification first, followed by introducing

the request. These variations may be attributed to students' individual preferences or educational backgrounds. These findings support previous research, such as Elmianvari and Kheirabadi (2013), emphasizing the importance of teaching pragmatic or functional knowledge to ESL and EFL learners. While this study did not directly explore teaching methods, the results underscore the need for instruction that considers the influence of culture and native language on email etiquette. In summary, the findings align with previous studies in the field of politeness, communicative competence, and language learning.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined Saudi ESL university students' requests to professors in emails, including forms of address in email openings and closings, the level of directness and request strategies employed, and the information sequencing within emails. The use of naturalistic data added authenticity to the findings, enhancing their credibility.

In general, the results revealed a considerable variation in student preferences in selecting strategies and structuring emails. It became evident that students could benefit from explicit instruction in pragmatics and speech acts. Despite being considered advanced English learners, their proficiency levels did not consistently translate into effective email composition. This aligned with previous studies that emphasized the necessity of explicit instruction in this context (e.g., Bloch, 2002; Chen, 2015; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Zhu, 2012; Qari, 2021).

In spite of certain limitations, this study sheds light on the expanding body of knowledge concerning institutional email practices, politeness conventions, interlanguage pragmatics, and the need for pedagogical interventions related to speech acts and email etiquette. Moving forward, there are several avenues for future research.

To more precisely compare and understand social norms and cultural preferences, a control group of native English speakers would be beneficial. Additionally, this study was limited to female Saudi students studying in the United States. Further research should seek to control for gender, as this variable often plays a pivotal role in speech act research. Furthermore, providing more information about the professors, including their gender and relationship to the students, would offer a more comprehensive perspective.

Future studies could explore how students from diverse cultural backgrounds utilize request strategies in email communication within an academic context. Additionally, the factor of age could be explored since it is a significant social variable (Alshakhi, 2019). Finally, applying this study with a different participant group, such as EFL Saudi students in the same academic context, could reveal the influence of their duration of stay in the United States on politeness strategies.

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Nuha K. Alsalem earned her doctorate in Applied Linguistics from Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana, in 2019 and her master's in applied Linguistics from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Illinois, in 2015.

She worked as a teaching assistant at Ball State University's Intensive English Institute from 2016 to 2017. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics in the English Language Department in the College of Science and Humanities at Shaqra University, Saudi Arabia. Her research interests include pragmatics, discourse analysis, and intercultural communication.

Dr. Alsalem received an Academic Excellence Award for Faculty Members from Shaqra University in 2023. She also serves as the vice dean of the deanship of admissions and registration and actively participates in various academic committees.

Happy Images in Vietnamese Perception Through Idioms of Happiness: A Cultural Approach

Dang Nguyen Giang[*]
Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Labour and Social Affairs, Hanoi, Vietnam

Ho Ngoc Trung
Faculty of English, Hanoi Open University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Hoang Tuyet Minh
Faculty of Applied Linguistics, International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Abstract—**Idioms illustrate special linguistic units since they reflect human wisdom in the perception of the world (Giang, 2023b). They have intertwined and transformed into archives of a community's culture in the past. Idioms also play a significant role in the linguistic ontologization of emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger, etc. Semantically, idioms in Vietnamese are all perceptively associated with typical images (Hanh, 2008), and idioms of happiness have their own happy images. The paper aims to investigate the happy images Vietnamese people perceive through idioms of happiness from a cultural perspective. This is a descriptive study that presents the theoretical background of Vietnamese idioms in general and the findings and discussion of happy images behind the idioms of happiness in particular. To gather the data, a hand search of Giang's (2018) collection of Vietnamese idioms was conducted to provide a corpus of 32 entries, from which three groups of happy images were identified. Results from this study show that happy images in Vietnamese perception through idioms of happiness derive from (i) animals, (ii) human body parts, and (iii) events and festivals.**

Index Terms—**happy images, idioms of happiness, idiomatic meanings, Vietnamese perception, cultural perspective**

I. INTRODUCTION

Essentially, words and expressions, including idioms, have formed the vocabulary system of a language (Hanh, 2008). Unlike other linguistic units, idioms contain national cultures and views (Giang, 2023a). Idioms are used to figuratively express ideas. They make the speakers' speeches vivid and rich. Therefore, a person's ability to develop a communicative relationship might depend on how well he uses idioms in his conversations. The most notable benefit of idioms, moreover, is that they give users a completely new linguistic means of expressing ideas. Indeed, a language's color and vitality can be characterized by its idioms.

According to Hanh (2008), there have been three approaches in researching idioms in Vietnam: etymology, synchronic evolution, and contrastive analysis. In the first place, studies on idioms under etymology go into a broad field. These investigations show how each idiom developed and changed over time. It is a demanding job that takes a lot of time and effort. Etymologizing, or recovering idioms' origins in order to make their meanings clear, is the principal method employed in these studies (Giang, 2008). The authors who typically focus on this area are Hanh (2002) and Minh (2007). Synchronic evolution is the second approach in studying idioms. Descriptive studies conducted by numerous researchers, such as San (1974), Duc (1995), Hanh (2008), Luc and Dang (2009), Giang (2016), etc., help to partially infer the cultural variables that underlie the idioms. The third approach involves analyzing idioms through contrastive analysis. Contrastive analysis works are based on research projects of original discovery and synchronic evolution. There have been several attempts to determine the similarities and differences between Vietnamese and another language, particularly English, in terms of idioms of emotion (Trao, 2009; Tien, 2022), idiomatic verb phrases (Long, 2010), idiom translation (Lan, 2001; Phuc, 2009), structural and semantic components of idioms (Giang, 2013), etc. Giang (2023b) also proposed that these in-depth investigations of idioms provide fantastic chances for cross-linguistic comparison and analysis.

Giang (2023b) carried out an investigation into comparative images in Vietnamese perception through idioms with comparisons, and it is considered the first research work on idioms in terms of images behind idiomatic meanings. It was found in Giang (2023b) that comparative images Vietnamese people perceive through idioms with comparisons originate from humans, animals, objects and materials, natural phenomena, food, and plants. These comparative images of idioms serve as a mirror that reflects not only the geographical and natural features of Vietnam but also the rich material and spiritual lives of the Vietnamese people. Indeed, idiomatic meanings are generally based on images, and

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[*] Corresponding Author.

uncovering happy images in Vietnamese perception through idioms is one of the ways to make Vietnamese cultural values behind the idioms explicit.

<div align="center">II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</div>

A. Defining Idioms

Traditionally, Vietnamese idioms are believed to be unpredictable or non-compositional (Menh, 1972; Chau, 1981; Dan, 1986; Duc, 1995; Hanh, 2008; Luc & Dang, 2009). The idioms are non-compositional since their meanings are not the sum of the meanings of their component parts. For instance, the phrase *ếch ngồi đáy giếng* 'frog sit bottom well' which is paraphrasable as "have limited knowledge because of little communication" is an idiom, for its idiomatic meaning cannot be derived from the meanings of its constituents (*ếch, ngồi, đáy*, and *giếng*).

According to Dan (1986), an idiom is a fixed group of words serving a complete sense and descriptive value. More specifically, Hanh (2008) supposed that "an idiom is a fixed group of words that is firm in terms of structure, complete and figurative in terms of meaning, and is widely used in daily communications" (p. 31). The fixation of an idiom in Hanh's (2008) definition refers to two criteria: (i) the constituents forming an idiom are generally unvaried in usage, and (ii) the order of the constituent parts forming an idiom is unchangeable. In terms of semantic perspective, Hanh (2008) also emphasized that the idiomatic meaning is not the result of the compositional function of constituents forming an idiom. Similarly, Luc and Dang (2009) stated that the idiomatic meaning of an idiom cannot be captured although the meaning and syntactic properties of each word of that idiom have been learned. Generally, an idiom is a set expression whose meaning cannot be determined by examining the meanings of its separate constituents, according to the majority of Vietnamese linguists.

From a cognitive perspective, most Vietnamese idioms, according to Giang (2018), can be analyzed and have meanings that are at least partially motivated. For example, *xanh vỏ đỏ lòng* 'green covers red bowels' is an idiom, in which *xanh vỏ* [green covers] describes the appearance (form) whereas *đỏ lòng* [red bowels] gives the nature (content), i.e., the idiom represents an image of the appearance and the nature that are opposite. *Xanh vỏ đỏ lòng* is paraphrasable as "while the interior is fine, the exterior appears to be poor". The idiom *cưa sừng làm nghé* 'saw horns become buffalo calfs' which means "one who is old tries to be young and innocent" is another example. The meaning of this idiom can be analyzed by looking at *cưa sừng* [saw horns] as *người già lớn tuổi* [the old] and *làm nghé* [become buffalo calfs] as *cố làm ra vẻ trẻ trung, ngây thơ* [try to be young and innocent]. The present analysis is based on the image that an old buffalo wants to have its horns cut to become a calf (Giang, 2018). Giang (2018) also classified Vietnamese idioms into four categories based on Fernando and Flavell's (1981) classification of idioms: transparent (all constituents are explicit), semi-transparent (some constituents are explicit and the others are implicit), semi-opaque (all constituents are implicit but possibly interpretable), and opaque (all constituents are implicit). This is his way of saying that Vietnamese idioms range in appearance from completely transparent to completely opaque.

Indeed, an idiom has its own typical properties, and here is a list of the characteristics that make up a Vietnamese idiom. An idiom in Vietnamese (i) is a phrase whose constituents can be unvaried or varied under definable control; (ii) is regarded as a complex scene with a bipartite semantic structure that can be analyzable: a literal reading and an idiomatic meaning based on an image; (iii) has meaning that usually differs from the meanings of the combination of its constituents but is at least partly motivated; (iv) expresses a pure concept (Giang, 2018).

B. Idioms From a Perspective of Culture

In Kramsch (1998), language is the primary means through which social lives are performed. Language has numerous intricate relationships with culture when it is utilized in communication contexts. Kramsch (1998) also explained that facts, ideas, or events are all expressed through words because they deal with a stock of knowledge about the world. Besides, words reflect people's attitudes, beliefs, and points of view. It means that language expresses cultural reality.

Hanh (2008) stated that language is a means of conveying and preserving the cultural heritage of a nation. In other words, language is a reflection of culture, and culture has a direct impact on how language is formed. According to Hanh (2008), Vietnamese idioms, like those in any other language, are a treasure keeping the rich and unique cultural features of the nation. In terms of cognition, idioms show a transformation in how people conceptualize their surroundings (Giang, 2018).

Geography, habitat, production mode, national thought, etc. in Binh (1999) are regarded as typical factors defining the distinctive qualities of idioms in each language. Giang (2018) also noted that the significant cultural differences between English and Vietnamese in terms of the origins of idioms are from living conditions, history, religions, beliefs, traditions, and customs. The idiom *night cap* in English is an example. From a literal reading, a *night cap* is a type of headwear worn at night while sleeping. Unexpectedly, this idiom is used to describe a glass of wine or something to drink before going to bed (Binh, 1999). If we are not English, we would find it hard to understand the idiomatic meaning by looking at separate constituents of the idiom. Nevertheless, it is difficult for the English to learn the Vietnamese idiom *cơm lành canh ngọt* 'cooked rice good soup tasty' [a happy family or a united team] since their main food is bread but rice.

Lan (2001) highlighted how crucial national thought is in defining comparative images by providing a table that compares the uses of idioms with comparisons in Vietnamese, English, and Russian. The results in Lan (2001) showed that comparative images are very popular things from people's everyday lives in each nation. In addition, Hanh (2008), apart from structural and semantic properties, particularly paid attention to the use and artistic value of Vietnamese idioms.

In a nutshell, language and culture coexist and reinforce each other constantly (Zhang, 2007). They are so intrinsically linked that understanding or appreciating one requires the knowledge of the others. Actually, idioms, which are special linguistic units, reflect national cultures and views. It is why Hanh (2008) said that the underlying cultural factors behind idioms need to be uncovered.

C. Images and Idiomatic Meanings

Image in Cambridge Dictionary (2023) is "a picture in your mind or an idea of how someone or something is". This mental picture appears according to people's real experiences, especially when using language. Along with other linguistic units, people use idioms as a means of communication to express their own ideas through images (Giang, 2018). Indeed, idiomatic meanings are usually based on images. For example, *like water off a duck's back* is an English idiom associated with the image that water is poured onto a duck's back and flows down without stagnation. People's perception of this image in a certain context provides the phrase with a new special sense: "have no effect". Similarly, the idiom *như chó với mèo* 'like dog and cat' in Vietnamese is linked with the image of a relationship between a dog and a cat. The image shows that dogs and cats are animals that do not like each other, so they cannot be friends, and when they are close to each other, there will be war between them. The idiomatic meaning is then produced from this image. Finally, *như chó với mèo* is paraphrasable as "be always conflictive".

External semantic cognition is typically what drives idiomatic meanings. According to Giang (2018), it is the process by which humans perceive their immediate surroundings, including the social, natural, and imaginary worlds. The surroundings in Giang (2018) refer to what people have encountered, such as things, animals, plants, flowers, events, culinary art, food, clothing, bodies, bodily functions, colors, numbers, climate, laboring, etc. It is noteworthy that each nation has its own views of the surrounding world. An illustration of this is animal cognition. The idiom *work like a horse* in English describes someone who is diligent, and the idiom *chăm chỉ như con ong* 'work like a bee' in Vietnamese is used with the same meaning. In these idioms, "horse" in English and "bee" in Vietnamese are comparative images indicating how hard-working someone is.

Images and idiomatic meanings have a close relationship with each other. Images are the background shaping the idiomatic meanings through people's perception. In other words, idiomatic meanings come from people's perception of the world around by images.

III. METHODS

The study undertakes an investigatory model giving an in-depth discussion of happy images in Vietnamese perception through idioms of happiness. According to Wisker (2001), descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon with detailed information. Wisker (2001) also elucidated that in descriptive research, the characteristics of phenomena are described through description, classification, measurement, and comparison. The study generally addresses the theoretical background of idioms in Vietnamese and then the results and discussion of happy images in idioms of happiness. Following explanations and comments for the illustrational instances, deductive reasoning is used to give concluding remarks.

The data are restricted to idioms of happiness taken from Giang's (2018) collection of Vietnamese idioms. A hand search of idioms in Giang (2018) helps to establish a corpus of 32 idioms of happiness. From our corpus, happy images of idioms are divided into three categories according to their formation origins as follows:

(i) Happy images from animals: e.g., *như cá gặp nước* 'like fish meet water' [be happy to meet the right person in the right situation, satisfying one's desires], *chuột sa chĩnh gạo* 'mouse fall into rice jar' [be happy to have a comfortable life because of sudden luck], *vui như sáo* 'happy as/like starling' [feel so happy], etc.

(ii) Happy images from human body parts: e.g., *nở gan nở ruột* 'dilate liver dilate intestine' [feel extremely happy and satisfied], *mát lòng mát dạ* 'cool intestine cool intestine' [feel extremely happy and satisfied], *tay bắt mặt mừng* 'hand shake face happy' [shake hands for joy], etc.

(iii) Happy images from events and festivals: e.g., *như bắt được vàng* 'as catch gold' [feel so happy], *vui như hội* [happy as festival' [be very happy], *vui như Tết* [happy as/like Tết (Vietnamese traditional Lunar New Year)' [be very happy], etc.

The happy images that serve as the foundation for idioms were characterized and analyzed after the data had been gathered and categorized. In addition, Vietnamese idioms used for illustrations in this study had to be translated into English. Nevertheless, most Vietnamese idioms do not have corresponding English ones, and vice versa. We employ word-for-word and paraphrase translation techniques, introduced by Baker (1992), to preserve consistency in the final product. Word-for-word translation would convey the literal meanings of the original words in the source language, whereas paraphrase would help to keep the idiomatic meanings.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, 32 idioms of happiness were collected from Giang's (2018) collection of Vietnamese idioms. Within this corpus, three happy image groups of idioms were identified: happy images from animals (9 idioms, accounting for 28.125%), happy images from human body parts (14 idioms, accounting for 43.75%), and happy images from events and festivals (9 idioms, accounting for 28.125%).

A. Happy Images From Animals

In Cambridge Dictionary (2023), a *fish* is "an animal that lives in water, is covered with scales, and breathes by taking water in through its mouth, or the flesh of these animals eaten as food". *Cá* [fish] are "vertebrates that live in water, breathe with gills, and swim with fins" (Phe, 2017, p. 139). In fact, water is not only fish's favourite habitat, but it also determines their survival. For some reason, fish are separated from their water environment, which is probably the worst thing for them. Without water, they cannot breathe, swim, or find food, and they will die soon. In this situation, the fish's greatest desire is to return to their aquatic environment. (1) shows an image that a fish is happy to be back in the water environment determining its life. From this image, the Vietnamese use (1) to mean that someone is happy to meet the right person in the right situation, and this fact satisfies their desires.

(1) *(như)*   *cá*   *gặp*   *nước*
     '(like)   fish   meet   water'
     [be happy to meet the right person in the right situation, satisfying one's desires]

Fish in water are happy, but anabas testudineus in showers are even happier. *Cá rô* [anabas testudineus] is "a freshwater fish that usually lives in ponds or lakes, has a slightly flattened oval body, hard scales and spines on the dorsal fin, and can live for a long time without water" (Phe, 2017, p. 142). Naturally, the anabas testudineus appears from gray-green to light green; the back is darker than the belly; there is a dark dot on the tail and another dot on the back of the gills. The colour of scale edges and fins is light. The gill caps have serrated shapes. These fish have strong sharp teeth, arranged in rows on both jaws, on which there are small sharp teeth: the middle teeth are larger than the sides, and the teeth are also on the vorners. In Vietnam, the anabas testudineus are found in almost all regions. They live in freshwater environments such as rice fields, ponds, trenches, gutters, reservoirs, lakes, rivers, canals, etc. Since ancient times, Vietnamese people (both children and adults) in the countryside have eagerly waited for the first showers of the rainy seasons to catch the anabas testudineus jumping ashore. After several days of waiting, when the first rains of the seasons fall, the anabas testudineus dodge upstream to the shores and onto the fields. The reason the anabas testudineus climb to the fields in the rainy seasons is to exercise the instinct to maintain their species; the purpose of fish migration is to find a deeper water area to lay eggs. These fish choose to lay eggs at this time because of the available aquatic plants and algae in the rainy seasons. It means that the food is abundant, providing adequate nutrients and energy for the father and mother fish to carry out their reproductive instincts, and it is also a rich source of nutrition for the baby fish. Anabas testudineus do not have habits of keeping and raising their babies, so the food source in the rainy seasons is a vital factor. The gills of the anabas testudineus are very strong and have many sharp spines that help the fish move on land easily. A more important factor is that the fish also have accessory respiratory organs on the gills, so they can stay on land in wet conditions for a long time while the other fish cannot. That the anabas testudineus have joy and fun when the first showers of the rainy seasons pour down is the image of (2). The Vietnamese have used this image to refer to the joy of having a favorable opportunity.

(2) *cá rô*   *gặp*   *mưa rào*
     'anabas testudineus   meet   shower'
     [be happy to meet the right person in the right situation, satisfying one's desires]

Beside the images of fish, Vietnamese people also use the images of birds to express happiness through idioms. According to Vietnamese Dictionary (Phe, 2017), *chim* [birds] are "vertebrate egg-laying animals having heads with beaks, feathered bodies, and wings for flying (mostly)" (p. 225). They have unique digestive and respiratory systems that are highly responsive to flying activities. Many species of birds annually migrate to very distant places, and some others make shorter and more irregular flights. Birds are social animals that communicate with each other through calls and songs and engage in swarm activities such as cooperating in breeding, hunting, moving, and attacking their enemies. Most birds are socially monogamous, usually in mating seasons for a certain period of time. Parent birds usually lay and incubate their eggs in nests. Baby birds, after hatching, have extra time in the care of their parents. For Vietnamese people, birds are wild animals with free lives. If they are kept in cages (imprisoned), they will feel miserable and look forward to a free life outside. The image of a bird that is locked and suddenly released from the cage through its door is associated with (3). This idiom is paraphrasable as "someone feels extremely happy and free from the bondage". Chickens are also birds that have been domesticated for thousands of years. Despite being domesticated, they still carry a wild nature and enjoy free lives. The chickens, when escaping from the coops, are as happy as the birds out of the cages. Therefore, (3) and (4) are synonymous idioms.

(3) *chim*   *sổ*   *lồng*
     'bird   released from   cage'
     [feel extremely happy and free]

(4) *gà*   *sổng*   *chuồng*

'chicken released from coop'
[feel extremely happy and free]

Sáo [starlings] are "small birds that have black feathers and white spots on their wings often live in flocks" (Phe, 2017, p. 1119). Although starlings have small bodies, they are very sturdy. They have small flattened heads. The most prominent feature on a starling's face is its sharp hard bright yellow beak. Starlings have large clear eyes with yellow borders around and rather long necks compared to other birds. Thanks to this feature, when standing, they always stand with chests out and straight backs, which makes them look very haughty and arrogant. Starlings also have long strong wings, so they can fly in the sky for a long time without getting tired. In fact, they are Vietnamese people's favourite birds. For the Vietnamese, starlings are beautiful, intelligent, and always happy. That the starling leaps is the image expressing the joy in (5). Since starlings are always cheerful and active, they are also the comparative image of *vui* [happy] in (6).

(5) *nhảy* *chân* *sáo*
   'leap' leg   starling'
   [feel so happy and leap]

(6) *vui* *như* *sáo*
   'happy' as/like starling'
   [feel so happy]

Chuột [mice] are "rodents that have pointed snouts, oval ears, and elongated tails often destroy crops and can spread plague" (Phe, 2017, p. 258). In Vietnamese people's lives, mice are familiar animals. They forage for food and proliferate with human productive labor in the vast rice fields. Despite being animals that have many negative effects on human lives, mice are still very common. They live and hide in fields, bushes, warehouses, kitchens, or even farmers' houses. The Vietnamese in the past (and a few Vietnamese people today) often used jars to store rice or liquid lard for gradual cooking. Rice, especially sticky rice, and liquid lard are the mice's favourite foods. That a mouse suddenly falls into a jar of rice or liquide lard is considered a lucky thing. This image is associated with the idiomatic meanings of (7), (8), and (9). These three idioms refer to people who are very happy to have comfortable lives because of their sudden luck.

(7) *chuột* *sa*   *chĩnh gạo*
   'mouse' fall into rice jar'
   [be happy to have a comfortable life because of sudden luck]

(8) *chuột* *sa*   *hũ nếp*
   'mouse' fall into sticky rice jar'
   [be happy to have a comfortable life because of sudden luck]

(9) *chuột* *sa*   *lọ mỡ*
   'mouse' fall into liquid lard jar'
   [be happy to have a comfortable life because of sudden luck]

Thus, Vietnamese idioms of happiness can be associated with images of animals in different favorable conditions. To indicate the degree of happiness, the Vietnamese think of the reactions of animals such as fish, birds, mice, etc., when they are in the conditions they expect: birds are free, fish return to water, mice are in a place full of their favourite food, etc.

B. Happy Images From Human Body Parts

Human bodies have many different parts; however, only some parts such as hands, feet, faces, eyebrows, bellies, livers and intestines appear in Vietnamese idioms of happiness. The Vietnamese have a very special way of linguistic thinking when they see the belly as the brain or the head. *Mở cờ* 'unfurl a flag' [happy] in Phe (2017) is "a state of extreme joy and happiness" (p. 849). Instead of *mở cờ trong đầu* 'unfurl flag in head', Vietnamese people say *mở cờ trong bụng* 'unfurl flag in belly' [feel so happy in one's heart], and this image indicates the feeling of happiness in the heart. The meanings of (10) and (11) are the same because they are variants of each other.

(10) *mở*   *cờ*   *trong* *bụng*
    'unfurl' flag   in   belly'
    [feel so happy in one's heart]

(11) *bụng* *như* *mở*   *cờ*
    'belly' like   unfurl flag'
    [feel so happy in one's heart]

Nở [dilate] in Vietnamese Dictionary (Phe, 2017) is a verb having four meanings: (i) bloom in a spontaneous way (flower buds); (ii) break the eggshells to be out (hatch); (iii) give birth; (iv) increase the volume without increasing the mass (dilate). Vietnamese people use the verb *nở* [dilate] in idioms according to the fourth sense. In Vietnamese perception, when happy, some parts of the body will be bigger than usual. Therefore, the images of body parts dilating such as *mày* [eyebrows] and *mặt* [face] in (12) and (13), *gan* [liver] and *ruột* [intestine] in (14) and (15), and *khúc ruột* [a piece of intestine] in (16) indicate happiness and satisfaction.

(12) *nở*   *mày*   *nở*   *mặt*
    'dilate' eyebrows dilate face'

[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(13)   *nở*   *mặt*   *nở*   *mày*
‘dilate   face   dilate   eyebrows’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(14)   *nở*   *gan*   *nở*   *ruột*
‘dilate   liver   dilate   intestine’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(15)   *nở*   *ruột*   *nở*   *gan*
‘dilate   intestine   dilate   liver’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(16)   *nở*   *từng*   *khúc*   *ruột*
‘dilate   each   piece   intestine’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

In Vietnamese perception, the coolness in body parts also presents happiness. The meaning of *mát* [cool] in Vietnamese Dictionary (Phe, 2017) is "having a pleasant feeling or not being hot" (p. 807). The word *mát* [cool] could go with body parts such as *mày* [eyebrows] and *mặt* [face] in (17), *lòng* [intestine] and *dạ* [intestine] in (18), *lòng* [intestine] and *ruột* [intestine] in (19), and *gan* [liver] and *ruột* [intestine] in (20) to manifest happiness and satisfaction.

(17)   *mát*   *mày*   *mát*   *mặt*
‘cool   eyebrows   cool   face’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(18)   *mát*   *lòng*   *mát*   *dạ*
‘cool   intestine   cool   intestine’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(19)   *mát*   *lòng*   *mát*   *ruột*
‘cool   intestine   cool   intestine’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

(20)   *mát*   *gan*   *mát*   *ruột*
‘cool   liver   cool   intestine’
[feel extremely happy and satisfied]

As shown in (21), a happy person actively moves (dances) their hands in a bag when chatting joyfully. This image is used to convey happiness. The physical gesture in (21) appears to reveal the mood in a secretive manner. To express happiness and to share it with others, Vietnamese people also shake hands as indicated in (22). In addition to facial and hand expressions, smiling, as seen in (23), is crucial for the transmission and manifestation of joyful emotions. A person who is happy also shows the act of leaping (jumping up). This image is found in (24).

(21)   *múa*   *tay*   *trong*   *bị*
‘dance   hands   in   bag’
[move hands for happiness]

(22)   *tay*   *bắt*   *mặt*   *mừng*
‘hand   shake   face   happy’
[shake hands for joy]

(23)   *tươi*   *cười*   *hớn hở*
‘jocund   smile   merry’
[smile for joy]

(24)   *nhảy*   *cẫng lên*
‘jump   up’
[jump up for joy]

This section has so far given explanations of happy images of idioms associated with human body parts such as eyebrows, face, mouth, liver, intestine, hands, and legs. In Vietnamese perception, a happy person is someone who is able to move upward in mood by making the body parts dilate or cool, dancing the hands, and showing a very joyful face or smile.

C. Happy Images From Events and Festivals

In childhood memories, Vietnamese people, especially those born in the countryside a few decades ago, used to get excited when they looked forward to their mothers' return from markets. That mothers came from markets was a special event for the children. Waiting for their mothers in these cases meant that they looked forward to the moment of having the nosh bought at markets. In the past, because of difficult economic conditions, candies and many other delicious kinds of nosh were not as common as they are these days. At that time, what mothers usually bought for their children at countryside markets were *bánh gạo* [rice crackers], *kẹo bột* [powdered candies], *bánh đúc lạc* [soft rice cakes made of rice flour, peanuts, and lime water], *bánh đa* [rice wafers], etc. Although these kinds of food were simple and cheap, they still made the children so happy. The image that the children get excited when their mothers return from markets is the degree of *mừng* [happy] in (25).

(25)   mừng   như   mẹ   đi   chợ   về
       'happy   as   mother   go   market   back'
       [feel so happy]

The happy image in (26) derives from the event that a man graduated with a first-rank doctorate in a court feudal examination. A first-laureate graduate called *Trạng nguyên* (often known as *Trạng*) was awarded distinguished accolades and fame (Trao, 2009). The king greatly rewarded those who passed the court feudal examinations and appointed them as mandarins. The men graduating with first-rank doctorates in court feudal examinations were solemnly welcomed in their homeland. Their names were carved into stone stelas and etched in gilded lettering. In Vietnamese feudal dynasties, *Trạng nguyên* was the highest title in the high-level advisory board for the kings. Therefore, all these produced a life of ultimate abundance and bliss (Trao, 2009).

(26)   sướng   bằng   đỗ   Trạng
       'euphoric   as   graduate   first-rank doctorate'
       [feel extremely happy]

There are many events that take place during one's life, and getting valuable things is also a happy event. *Của* [treasures] in (27) are valuable objects belonging to someone. *Vàng* [gold] in (28) is a precious metal for jewellery. Vietnamese people frequently base their assessment of someone's wealth on how much gold they own. For the Vietnamese, gold has also long been seen as God's gift to those who are helpful and compassionate. Getting *của* [treasures] in (28) and catching *vàng* [gold] in (29) are the images that indicate one's feeling of happiness.

(27)   như   vớ được   của
       'as   get   treasures'
       [feel so happy]

(28)   như   bắt được   vàng
       'as   catch   gold'
       [feel so happy]

It can be said that Vietnam is a country of festivals. Festivals are cultural events organized by the community. A set of behaviors and gestures known as *lễ* [rites] are performed to honor the gods and represent the people's sincere but unfulfilled aspirations. *Hội* [reunions] that are cultural, religious and artistic activities of the community are derived from people's needs. In Vietnamese culture, festival activities are very typical cultural areas. Festivals are folk cultural activities that appear in almost all parts of the country. Many festivals that were born thousands of years ago are still maintained today. Festivals in Vietnam always focus on sacred characters who are worshiped as human gods or natural gods. It is the image that converges the most beautiful human qualities, helps people remember their roots, and aims to be good and build a happy life. Traditional festivals in Vietnam usually take place in spring, and a few in autumn, the two most beautiful seasons of the year, and at the same time when farmers have free time. Any festival that takes place attracts a lot of participants, and during the festival, there are many fun activities. Therefore, participating in the festivals means being in a joyful bustling atmosphere, and the image of festivals indicates the degree of *vui* [happy] in (29), (30), and (31).

(29)   vui   như   mở   hội
       'happy   as   open   festival'
       [be very happy]

(30)   vui   như   hội
       'happy   as   festival'
       [be very happy]

(31)   vui   như   trảy   hội
       'happy   as   go   festival'
       [be very happy]

Tết is a shortened name for Tết Nguyên Đán (Vietnamese traditional Lunar New Year), which is based on the Lunar calendar, a lunisolar calendar. The annual Lunar New Year typically lasts 7-8 days at the end of the preceding year and the first 7 days of the next year (from December 23 to the end of January 7 of the Lunar calendar). For Vietnamese people, Tết is the biggest traditional festival of the year. During Tết days, there are various customs practiced such as visiting people's houses, planting trees, and especially giving children and old people lucky money as a special wish for the new year. Tết is also a time for family get-togethers. At Tết, Vietnamese people try to prepare a lot of food, especially traditional dishes such as *bánh chưng* [sticky rice cakes], *giò lụa* [pork pies], *nem* [spring rolls], etc. Everything is available or abundant on these days. According to Vietnamese culture, if people lack something at Tết, they won't have it the rest of the year. On Tết days, people forget all the troubles of the past year and hope for a better upcoming year with success, good health, money, love, and friendship. Therefore, Tết implies happiness and abundance. It is the comparative image indicating the degree of *vui* [happy] in (32).

(32)   vui   như   Tết
       'happy   as   Tết'
       [feel so happy]

V. CONCLUSION

Idioms in Giang (2023) are considered unique linguistic units because they include cultural traits and national perspectives. All idioms of happiness in Vietnamese are associated with their own happy images. In Vietnamese perception, the happy images behind idioms come from animals, human body parts, events, and festivals. To indicate the degree of happiness, Vietnamese people think of the images that animals are in their favourite environments: fish return to water; anabas testudineus are in the first showers of the rainy seasons; birds and chickens are released from cages; mice suddenly fall into a jar of rice or liquid lard. In terms of human body parts, physiological reactions and behaviours such as facial expressions, leaping, and laughing are associated with happy images. It establishes a link between an internal mental state and the practical and/or psychological actions that take place in a joyful environment (Trao, 2009). The happy images from human body parts are also indicated via the lateral dilation of the face, eyebrows, intestines, or liver, and the coolness in the face, eyebrows, intestines, or liver. Happy events (mothers' return from markets and getting treasures or gold) and festivals, especially Tết, are comparative images showing the degree of happiness in the idioms. Thus, the meanings of idioms of happiness in Vietnamese perception are all associated with happy images from different joyful contexts. In other words, the happy images help to make the idiomatic meanings more transparent.

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Dang Nguyen Giang is a lecturer and currently the Deputy Dean of Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Labour and Social Affairs, Hanoi, Vietnam. He received his Bachelor's Degree in English from Thai Nguyen University, his Master's degree in English Linguistics from University of Languages and International Studies (ULIS) and his Ph.D. in English Linguistics from Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU-HN). His research interests include Idioms in English and Vietnamese, Contrastive Linguistics and English Language Teaching.

Ho Ngoc Trung, Ph.D. and Associate Professor, is a dedicated educator and researcher in English linguistics. He currently serves as Dean of Faculty of English, Hanoi Open University, and as a member of Linguistic Society of Vietnam. He is also an Editor of the Journal of Language & Life. He has presented at many professional conferences and the author/co-author of five books (monographs, coursebooks and dictionaries) and numerous articles. His major research interests include Discourse Analysis, Translation and English Teaching and Learning.

Hoang Tuyet Minh earned her Ph.D. degree in Linguistics from Institute of Linguistics in Vietnam in 2008. She is currently an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam. She has published over 60 articles, 7 books and textbooks related to syntactic and semantic features of relational verbs, comparative rhetoric, and prototypes of high-speed movement in English and Vietnamese. Previously, she was a member of Five Open Universities (OU5) of Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU). She is now serving as an Editor of the Journal of Language & Life and Journal of Science, Hanoi Open University.

The Historical Development of Writing Instruction in an EFL Context: The Effect of Culture, Religion, Experience, and Globalization

Nafilah M. Aloairdhi

Department of English Language and Translation, College of Arabic Language and Social Studies, Qassim University, Buraydah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ahmad I Alhojailan[*]

Department of English Language and Translation, College of Arabic Language and Social Studies, Qassim University, Buraydah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Due to the growing importance of English as a foreign language (EFL) writing and its teaching, this study aims to understand how EFL writing instruction has developed in Saudi Arabia. Aside from its historical development, this study also aims to investigate features and practices associated with teaching EFL writing over time using two qualitative methods: 1) semi-structured interviews with 11 expert educators from Saudi Arabia, and 2) Qualitative Content Analysis of the pre-existing body of content related to teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia. Clarke and Braun's reflexive thematic analysis using MAXQDA software was used to analyse the interviews, while Roller and Lavrakas' Total Quality Framework using Excel Worksheets was used to analyse the qualitative content. It was found that teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia has undergone three periods of historical development, each with their own various features and practices. The study can contribute to existing research on EFL writing instruction in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular. Moreover, the study provides a focus for evaluating the difference between actual teaching and learning practices, and the outcomes expected from the EFL textbooks. This can help teachers and policy makers in implementing and designing more useful EFL learning approaches.

Index Terms—writing, writing practices, teaching writing, writing instruction, teacher education

I. INTRODUCTION

While the four skills of a language are equally essential, the writing skill holds more importance for future success in academic fields and the workplace compared to the other skills (Forbes, 2019; Yu et al., 2023). This is because writing is considered one of the most important tools to assess learners' performance in the academic disciplines (Mohammad & Hazarika, 2016). Additionally, students are asked to write texts for the purpose of supporting and enhancing their knowledge and understanding of themselves, their relationships, and their worlds (Graham & Perin, 2007). Writing exercises also help students' performance on high-stakes achievement examinations in writing and other subject areas (Graham & Hebert, 2011).

The importance of English as a foreign language (EFL) writing has attracted a great deal of interest in its different aspects, and many studies have stressed the importance of English writing (e.g., Li & Deng, 2021; Mohammad & Hazarika, 2016; Nejad et al., 2016; Sun & Lan, 2023). In Saudi Arabia, such studies have investigated English writing instructors' views (e.g., Alkubaidi, 2019), the most frequent EFL writing errors (e.g., Khatter, 2019), and the different perceptions toward EFL writing (e.g., Alhojailan, 2021).

Although considerable research has been devoted to discussing EFL in general and different aspects of EFL writing in particular, less attention has been paid to the evolution and development of EFL writing, and teaching practices used to teach it at the school level in EFL context (e.g., Saudi Arabia) (Geng et al., 2022). In fact, Alsowat (2017) stated that 73.3% of the studies investigating teaching EFL skills in Saudi Arabia were at the university level, indicating a limited interest in research at the school level. To the best of our knowledge, no study has been conducted to investigate the historical development and practices of teaching of EFL writing in Saudi Arabia.

To fill this gap, our study takes a chronological approach, starting from the establishment of EFL writing instruction in Saudi Arabia, following its evolutionary periods (stages) in school English textbooks, and noting their present development. Historical inquiry can help 'identify what issues have been discussed, what questions have been posed, what solutions have been devised, and what consequences have come of those solutions—and why…understand the present and consider directions for the future' (Matsuda, 2005, pp. 33-34). Thus, examining the development of EFL writing can help language planners to prepare future programs for the teaching of writing in Saudi Arabia.

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[*] Corresponding Author. Email: a.alhojailan@qu.edu.sa

This study attempts to answer the following questions:
- What different periods has teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia undergone?
- What are the features of teaching EFL writing practices in these evolutionary periods?

II. Literature Review

A. The History of Teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia

While various researchers have provided different dates for when EFL began and developed in Saudi Arabia, Alshahrani (2016) argued that the exact date when EFL was introduced to the Saudi educational system is still unknown. After reviewing the relevant literature, he pointed out that many dates have been suggested as the beginning of teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia. These include 1924, the year when the General Directorate of Education was established; or before 1932, when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia emerged; or in 1936, 1950, or 1958. Finally, Alshahrani (2016) assumes that "English was introduced for the first time in Saudi Arabia in the late 1920s", a few years before oil was discovered in the country (p. 43).

The most recent attempt in articulating the history of EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia is that of Al-Hoorie and his colleagues (2021). They pointed out that EFL was taught in intermediate and secondary schools from 1945 to 1958. Students at that time were taught EFL subjects from international publishers. First grade textbook content focused on vocabulary, spelling, sentence completion, and orthography, while second grade textbooks focused on spelling, orthography, simple grammatical rules, composition, and short stories. The textbooks for the third grade included complex grammar, punctuation, direct and indirect sentences, and letter writing, and those for the fourth grade had more writing topics, complex grammatical rules, and short essays. Finally, fifth grade textbooks focused on the expansion of English-English vocabulary usage, writing scientific articles, short literary stories, and trading letters.

The second historical development took place between 1959 and 1969, when EFL was taught in the intermediate stage from international publishers. During this stage, teaching EFL to the first grade focused on vocabulary memorisation, reading, grammar, and spelling; teaching EFL to the second grade focused on reading, writing, simple composition, and writing letters; and teaching EFL to the third grade focused on grammar and writing. As for secondary schools during the same period (1959-1969), the first grade textbooks focused on grammar and summary writing of long and short stories; the second grade textbooks focused on complex grammatical structures, comprehension, and composition; and the third grade textbooks focused on teaching students to write long answers and essays, conversation, dialogue completion, reading, and summarising stories.

The third historical development occurred from 1972 through 1988. For the intermediate stage, students were taught *Saudi Arabian Schools' English* from international publishers. The textbooks consisted of 24 units over two semesters, with each unit consisting of comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and spelling, with composition being written in the workbook. For the secondary schools, students in all three grades were taught *Saudi Arabian Schools' English* from international publishers. The content was similar to the intermediate stage content, except that the language used was more advanced and encouraged further reading.

The last period was from 1989 to 2001. Before this period, in 1987, a project to introduce new curriculum was piloted, and at the end of the same year, the Ministry of Education (MOE) approved the final version of students' textbooks and teachers' materials. Gradually, the textbooks were taught, beginning in the first grade of the intermediate stage in 1990.

The last update from the MOE in teaching EFL was its decision to contract only the McGraw Hill series to be taught at all educational stages (Saudi Press Agency, 2020).

B. Features of EFL Textbooks Taught in Saudi Arabia

Numerous studies have been conducted to identify different features of EFL textbooks used in Saudi Arabia (e.g., Al-Seghayer, 2011). These investigations included, for example, the way the textbooks were presented, the textbooks' characters, and the different cultures included. Given that Islamic and Saudi cultures are rooted in the Saudi educational system, it was found that textbooks used to teach EFL, developed either locally or by foreign companies, should be related to Islamic teachings and reflect Saudi culture (Alhojailan, 2015).

Researching various features of *English for Saudi Arabia* textbooks, Al-Seghayer (2011) argued that the textbooks were designed without analysing students' needs. Thus, the textbooks for each stage do not prepare students to advance to the next stage. Moreover, the textbooks were not well-organised, and did not introduce English gradually, from simple to more complex. Similarly, he noted that the topics were not appropriate to students' ages, and not related to their interests or goals. He also observed that the textbooks emphasised imparting knowledge, rather than teaching skills. This means that the textbooks gave information without providing students with ample opportunities to practice what they learned. Regarding the exercises included, he commented that the textbooks 'contain mechanical exercises that outweigh the number of meaningful, interesting, contextualised, and involved exercises that are communicative in nature' (p. 49). Additionally, the exercises were not suitable for the allotted time and students' level.

C. Practices of Teaching/Learning EFL Writing in Saudi Arabia

(a). Saudi Educators' Practices When Teaching EFL Writing

Saudi educators have different practices when teaching EFL writing. These practices are 'guided and shaped by the wider social and institutional cultures within which the process of EFL instruction operates' (Al-Seghayer, 2017, p. 34). Saba (2014), for example, showed that Saudi EFL writing teachers introduce their students to pre-constructed models of guided composition. In fact, they require students to memorise a limited number of isolated pieces of writing for their tests. Therefore, teachers do not train their students to be engaged in EFL writing as a process, with the steps of planning, composing, and revising, and do not provide students with opportunities to think critically and use their own voice in their writing.

(b). Saudi Students' Practices When Learning EFL Writing

Al-Seghayer (2011) identified some of the Saudi students' general practices when learning EFL writing. First, some students are uncomfortable expressing their own ideas as they might differ from their class partners' ideas. Additionally, they do not pay serious attention to learning EFL as it is not directly related to their needs. Students attend EFL sessions passively, assimilating their teacher's explanations, and work through the textbook. Moreover, Saudi EFL students rely heavily on rote learning and memorisation to write their compositions in writing examinations. This latter view is echoed by Alkubaidi (2014), who stated that "[s]tudents are given paragraphs to memorize without sometimes understanding the whole meanings or indeed the way in which sentences are formed" (p. 83). In the same vein, Alrashidi and Phan (2015) said Saudi EFL students use memorisation as a primary strategy to learn EFL.

Saudi EFL students can be affected by certain social beliefs related to how people interact with their teachers and older adults in general, and some teaching approaches (e.g., product-oriented approach). For example, Alkubaidi (2019) attributed Saudi EFL students' difficulties in developing their EFL writing to their reliance on their teachers as the sole source of knowledge.

III. METHODOLOGY

Methods
Two methods based on the qualitative approach were used to answer the research questions: semi-structured interviews, and a qualitative content analysis of the EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia.

A. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with 11 Saudi expert educators were conducted to investigate how EFL writing has developed in Saudi Arabia.

The Participants. We used the purposive sampling technique to select our participants, mainly focusing on two main attributes: participants' years of experience, and their students' level (i.e., elementary, intermediate, or secondary). We selected 11 participants, three were university professors (two males and one female), two were educational supervisors (one male and one female), two were secondary-school teachers (one male and one female), two were intermediate-school teachers (one male and one female), and two were elementary-school teachers (one male and one female). Participants were given pseudonyms to maintain their anonymity.

The Interview Questions. On the continuum of inductive and deductive orientations, our research is located in the middle, leaning more towards induction. Thus, our interview questions were not largely based on the literature, though some were derived indirectly from our readings and interpretations, while others were based on our own experience. This is because the research is descriptive and interpretive in nature, and hence does not require any theory or model as a basis. Besides, semi-structured interviews allowed us to ask more questions if needed. We had 20 interview questions, some discussing the stages of EFL writing development, while the majority discussed the features of teaching EFL writing during the developmental stages.

Data Analysis. Under Braun and Clarke's (2006) concept of thematic analysis, we made use of the reflexive thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019b) to analyse our data, which aims to 'identify patterns of meaning across a dataset that provide an answer to the research question being addressed. Patterns are identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision' (para. 10). The MAXQDA software was used to help us better organise and categorise the data.

To follow the reflexive approach of thematic analysis, we familiarised ourselves with data by transcribing, reading, and rereading them, after which the data were coded, and potential themes generated. Codes were any piece of data that gave a meaningful and independent idea, while themes were any group of codes that had shared aspects of meaning or ideas. When there were levels of abstraction, we assigned one-idea pieces of data as sub-codes, and groups of codes sharing a higher meaning as sub-themes. Figure 1 illustrates this process for the following interview excerpt using visual tools, the MAXMaps option in MAXQDA:

(Excerpt 1):

> Introducing EFL writing was direct. I remember when I was in the third stage of intermediate school in 1406 AH (1986), when MOE developed our final exams, the questions were direct: 'Write about …' followed by guided words. No analyzing. No summarizing. (Mr. Turki, Interview Transcript, p. 64)
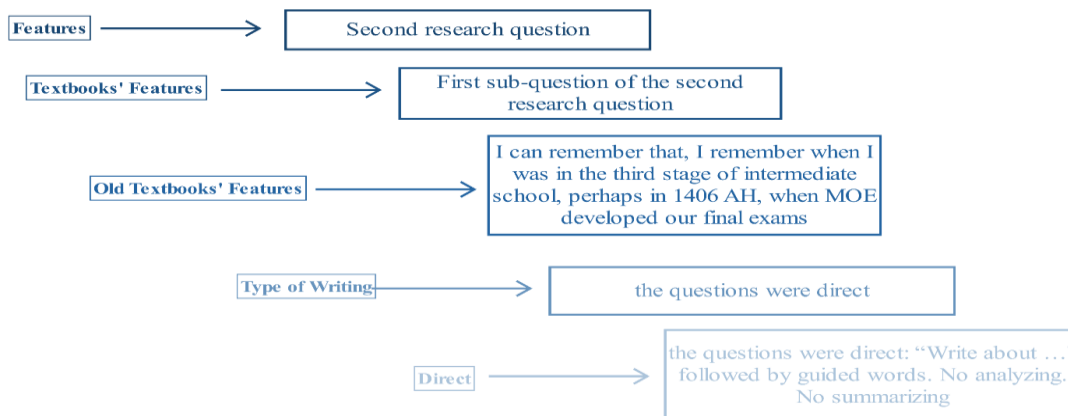
Figure 1. Reflexive Thematic Analysis of One Excerpt

Trustworthiness. For trustworthiness, we followed Nowell et al.'s (2017) outline as a practical process to meet Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria in thematic analysis.

B. Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

The Sample. The sample to be analysed was the pre-existing body of content related to EFL writing instruction in Saudi Arabia that we had access to, which consisted of 97 EFL books taught in the country: 49 textbooks taught in secondary school, 29 textbooks taught in intermediate school, and 19 textbooks taught in elementary school.

Data Analysis. For the QCA, we followed Roller and Lavrakas' (2015) two-phase, eight-step process based on the definition that QCA is 'the systematic reduction (i.e., condensation) of content, analyzed with special attention on the context in which the data were created, to identify themes and extract meaningful interpretations' (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015, p. 230). We analysed a sample of EFL textbooks taught in Saudi Arabia at all educational stages. The primary purpose was to examine how the teaching of EFL writing has developed in the country. More specifically, it aimed to follow the periods of change that teaching EFL writing has undergone, and the distinct features of each period.

Applying Total Quality Framework to QCA. To ensure trustworthiness, we followed Roller and Lavrakas' (2015) framework that associates all phases and steps of QCA with quality criteria, which is called the total quality framework (TQF).

IV. RESULTS

A. Evolutionary Periods of Teaching EFL Writing

(a). Emergence of Teaching EFL Writing

For the QCA, the oldest periods we could examine regarding teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia were 2004, 1980, and 1982, for the elementary, intermediate, and secondary stages, respectively.

(b). Historical Development of Teaching EFL Writing

Teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia went through different periods. For the elementary stage, it went through three periods of historical development: unknown period when teaching EFL was introduced at the elementary stage, and later removed; the second period from 2004 to 2014, when the EFL textbooks were introduced by the Saudi MOE; and a third period from 2008 to the present, when the EFL textbooks were introduced by international companies (e.g., MM Publications) under the supervision of the MOE, and later unified to be produced exclusively by McGraw Hill.

The intermediate and secondary stages also went through three periods of historical development. The first period covered the 1970s and 1980s, during which EFL textbooks were produced by international companies. The second period covered the years from the 1990s to 2014, when the EFL textbooks were introduced by the Saudi MOE. The third period lasted from 2008 until the present, when the EFL textbooks were produced by international companies under the supervision of MOE, and later unified to be produced by McGraw Hill only.

Some periods saw an overlap in introducing EFL textbooks. This meant that while piloting some material from international companies, there were some schools still studying MOE textbooks.

B. Features of Teaching/Learning EFL Writing

In this paper, we considered features as the characteristics that shape the learning process or educators' practices in EFL writing instruction. Two main types of features appear when teaching/learning EFL writing in Saudi Arabia: features adopted in the process of teaching EFL writing and related to how EFL textbooks addressed writing in different periods of time, and features adopted in the practices of supervisors, teachers, and students while teaching/learning EFL writing.

(a). Features of Teaching EFL Writing

Data from this section included three themes: features of the first period's textbooks (1970s-1980s), features of the second period's textbooks (1990s-2014), and finally, features of the third period's textbooks (2008-present). It also included seven subthemes: presentation, which included details about how writing sections were presented; topics that students were required to write about; ideas, which included information about the nature of the ideas included in the textbooks, differing from topics in that they could be more latent; the type of writing, which provided information about what types of writing were required in the textbooks; skills that should be acquired by students; culture, in which we tried to discuss what cultures were introduced to the students; and others, which included any other important information or finding related to the features that could not be coded under any other subtheme.

As for the codes and sub-codes, their number under each subtheme was different based on the density of content our participants provided, and the thickness of our QCA. For presentation, two basic codes emerged: pictures, which included whether pictures were provided in the textbooks and whether they were drawings or photographs; and colours, which indicated whether the books were printed in colour or not. This subtheme aimed to give a brief account of the textbooks' presentation.

The second subtheme was topics. Seven codes emerged from topics: relevance, which included a set of topics related to real life; generality, which included general topics with no clear features; commonness, which included topics fixed and repeated in different stages; recency, which included topics that could be considered recent and up-to-date; appropriateness, which included topics that were appropriate to the students' level and current conditions; necessity, which included topics necessary to students' needs in general, and their future needs in particular; and culturally linked topics, which were related to Islamic, Arabic, or Saudi culture.

The third subtheme was ideas. Six codes emerged: a focus on communication, where the ideas concentrated on communicative purposes; consideration of students, where the ideas viewed students as central and the priority; challenge, in which the ideas required students to make an effort to understand them; value-related ideas, where the ideas were related to values the students should have; openness, where the ideas were more open than previously; and biases, where hidden ideas or the language used in them was biased, specifically gender-biased.

The fourth subtheme was the type of writing, with two basic codes: direct writing and indirect writing. Direct writing included all types of questions in which details were given to students and they were required to write. It included, for example, tracing, copying, handwriting, fill-in exercises, controlled practice (in which students followed a model to write their own pieces), and free writing (in response to direct questions about the topic of the lesson or module, with no prior preparation). Indirect writing included types of writing where students could prepare before the writing task. Preparation could be done by brainstorming, filling in a web, completing a mind map, following the details in specific pictures, doing a survey, or completing a questionnaire—the basic criterion in this code was that the students were prepared before writing.

The fifth subtheme was the skills students were expected to acquire. This subtheme included five codes. Writing-related skills included all the skills students were expected to acquire in order to write. These were sub-coded into basic language skills, analytical skills, genre-based skills, and quality-related skills. Basic language skills included the basic skills students needed in order to write, such as capitalization, punctuation, word order, coherence, cohesion, indentation, spelling, abbreviations, symbols, structure, and paragraphing. Analytical skills included all the skills students needed to analyse different types of writing, including identifying the purpose, audience, and stylistic features of a specific text, and analysing its register, style, organisation, and formality. Genre-based skills included all the genres students were expected to acquire, such as writing formal letters, semi-formal letters, informal letters, emails, invitations, job applications, curricula vitae, recipes, instructions, notes, SMS messages, biographies, autobiographies, book reviews, advertisements, reports, stories, summaries, and others. Finally, quality-related skills included the skills students needed to write works of high quality, such as self-correction, peer review, and proofreading.

The second code was collaborative work skills that students needed for working in pairs or groups. The third code was communication skills that students needed to communicate effectively. The fourth code, thinking skills, included the skills of critical thinking, creative thinking, and learner independence. The fifth code was the technological skills that students need to be always updated and to integrate their studies with technology.

The next subtheme of the features of teaching EFL writing was culture. By culture, we tried to describe what cultures were addressed in the textbooks in different periods of time. Five facets of culture were analysed: the names that were used; the customs that were discussed; the clothes that were shown; the thoughts that were adopted; and the events that were introduced. We also included some findings about cultural openness, which refers to attempts to normalise communications and relationships between individuals from different cultures.

Finally, the last subtheme was others, comprising all other important information that did not fit elsewhere.

Figures 2, 3, and 4 provide timelines for the historical development of EFL writing instructions with the particular features of each era.

Figure 2. Historical Development of EFL Writing Instruction in the Elementary Stage

Figure 3. Historical Development of EFL Writing Instruction in the Intermediate Stage
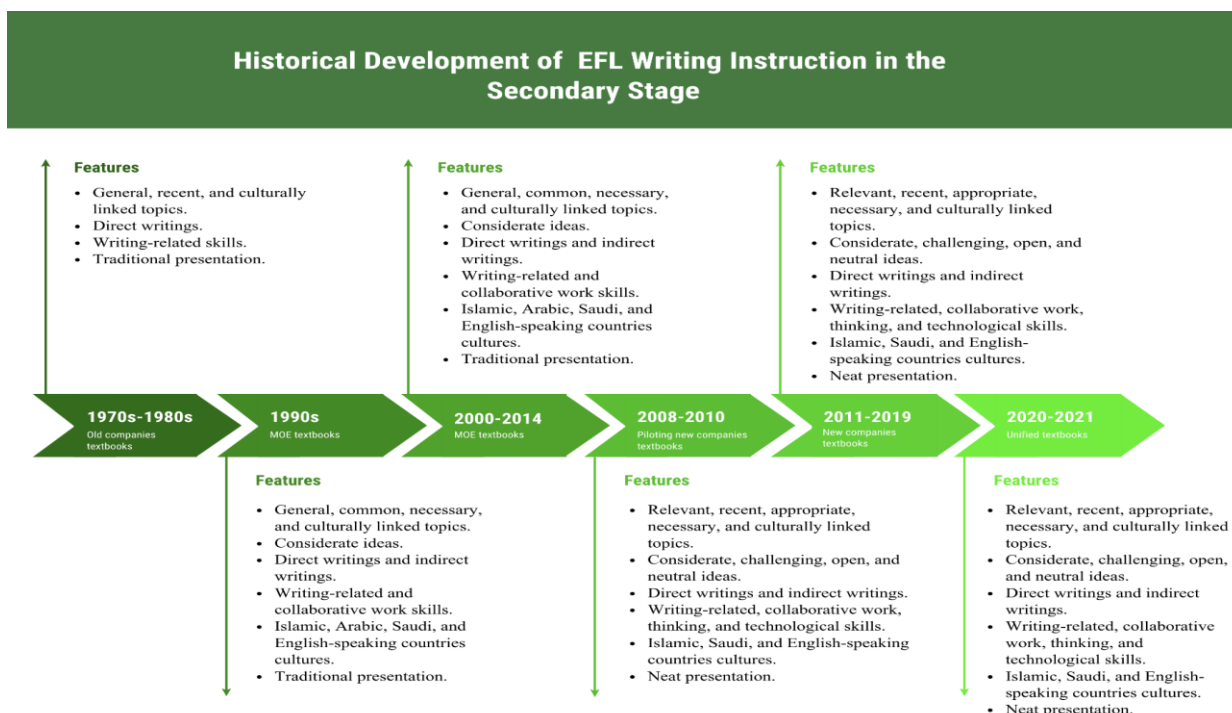
Figure 4. Historical Development of EFL Writing Instruction in the Secondary Stage

(b). Features of Practices Used in Teaching/Learning EFL Writing

Features of Supervisors' Practices. While there were many differences in how supervisors interacted with teachers, three codes emerged from the available data. These showed that supervisors' practices were flexible, compulsory, and when comparing female and male supervisors, females were more rigorous in their supervision.

Features of Teachers' Practices. While there were many differences in the way teachers teach EFL writing, two subthemes emerged from the available data: positive features, which included two codes—considerate and serious; and negative features, which included four codes—ineffective, traditional, neglectful, and underestimating the value of assessment.

For the positive features, teachers were considerate in that they paid conscious attention to what their students needed, wanted, and were able to do, encouraging them—for example, giving students complete responsibility in working on and conducting searches about their topics, especially in the secondary stage. Further, teachers were serious about teaching EFL writing. They taught in a thoughtful way, and made great effort to present the topic.

Regarding negative features, some practices were ineffective. These practices did not take all aspects of teaching EFL writing into consideration, and did not improve students' writing. Other practices adopted traditional methods and strategies to teach EFL writing. The third negative feature of teachers' practices was underestimating the value of assessment. This was done in different ways, as when teachers considered spelling to be the only criterion when correcting students' compositions, or not having clear guidelines or a rubric when evaluating student work. The last feature of teachers' practices was that some of them neglected writing skills. They neglected EFL writing in various ways, including by over-focusing on other skills, such as grammar.

Features of Students' Practices. In brief, students were different in the way they learned EFL writing. However, two subthemes—positive versus negative features—emerged from the available data, with one positive code (passionate), and three negative codes (weak skills, ignoring EFL writing, and worrying).

V. DISCUSSION

A. Historical Development of Teaching EFL Writing

The historical development of EFL writing instruction for the intermediate and secondary stages went through three distinct periods, while the elementary stage of instruction went through two periods. The first period was during the 1970s and 1980s, with textbooks produced by international publishers for the intermediate and secondary stages, as affirmed by Al-Hoorie et al. (2021). The use and adaptation of international textbooks at this time can be explained by the likely absence of Saudi expert educators to create Saudi textbooks.

The second identified period of the historical development covered the years from the 1990s until 2014, with textbooks produced by the Saudi MOE. This finding supports the work of Al-Hoorie et al. (2021) and Al-Seghayer (2011). Producing Saudi EFL textbooks can be attributed to a number of reasons, including the fact that the Saudi MOE was able at that time, with many experts, to produce national EFL textbooks. Moreover, replacing international

textbooks with Saudi ones could make EFL teaching more relatable to both Islamic and Saudi cultures. Producing Saudi textbooks written by Saudi experts might have been lower in cost as well, compared to signing with international publishers to adapt different textbooks, and reproducing them for Saudi students. Similarly, the MOE might have desired to be autonomous, rather than depending on external companies to prepare its materials.

The third period covered the years from 2008 until the present, with textbooks produced by international publishers, later limiting those publishers to make McGraw Hill the exclusive company producing EFL textbooks in Saudi Arabia since 2020. One possible explanation to introduce EFL textbooks produced by international publishers is that previous Saudi textbooks were not particularly helpful or adequate for teachers and students. Simultaneously, it is important to adopt recent and up-to-date textbooks that can meet students' needs and interests, while also understanding that globalisation has made the world into a small village. The reason to exclusively contract McGraw Hill to publish textbooks in Saudi Arabia could be because signing with only one company could save more time, money, and energy, than signing with three or more companies. It is further possible that the MOE considered it necessary for all students in Saudi Arabia to learn from the same books to achieve educational justice or related goals.

B. Features of Teaching EFL Writing in the First Period (1970s-1980s)

The textbooks in this period were presented traditionally with no pictures or colours. This can be explained by the limited access to the different multimedia available on the Internet at that time, as well as the little importance given to such topics, and a lack of research during that time discussing the benefits of including multimedia in education.

Moreover, participants reported that the topics and ideas were challenging, which could be due to their direct adaptation from foreign countries, without adequate alignment with Saudi culture or students' interests. Additionally, one can say that the textbooks did not consider students as foreign language learners, and that teaching English systematically was still in its infancy in Saudi Arabia.

For the intermediate stage, students were taught the basics and simple ideas. This is expected given that students were recently introduced to EFL. Furthermore, students were only asked to write directly. This finding supports the claim that teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia was taught using product-based approaches. A possible explanation is that teaching EFL writing was neglected at that time, with the focus on grammar and reading. Another possible explanation is that Saudi people were focusing on communication in English, as their necessity may have been speaking and understanding what others say (e.g., pilgrims and foreign employees who do not know Arabic and use English for communication).

As for the secondary stage, students were required to write about general, relatively recent, and culturally linked topics. Asking students to write about general topics, such as writing about pollution, weekend activities, or a famous person, seems inevitable. It can be that textbooks wanted students to be able to discuss general topics in English. Some topics were considered relatively recent for Saudi people living in a state that was building its modern life. This can be explained by the idea that such topics were familiar to people in the UK, where the textbooks came from, even if they were nor familiar to Saudi students. Some other topics were culturally linked to either Islamic or Saudi cultures, which was expected since one of the objectives of teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia was for students to be able to introduce Islamic culture. Additionally, students were introduced to different types of skills to acquire them, which can be attributed to the desire to consider students' level as they were preparing to enter higher education.

C. Features of Teaching EFL Writing in the Second Period (1990s-2014)

The findings about this period revealed several facets regarding EFL writing instruction. First, the textbooks included both real and printed pictures, and they were in colour. This was possibly an attempt to overcome the inadequacies of the previous period's textbooks. Moreover, access to the Internet and the availability of good quality printing houses could have helped in developing these textbooks.

Second, the topics were found to be general, culturally linked, common, and irrelevant. There are a number of possible explanations for this finding. The topics students were asked to write about were limited, common, and repeated in different stages. This is consistent with Al-Seghayer's (2011) finding that MOE textbooks did not prepare students to advance to the next level. While it is difficult to explain this finding, it could be related to the lack of topics expected to be interesting to students, as there was no analysis of their needs. Moreover, the topics were not related to students' real life. This finding can be explained by the fact that teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia was based on traditional methods and rote learning. The textbooks were designed by Saudi experts, and their philosophies likely affected their design. It can be that they were not interested in the different communicative aspects of language and saw it as a merely grammar and vocabulary.

Moreover, students were provided with different types of writing—hand-writing, controlled practices, and direct questions. One possible explanation for this is that the textbooks were printed in 1998 or 1999, and introduced before EFL was taught at the elementary stage. Therefore, it can be said that these textbooks targeted students who were recently introduced to EFL, not students who had been learning EFL for three years.

Further, students in this period were not introduced to several necessary skills, including different strategies to help them enhance their writing ability. The participants indicated that the quantity of writing was the most important aspect of evaluation, with the quality of writing being neglected. This can be expected as teaching EFL writing was based on product-based approaches. Second, students were not encouraged to be independent and use critical thinking. They

were simply parroting content as passive members. In this sense, students lacked several opportunities to practice EFL. Given that respecting older adults, such as teachers, and honouring their experience, is a common Saudi value, for students to question everything or contradict their teachers' views could be seen as a lack of respect to teachers, rather than having an independent personality or critical thinking. In a similar vein, traditional teaching methods and teacher-centred classrooms may contribute to such practices. At the same time, it is possible that the students themselves were not interested in EFL writing, and hence were satisfied with traditional methods and rote learning.

Another finding was the dominance of Arabic and Islamic cultures, with a relative absence of any international perspective. In our own view, the most compelling explanation for this is that these textbooks were introduced as a replacement of earlier books that did not meet students' needs and interests. Hence, the new textbooks intentionally emphasised Islamic and Saudi cultures, while avoiding Western culture.

For some specific features of this period, students in both the intermediate and secondary stages were required to write directly and indirectly. This is inconsistent with Ezza (2010) and Al-Seghayer (2017), who argued that teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia is product-oriented. This discrepancy may be due to different definitions, and considerations given to different approaches for teaching EFL writing. Our definition of indirect writing was not limited to being preceded by brainstorming or a specific activity, but included any type of preparation assisting students to consider how to write their passages.

D. Features of Teaching EFL Writing in the Third Period (2008-Present)

The findings of this period revealed diverse aspects of EFL writing instruction. First, the textbooks were in colour, had a neat and attractive look with pictures attached to writing sections. One possible explanation for the inclusion of high-quality pictures is that they are considered an effective and practical medium, with a positive effect on students' learning. Given that the students employing these books were used to advanced technology and educational tools, the textbook designers possibly thought they would be valuable to students' EFL learning experience.

Second, the ideas of this era were open, considerate, and value-related. For ideas being more open than before, this may be due to how Saudi people have changed, and are more open to the external world. It can be further attributed to the fact that these textbooks were produced by foreign companies, with their own principles and attitudes. Additionally, the ideas were value-related. Teachers were required to link their instruction with various values; the textbooks attempted to broaden students' views, and help them think of different values in English. Many of these values were also similar to Islamic teachings, and could hence be seen as another way to strengthen students' Islamic culture.

Third, students were expected to have writing-related skills, collaborative work skills, effective communication skills, critical thinking, self-reliance, and technological skills. It is possible that students were introduced to different writing skills to enhance their writing ability, as Alhojailan (2015) stated that Saudi students had low scores in EFL writing. It can also be argued that students were taught EFL writing based on genre approaches, since students were introduced to different features of written works, including style, content, organization, tenses, formality, register, and the communication functions of a text. Moreover, quality of writing was emphasised through several means. These textbooks dealt with EFL writing differently, and did not teach writing using only one method or approach. As indicated in the QCA, different approaches and activities were integrated to teach EFL writing, with attempts to familiarise students with EFL writing, its conventions, and responsibilities.

As for collaborative work skills, it is possible that they were included to emphasise group work and collaborative writing. According to recent research (e.g., Pham, 2021), collaborative writing has an extremely positive effect on students' writing fluency. Moreover, effective communication skills were introduced, and this can be attributed to the textbooks' emphasis on communication and the use of language to communicate effectively. Students were further introduced to critical thinking and self-reliance. The introduction of such skills is important as students need them to be able to learn, solve problems, and be independent. Finally, technological skills were expected to be acquired. With the rapid growth of technology and its use in learning, it seems necessary to provide students with basic technological skills. This finding is in line with Al-Hoorie et al. (2021), who suggest that recent EFL textbooks mark a real integration of technology into EFL classrooms.

Finally, both Saudi and English-speaking countries' cultures were included, and cultural openness was normalised. This finding is consistent with Al-Hoorie et al. (2021). Including both cultures may be considered a reaction to the second period's textbooks being overloaded with Saudi culture. Another explanation is that one of the aims of recent textbooks is to enhance students' communication skills, to encourage students to communicate not only in their local environments, but also with people from different cultures. The designers could also be aware of the important role a foreign culture plays in the process of learning a foreign language; for instance, Alamri (2019) argued that learning a language separately from its culture can have negative effects on students' achievements.

Our analysis also found some additional aspects of teaching EFL writing. For example, in some textbooks for higher grades, such as *Flying High for Saudi Arabia 6* (Secondary Stage, no. 14, 2009), students were introduced to some deeper notions in EFL writing. One chapter in the textbook, for example, was entitled, 'Using Language Skills,' which included some details about learning different EFL skills. For example, in discussing writing (pp. 72-73), the book tried to familiarise students with tone of voice and levels of formality. Students were also asked to share their own learning tips regarding learning to write. These sections can be referred to as metawriting, suggesting that teaching EFL writing has developed and begun to follow more recent approaches to teach writing.

E. Features of Saudi Educators' Practices in Teaching EFL Writing

Male supervisors were found to be flexible, while female ones found to be more rigorous. However, it must be noted that how these terms are defined is important. The participant who made this statement, Mr. Turki, perhaps has different interpretations. We do not consider flexibility to mean neglecting essential components of any process. For instance, it cannot be termed flexible when some male supervisors are satisfied with materials prepared by one teacher and copied by others. As for female supervisors being more rigorous, they wanted every teacher to prepare her lesson by herself; this definition is also relative. Moreover, with a limited number of participants and pure qualitative design, caution must be applied, as these findings might not reflect the whole picture of Saudi male and female supervisors' practices and were based on what our participant revealed.

Another practice used by Saudi supervisors was requiring teachers to link all lessons to a religious value or aim. Although participants had different points of view regarding this topic, as some of them supported such practices while others did not, it seems difficult to link every lesson, particularly abstract language lessons such as grammar. And yet, this practice was considered compulsory, with supervisors required to assess teachers on such criteria. As noted before, as the national religion, Islam is rooted in the Saudi educational system.

Our data found teachers to be considerate of their students' needs and interests, providing them with encouragement, which is in contrast to the findings of Al-Seghayer (2017) and Alrashidi and Phan (2015). This inconsistency can be explained in the diversity of practices used by teachers in Saudi Arabia. Another inconsistency is our finding of teachers to be serious in teaching EFL writing and providing their students with effective feedback, which is different from Khan (2011), who assumed that teachers do not follow up on what their students have written. This discrepancy can be attributed to how different researchers define 'feedback'. Al-Seghayer (2017) argued that teachers neglect student-teacher conferences and peer-reviews, instead focusing on written feedback. This view of different types of feedback may be able to partly explain inconsistencies in the research on this issue.

Other features of Saudi EFL writing teachers' practices were ineffective, traditional, underestimated the value of assessment, and neglected EFL writing. Ineffective practices included teachers asking their students to memorise passages to write in their EFL examinations, which affirms the finding by Al-Seghayer (2011) and Saba (2014). Asking students to memorise indicates a weakness in the process of teaching EFL in Saudi Arabia. It could also indicate teachers' lack of confidence in their students' writing ability, and hence providing them with prewritten passages to make sure they can pass their course. On the other hand, it could be that some teachers neglected writing, and preferred their students to focus on grammar, for example. Teachers should know, however, that writing and grammar are different subjects (Kohnen et al., 2019). Another ineffective practice is the neglect of technology. Some teachers might have shunned using technology in favour of relying on textbooks. As mentioned before, Saudi Arabia's educational system is centred on the MOE's instructions and materials, to be followed by all teachers around the country. Many teachers might have decided it best to rely on the MOE's materials alone. At the same time, other teachers may have felt that Internet access was not possible for all students, and hence did not make use of technology; although Saudi Arabia is rapidly improving, there are still some small villages where accessing the Internet can be difficult.

Our research found that teachers also adopted traditional methods to teach EFL writing, and communicated with their students in Arabic, as affirmed by Al-Seghayer (2011), Saba (2014), Alrashidi and Phan (2015), and Al-Seghayer (2017). This could be because the teachers were not convinced of the unsuitability of traditional methods, or because they lacked the necessary training to use more recent teaching methods. The third negative feature of teachers' practices was that they underestimated the value of assessment, considering spelling and grammar, for example, as the most important assessment criteria, and did not have clear rubrics to correct student work. This can be related to the use of traditional teaching methods, whereby teachers pay more attention to the final product, without focusing on the linear EFL writing process. As for ignoring the use of rubrics, it may be that teachers wanted students to pass the course; failure would result in criticism of them. With regard to students' assessment, one participant argued that some teachers provided their students with incorrect comments and feedback. While it is difficult to explain such an occurrence, it could simply be the belief that there is more than one correct way. The fourth feature of teachers' practices was that they neglected EFL writing, which confirms the work of Al-Seghayer (2017). Such teachers might believe that mastering EFL grammar and memorizing a huge amount of vocabulary would produce EFL writers. Another explanation could be that teachers do not have enough time to teach EFL writing in an effective way; some participants noted that the time allotted to writing was not enough, especially as there were many exercises attached to each section.

F. Features of Saudi Students' Practices in Learning EFL Writing

Students' practices were categorised as having both positive and negative features. On the positive side, students were passionate about EFL writing. Students may recognise the importance of EFL writing either in their daily life or in their future. Additionally, it is possible that students were passionate because they received high-quality EFL writing instruction, and were encouraged to improve their skills.

As for negative features, certain student practices, such as memorization, could indicate a weakness in EFL writing, as affirmed by Al-Seghayer (2011), Alkubaidi (2014), and Alrashidi and Phan (2015). There are several possible explanations for this finding. Perhaps students were not introduced to writing-related skills so they could express their ideas in writing. Additionally, it is possible that students were more accustomed to rote learning, so they felt more

comfortable when memorizing. Moreover, teachers themselves could have asked students to memorise, rather than encouraging them to write on their own. Another negative feature was of ignoring EFL writing, specifically in examinations. The focus was probably more on other skills, mainly grammar and reading. It could also be that if only a few points were given to writing sections in exams, students may consider writing a waste of time, instead focusing on other sections with more points. The last negative feature was worrying. Certain student practices revealed they were anxious about EFL writing, which is similar to Al-Seghayer (2017) stating that Saudi students demonstrated significant EFL writing apprehension. This apprehension may be due to students' lack of confidence in their writing abilities, or to fear of negative assessments.

Taken together, our findings indicate a notable development in teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia. We suggest that the MOE is steadily making its own way to improve EFL writing instruction in Saudi Arabia. It is improbable that all negative aspects of teaching EFL writing can be eliminated, but there is clearly a positive transformation from one stage to another, together with an awareness of each stage's strengths and weaknesses.

VI. CONCLUSION

Given that EFL writing instruction in Saudi Arabia has passed through different stages of historical development, and has been considered a challenging and demanding skill to teach, investigating its historical development and the features associated each period was necessary. Not only did this study shed light on how teaching EFL writing developed in Saudi Arabia, but it also identified different features of teaching EFL writing, and the features of Saudi educators' and students' practices in teaching and learning EFL writing.

We expect this work will help improve research in EFL writing worldwide in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular, in two specific ways. First, it may reveal more features of teaching EFL writing in relation to the outcomes of teaching writing. In this way, it is possible that the reality and development of teaching EFL writing can be systematically evaluated. Second, it may be helpful in showing the discrepancy between teachers' and students' actual practices inside classrooms, and the standard expectations or expected outcomes of the EFL textbooks. We argue that it is not enough to evaluate the content of the textbooks in relation to the outcomes, as actual practices play a vital role in different evaluation processes. We further expect this work to provide insights to EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. First, teachers can become more familiar with different features of teaching EFL writing during different periods of time. Second, they may benefit from how students think about EFL writing, and broaden their understanding. Finally, they can help evaluate each period with its curricula, features, and practices to narrate the story of teaching EFL writing in Saudi Arabia.

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Nafilah M. Aloairdhi is a researcher in applied linguistics and a certified interpreter. She received an MAs degree in Applied Linguistics and a Bachelor's degree in English language and translation from Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. Her research interests include EFL writing, written discourse analysis, and EFL teaching in foreign contexts.

Ahmad I Alhojailan is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of English Language and Translation at Qassim University, KSA. He holds an MA degree in Applied Linguistics from Essex University, UK, and a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Oklahoma State University, USA. His research interests include academic discourse, EAP, ESP, 2L writing, and pragmatics.

Defining the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Improving English Writing Skills Among Indonesian Students

Kaharuddin
English Education Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Djuwairiah Ahmad
English Education Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Mardiana
English Education Department, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia

Ismail Latif
English Education Program, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare, Indonesia

Burhanuddin Arafah
English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Ray Suryadi
English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sembilanbelas November University of Kolaka, Indonesia

Abstract—**Artificial intelligence (AI) is a technological product in the form of an application usable in education. The implementation of AI, specifically in the teaching and learning process in Higher Education, not only broadens students' scientific knowledge academically but also facilitates awareness about current technological developments. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the improvement of English writing skills through the integration of AI into reading practices and provision of adequate feedback for skills enhancement. Also, students' attitude toward the use of AI in the teaching and learning process served as the intervening variables. This study was conducted at Higher Schools in Makassar City, Indonesia, and data were collected from 80 students through questionnaires and subsequently analyzed using path analysis. The results showed that (1) Students' attitude toward the use of AI played a mediating role in explaining the effect of reading and feedback on writing skills, (2) Reading had an indirect effect through attitude on writing skills improvement, and (3) Lecturers feedback had an indirect effect through attitude on writing skills.**

Index Terms—**artificial intelligence, reading skills, feedback, attitude, writing skills**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted economic, social, and educational activities, where the teaching and learning process could not be carried out in the classroom. Government policy required that the teaching and learning process be carried out online through electronic media, such as computers, laptops, or cell phones. The face-to-face learning is suddenly changed into an online learning method (Anggrawan et al., 2019). Even though the concept of online learning application might not be considered optimal according to Kaharuddin (2022), it presented the initial effort to encourage the use of technological instruments in the educational field. The expansion of internet had a significant impact at this point (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a). Information and material learning provided online worldwide entail students' cognitive skills and abilities (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b; Arafah et al., 2023). This allowed students to gain a practical understanding of the relationship between technological developments and education.

Technology facilitated pedagogical approaches for lecturers (Tsui & Tavares, 2021, p. 110) and served as a medium for creating a new way of teaching and learning (Keengwe et al., 2008, p. 83). Therefore, it is expected that the use of electronic devices through artificial intelligence (AI) can provide expected learning outcomes. Depending on how it is used, technology is very beneficial within digital media and digital literacy (Suhadi et al., 2022; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). Additionally, the integration of AI facilitated the teaching and learning process (Hasjim et al., 2020; Kaharuddin et al., 2022). Through the internet, students can seek knowledge from any platform (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). For example, Google Translate provides translation facilities to translate teaching materials from English to

Indonesian. Caplar et al. (2017) stated that Artificial Intelligence (AI) can process language and translation automatically. In 2015 a new computer model was discovered; it is called the D-Wave 2X. This computer model can perform complex AI operations.

This study discussed the use of AI in English teaching and learning, as well as its effect on improving students' writing skills. Fahimirad and Kotamjani (2018) stated that the quality of students' learning process was improved through AI (p. 108). This study emphasized the improvement of students' writing skills on grammar mastery and vocabulary through AI.

English writing skills have been taught with traditional learning models, but the results were unsatisfactory because writing skills were low (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Furthermore, students' perceptions of the use of AI were descriptively discussed based on the results of quantitative analysis. The use of electronic devices was intended to facilitate writing skills supported by good grammar and vocabulary mastery, which can be developed by reading activities. Therefore, this analysis focused on how reading comprehension, as an independent variable, impacted writing skills. Reading lessons were delivered using AI applications, and each lesson required feedback from lecturers. Technology has basic features that enable virtual communicative interactions between lecturers and students. Feedback from lecturers can help students improve their mistakes in grammar and vocabulary. In this study, feedback was the second independent variable which was explored for its effect on writing skills. Therefore, "effective application of AI methods can improve the quality of teaching and learning" (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019, p. 108).

Students' attitude to English lessons promoted learning activities and accelerated mastery. Research by Kaharuddin et al. (2021) showed that there was a significant effect of students' attitude on motivation. The significance of character education is in need due to the current situation of education in Indonesia (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). This study discussed attitude as an intervening variable to explain the effect of reading and feedback on writing skills with the integration of AI. The perceptions of digital-based learning were also analysed, where English writing skills were the dependent variable while reading and feedback were the independent. This study directly and indirectly examined the effect of the two independent variables on students' attitude.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Artificial Intelligence for Learning-Teaching

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the English teaching process was not merely carried out by lecturers in class but included the use of AI online. This application was helpful in improving English skills, specifically writing. This is because students could check the grammatical errors using AI in addition to lecturers' explanation. As a "simulation of human knowledge on a machine programmed to think and imitate human actions" (Vasiljeva et al., 2021, p. 8), AI can replace lecturers to carry out the learning tasks. For example, students learn English grammar, how to spell words, match words, as well as make sentences through AI. The mistakes made can be detected by this application and corrected as feedback. However, in the context of writing, the mastery of English grammar is needed as expressed by Mozgovoy (2011) that "grammar check is important in text writing and language learning" (p. 209). Even a slight error can drastically change the whole meaning (Iksora et al., 2022). Correction of grammar, diction, or sentence construction was provided by AI through feedback-motivated learning activities. Cotos E. (2011) stated that "students obtain feedback, then re-read and improve their writing, as well as practice being independent learners" (p. 107). At the end, technology advancement in a form of online learning increases students' writing skills (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). Other than that, grammar correction leads students to use meaningful and informative words to improve communication skills (Kuswanty et al., 2023). Therefore, in communication, people should follow the exact patterns and procedures to avoid any kind of mistake (Yulianti et al., 2022).

B. Reading on Writing Improvement

Reading is an important language skill for students to be carried out regularly. In addition to understanding the message of the reading material, students can improve vocabulary mastery as a necessary aspect of English communication. According to Ismail et al. (2020), vocabulary is a language element through which messages are conveyed orally and in writing.

Students developed vocabulary through reading (Renandya, 2007; Arafah B. et al., 2023; Kaharuddin et al., 2023), and reading material was taught separately by lecturers (Kroll J.F., 1993). In writing classes, students rarely engaged in reading activities as expected (Jolliffe, 2007). Even lecturers and students neglected reading activities in composition classes (Hirvela, 2004). On the other hand, vocabulary and grammar mastery is needed in writing. Horning and Kraemer (2013) stated that one of the effective methods for developing writing skills in higher schools and colleges was to engage in reading activities. Among the four language skills, reading and writing were the first to be learned, according to Durukan (2011). This was in line with the opinion of Esmaeili (2002) that reading and writing had a positive influence on students' academic success, especially in English lessons. Reading activity can also in a form of reading literary work since literary work has escalated in academic studies (Takwa et al., 2022; Arafah et al., 2023). Through literary work, students are willing to improve knowledge in a scope of culture and locality (Arifin et al., 2022), nature and environmental situation (Manugeren et al., 2023; Siwi et al., 2022), and human relationship with other

creatures (Yudith et al., 2023). Therefore in learning English by reading literary work, students as readers are capable to discover language styles that an author used that later will be useful for them to write (Asri et al., 2023).

Related to the effect of reading and writing on improving English competence, this study was conducted using AI technology in a virtual teaching-learning process. The influence of reading on writing was directly and indirectly discussed through attitude toward the process of using AI.

C. Feedback on Writing Improvement

Students may have a few questions, such as *"Has the lecturer checked my assignment? Is my assignment correct? Is there anything I need to fix?"* The answers to these questions can be obtained through feedback from lecturers. However, many lecturers did not provide feedback, leading to a situation where the questions were not answered due to insufficient training (Corwin, 1976). In addition, there were many misconceptions only understood as lecturers' comments (Boud & Molloy, 2013). Feedback can be understood as lecturers' comments regarding students' work. Since the comments are related to the level of understanding and ability to carry out assignments (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), feedback is students' understanding of lecturers' comments (Henderson et al., 2019).

Feedback is not the end of a learning process, but information related to the ability to complete English assignments (Boud & Molloy, 2013). Therefore, it needs to comply with the principles of the right time, clear, educative, proportional to the assessment rubric, communicate, and motivate students (Henderson & Phillips, 2014). Corrective feedback improved writing skills (Boggs, 2019), reduced grammatical and lexical errors (Chandler, 2003), and significantly improved writing (Khadawardi, 2021). Avoiding any lexical error in choosing words or phrases enhances students' vocabulary as well (Baa et al., 2023; Takwa et al., 2022; Arafah B. et al., 2024).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the learning process took place virtually, and the comments feature in Microsoft Word or Google Docs was used to send feedback to students. Furthermore, audio feedback was used to improve communication (Cavanaugh & Song, 2014). A website-based application called Vocaroo (https://vocaroo.com) and Mote, an integrated extension of Google with some features were applied to make a record of activities and sounds.

D. Learning Attitude on Writing Improvement

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, students studied English in class through traditional methods. Lecturers sometimes used electronic devices and AI as teaching aids. However, during the pandemic, the learning-teaching process took place virtually through electronic devices. There are 3 main areas in virtual learning, namely developing access to education and training, developing the learning quality, and maintaining competitiveness in universities (Newton, 2003). Face-to-face learning in class can enhance the social aspects between students, as well as between students and lecturers. With virtual learning, there was a tendency for students to get bored studying from home (Male et al., 2020). Students were aware of the importance of technology even though the usage was not encouraged (Farooq & Javid, 2012; Mardiana et al., 2023), and they had a negative attitude to the virtual learning (Govindasamy, 2001). Meanwhile, students of nursing department performed positive attitude to the E-learning. Learning attitudes of students and their effect on writing skills are examined in this study.

III. METHODOLOGY

This was a descriptive quantitative study that explored students' perceptions on the use of AI as a tool in virtual English learning. Reading comprehension and teachers feedback were the independent variables. The writing skill was the dependent variable. The intervening variable was learning attitude. The effect of the independent variables ($X_{1,2}$) on the dependent variable (Y_2) through the intervening variable (Y_1) was the focus of this study. The research was conducted on 100 higher school students in Makassar City, as the research respondents. The questionnaires distributed to the respondents were valued based on the 5 points of Likert scale which covered strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree (Arafah B., 2023; Lebba & Kaharuddin, 2023).

A. Test of Research Instrument

Validity and reliability tests were conducted to meet the criteria for validity and reliability (Abidin & Kaharuddin, 2021; Lebba et al., 2023).
   a. Validity Test: This was conducted by correlating the value of each item and total variables. Pearson Correlation Product Moment (r) was used with a significance level 5% or 0.05, the result was called r-$_{calculation}$. If the r$_{calculation}$ on every item of questionnaire was significantly more than the value of r-table, the instrument was stated to be valid.
   b. Reliability Test: This unit was intended to test the consistency of students in answering the questionnaire. The reliability of students' answers was determined using Cronbach Alpha. The answers were stated to be reliable when the Cronbach Coefficient Alpha value was above 0.6.

B. Classical Assumption Test

   a. Normality Test: This test was conducted to analyse the distribution of the residual value of the model using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. A regression model is stated to be good when it has a normal distribution of residual values. The basis for decision making is the asymp value, and when the significance value is above 0.05, then it is

called normally distributed.

b. Multicollinearity test: It was conducted by analysing the correlation between reading comprehension and teachers feedback, both are independent variables. A good model does not show any multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is not shown if multicollinearity test gives value lower than 10 or the tolerance value is greater than 0.10.

c. Heteroscedasticity test: It was conducted to analyse the residual variance from one observation to another observation. The decision is based on the significance value. If the Significance value is greater than 0.05, heteroscedasticity is not shown.

d. Linearity Test: This test was conducted to analyse the level of significant linear relationship. The basis for the decision is that when the Sig value is > 0.05, the correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable is significant.

C. Inferential Statistical Analysis

The Inferential statistical analysis was carried out by using path analysis with Windows SPSS version 26.

D. Hypothesis Test

In the hypothesis test, direct and indirect effect of independent variables on dependent variable was analysed. It includes:

H_0: Independent variables (X_1 and X_2) have no direct effect on dependent variable (Y_2).

H_1: Independent variables (X_1 and X_2) have direct effect on dependent variable (Y_2).

IV. RESEARCH RESULT

Questionnaire was used to collect data, distributed to 80 students at Higher Schools in Makassar City, Indonesia. Among them was only 70 returned of which 5 were flawed. Therefore, only 65 were processed, and the data were analyzed using SPSS software version 26. The results were studied for the validity and reliability of the instrument. Concerning the criteria used to determine validity, when the significance value was below 0.05, the items were considered valid. Otherwise, when the value was above 0.05, the items were not considered valid. The validity test of the instrument showed that the significance value of all the questionnaire items was below 0.05, which means the instrument was valid.

Regarding the reliability test, the criterion was that when the Cronbach alpha value was above 0.70, the instrument was considered reliable. The reliability test of this instrument denoted that the output of SPSS version 26 showed Cronbach alpha of 0.823, and was above 0.70. Therefore, the questionnaire satisfied the reliability criteria.

TABLE 1
THE OUTPUT OF RELIABILITY TEST
RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.823	16

The validity and reliability tests were conducted, and the classical assumption test was carried out, including normality, multicollinearity, linearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. After the normality test, the output showed that the Asymp.Sig, (2-tailed) showed the value of 0.200, greater than 0.05 (0.200 > 0.05). This indicated a normal distribution of the residual variance.

TABLE 2
THE RESULT OF NORMALITY TEST

		Unstandardized Residual
N		65
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	1.30862592
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.062
	Positive	.059
	Negative	-.062
Test Statistic		.080
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200[c,d]

a. The test distribution is normal
b. Calculated from data
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

The multicollinearity test was carried out to reveal the linear correlation of the independent variables (reading and feedback). Furthermore, tolerance value of the variables and the value of VIF were compared with 0.10 and 10.00. The output of SPSS version 26 showed that the tolerance value of each variable (X_1: 0.904, X_2: 0.722) was more significant than 0.10, and the value of VIF (X_1: 1.106, X_2: 1.386) was less than 10.00. Therefore, there was no linear correlation

between one independent variable and the other one. It means that there was no multicollinearity problem.

TABLE 3
THE RESULT OF MULTICOLLINEARITY TEST
COEFFICIENTS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	6.133	1.755		3.494	.001		
	Rd	-.119	.104	-.111	-1.150	.255	.904	1.106
	Fb	. -.017	.069	-.027	-.251	.803	.722	1.386
	Att	.673	.097	.724	6.948	.000	.769	1.300

a. Dependent Variable: Wr

The heteroscedasticity test was conducted to determine the regression model variance in similarity. A good model does not show a heteroscedasticity. The conclusion was made based on the followings:

- Value of Sig> 0.05 = there was no heteroscedasticity
- Value of Sig<0.05 = there was heteroscedasticity

The table of coefficient in column sig. shows the sig. value of 0.874 for X_1, 0.712 for X_2 and 0.927 for Y_1. The regression model was bigger than 0.05 which means that there was no heteroscedasticity.

TABLE 4
THE OUTPUT OF HETEROSCEDASTICITY TEST
COEFFICIENTS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.420	1.305		1.088	.281		
	Rd	.012	.077	.021	.160	.874	.904	1.106
	Fb	-.019	.051	-.056	-.370	.712	.722	1.386
	Att	.007	.072	.013	.092	.927	.769	1.300

a. Dependent Variable: RES2

The linearity test was carried out to determine the significant linear correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The criteria to determine the correlation was sign. Value greater than 0.05 which was indicating a linearity in the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The Anova analysis denoted that the deviation from linearity showed the value of sign. 0.999 which was greater than 0.05. It means that there was lineaity in the correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable.

TABLE 5
THE OUTPUT OF THE LINEARITY TEST
ANOVA TABLE

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WR * FB	Between Groups	(Combined)	1.441	7	.206	.055	1.000
		Linearity	.046	1	.046	.012	.912
		Deviation from Linearity	1.395	6	.232	.062	.999
	Within Groups		213.698	57	3.749		
	Total		215.138	64			

The independent variables in this research were Reading (X_1) and Feedback (X_2), the dependent variable was Writing (Y_2), and the intervening variable was Attitude (Y_1). Path analysis was conducted twice, and produced two models: Model 1 and Model 2. Those two models were discussed below.

Model 1

In this Model 1 construction, Reading (X_1) and Feedback (X_2) were the independent variables and Attitude (Y_1) was the dependent variable. The result of the analysis using SPSS version 26 was shown in the Table 6 below.

TABLE 6
MODEL 1
COEFFICIENTS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.865	1.740		6.819	.000
	Rd	.048	.136	.041	.354	.724
	Fb	.321	.081	.466	3.980	.000

a. Dependent Variable: ATT

The value of standardized coefficient of the independent variables as the path coefficient of X_1 and X_2 is presented in Table 6 above. The part coefficient matrix was as follows:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \rho y1x1 \\ \rho y1x2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0.041 \\ 0.466 \end{pmatrix}$$

The value of determinant coefficient or the R square value was indicated by the model summary in the table below:

TABLE 7
DETERMINANT COEFFICIENT (R2) OF MODEL 1
MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.480a	.231	.206	1.758

a. Predictors: (Constant), Fb, Rd
b. dependent variable: Attitude

The R square value was 0.231. The path coefficient of X_1 and X_2 was manually calculated by a part matrix, multiplied by Y_1. The R square, $pY_{1\varepsilon}$, calculates the coefficient of variables outside the model.

$$\rho Y1\varepsilon = \sqrt{1 - 0.231} = 0.769$$

1) Path Coefficient of ρY_1X_1

For the path coefficient of pY_1X_1, namely from X_1 to Y_1, the column sig. in table 6 was 0.724, which was greater than 0.05. The value of $t_{calculation}$ 0.354 was smaller than the value of t_{table} 1.669. It means that H_0 was accepted and H_1 was rejected which implied that the path coefficient of X_1 to Y_1 was insignificant.

2) Path Coefficient of ρY_1X_2

Related to the path coefficient from X_2 to Y_1 (pY_1X_2), the value of sig. was 0.000 which was less than the value of 0.05. Meanwhile, the value of $t_{calculation}$ 3,980 was greater than the value of t_{table} 1.669. Therefore, H_0 was rejected, and H_1 accepted. It indicated that the path coefficient from X_2 to Y_1 was significant.

Model 2

In this Model 2, the dependent variable was writing skills (Y_2) and the independent variables were Reading skill (X_1), Feedback (X_2), and students' attitude (Y_1). The result of the analysis by SPSS in this Model 2 is presented below.

TABLE 8
MODEL 2
COEFFICIENTS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.133	1.755		3.494	.001
	Rd	-.119	.104	-.111	-1.150	.255
	Fb	-.017	.069	-.027	-.251	.803
	Att	.673	.097	.724	6.948	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Wr

Standardized coefficient values as shown in the Table 8 above indicated that coefficient value for Reading (X_1) was 0.111, Feedback (X_2) was 0.027, and Attitude (Y_1) was 0.724. The path coefficient matrix was:

$$\begin{pmatrix} \rho y2x1 \\ \rho y2x2 \\ \rho y2y1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0.111 \\ 0.027 \\ 0.724 \end{pmatrix}$$

TABLE 9
DETERMINANT COEFFICIENT (R2) OF MODEL 2
MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.700a	.491	.466	1.340

a. Predictors: (Constant), Att, Rd, Fb
b. Dependent Variable: Wr

The R Square value of 0.491 was manually calculated by changing the path coefficients of the independent variables (X_1, X_2, and Y_1) to the path matrix and multiplied by the column matrix Y_2. Path coefficient of other variables outside the model ($\rho Y_{2\varepsilon}$) was calculated by:

$$\rho Y2\varepsilon = \sqrt{1 - 0.491} = 0.509$$

1) Path Coefficient of $\rho Y_2 X_1$

The path coefficient from path X_1 to Y_2 indicated that the column sig. in table 8 was 0.255, which was greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ 1,150 was less than the t_{table} 1.663. In this case, H_0 was accepted and H_1 rejected, meaning the path coefficient of X_1 to Y_2 was statistically insignificant.

2) Path Coefficient of $\rho Y_2 X_2$

The path coefficient from X_2 to Y_2 indicated that the value of sig., as shown in table 8, was 0.803, which was greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ 0,251 was less than the t_{table} 1.663. Hence, H_1 was rejected and H_0 accepted, meaning the path coefficient of X_2 to Y_2 was insignificant.

3) Path Coefficient of $\rho Y_2 Y_1$

In path coefficient from the path Y_1 to Y_2, the value of sig. was 0.000, which was greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ 6,948 was bigger than the value of t_{table} 1.663. Hence, H_0 was rejected and H_1 was accepted, meaning the path coefficient of Y_1 to Y_2 was significant.

Test of Hypothesis

The effect of reading (X_1) on students' learning attitude (Y_1) was tested. The analysis of the path coefficient of $\rho Y_1 X_1$ indicated that the significant value of X_1 was 0.724, and was greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ (1,150) was less than the value of t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} < t_{table}$. This showed reading had no effect on students' learning attitude, hence, *Hypothesis 1: "Reading has a significant effect on Attitude"* was rejected.

To reveal whether the Reading skill (X_1) could affect the students' writing competence ((Y_2), the result of the data analysis indicated that the value of X_1 was 0.255, which was greater than 0.05, and $t_{calculation}$ (1.150) was less than the value of t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} < t_{table}$. It was concluded that X_1 had no direct effect on Y_2. Therefore, the Hypothesis 2, Reading has significant effect on Writing, was rejected which proved that the students' writing competence could not be improved by the reading skill.

With regard to the contribution of Reading skill (X_1) to the improvement of students Writing skill (Y_2), the data analysis showed that Reading (X_1) has significant value 0.255, which was greater than 0.05, and $t_{calculation}$ (1.150) was less than the value of t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} < t_{table}$. It was concluded that X_1 had no direct effect on Y_2. Therefore, the Hypothesis 2, Reading has significant effect on Writing, was rejected. It means that good competence on Reading could not boost directly the improvement of students' writing competence.

Indirect effect of Reading (X_1) on Writing (Y_2) mediated by Attitude (Y_1) was analyzed by multiplying the β value of Reading (X_1) on Attitude (Y_1) and the β value of Attitude (Y_1) on Writing (Y_2). It was noted in table 6 that the β value of Reading (X_1) on Attitude (Y_1) was 0.111 and the β value of Attitude (Y_1) on Writing (Y_2) was 0.724. The multiplication was then made, 0.111 x 0.724 = 0.027. The total effect of Reading (X_1) on Writing (Y_2) was the sum of the direct and indirect effects, 0.041+0.027= 0.068. The result indicated that the indirect effect was greater than the direct effect, which means that the *Hypothesis 3, Reading has an indirect effect through Attitude on Writing,* was accepted. In this case, students' attitude in learning English can bolster the Reading skill to improve the writing competence.

Regarding the analysis of the effect of feedback (X_2) on Attitude (Y_1), the result showed that the significant value of X_2 was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ (3.980) was greater than the value of t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} > t_{table}$. Therefore, *Hypothesis 4: "Feedback has effect on Attitude"* was accepted. Furthermore, the direct effect of feedback X_2 on Writing (Y_2) showed the significant value of X_2 (0.803) which was greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ (0.251) was less than the value of t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} < t_{table}$. In this case, it did not fulfil the criteria that feedback directly affected students' writing improvement. Therefore, *Hypothesis 5: "Feedback has a significant direct effect on Writing"* was rejected.

The Indirect effect of Feedback (X_2) on Writing (Y_2) mediated by Attitude (Y_1) was analyzed by multiplying the β value of Feedback (X_2) on Writing (Y_2) and the β value of Attitude (Y_1) on Writing (Y_2). The result was 0.466 x 0.724 = 0.337, and the total effect of X_2 on Y_2 was 0.803+0.337= 1.140. The result showed that the indirect effect value (1,140) was greater than the direct (0.803). This implied that Attitude (Y_1) could strengthen the indirect effect of Feedback (X_2) on students' Writing competence (Y_2). It means that *Hypothesis 6, Feedback has an indirect effect through Attitude on Writing,* was accepted.

The effect of Attitude (Y_1) on Writing (Y_2) was tested, and when the significance value of Y_1 was bigger than 0.05 or the value of $t_{calculation}$ was bigger than the value of t_{table}, Attitude (Y_1) was considered to affect the Writing Competence (Y_2). The analysis result showed that the significant value of Y_1 was 0.000, greater than 0.05, and the value of $t_{calculation}$ (6.948) was bigger than t_{table} (1.663) or $t_{calculation} > t_{table}$. This showed attitude affected writing, hence, *Hypothesis 7: "Attitude affects Writing"* was accepted.

V. DISCUSSION

Technological developments, specifically AI, have penetrated all sectors and tend to affect human civilization. The education sector is one of the sectors most affected, mainly related to the use of AI in teaching and learning. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the learning process was not carried out by face-to-face interaction in class, but virtually using AI. In the context of learning English in Higher Schools, this study was conducted to analyze the use of AI in teaching reading and providing feedback to improve writing skills. Furthermore, students' attitude toward the use of AI was

investigated. AI can perform automatic tasks, and the possibilities of performing complex tasks in higher education are unimaginable (Soto et al., 2012). Technological advancements will become a standard solution (Bengio et al., 2013) for teaching and learning problems.

The reading course was virtually disseminated by uploading the material on Google Classroom in the form of PowerPoint. According to Pence (2019), classes were held virtually, presented by a slide show program like PowerPoint. Students were assigned task through Google Classroom. Lecturers provided feedback to notify students about their mistakes in using appropriate words and the grammatical aspect. Ability to understand the reading materials people send virtually could boostle the students to improve their writing skill. This should be boosted by the mastery of English grammar and vocabulary, especially the vocabulary used in those reading materials. Furthermore, students' positive attitude toward using AI in the learning-teaching process should support their learning English progress.

This study found that virtual teaching through AI with a positive attitude had an indirect significant effect on writing skills improvement. The total indirect effect of reading on writing was 1.140, which showed reading contributed 11.40% indirect effect to the writing skills improvement. In this case, the teaching of reading did not significantly affect writing skills without a positive attitude of students. The improvement should be boosted by a positive attitude toward the process. Feedback had indirect effects through attitude on writing. In this case, it cannot significantly affect writing skills without positive attitude. This study proved that virtual teaching of reading and feedback with a positive attitude had a significant effect on writing skills improvement. Improving writing skills requires good mastery of grammar and vocabulary, which can be developed by reading and feedback from lecturers. Furthermore, electronic devices can facilitate this process with the application of AI.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, students' skills in learning English using AI needed to be improved. This was because students' attitude was shown to have a mediating role in explaining the effect of reading and teacher feedback on writing skills development. In this case, feedback had no direct influence on the development of writing skills. Therefore, building a positive attitude towards the use of AI in learning needs to be prioritized. Vocabulary development from reading and remedial exercises based on lecturers' feedback improved students' writing skills.

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Kaharuddin, an Associate Professor in English Language Teaching, was born in Makassar, Indonesia, on August 14, 1975. He got his Master's degree in English Language Studies in 2004 and his doctoral degree in Applied Linguistics in 2014, both from Hasanuddin University of Makassar, Indonesia. He is currently teaching English Language and Linguistics at the English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Lecturer Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Alauddin Makassar, Indonesia. He is the author of a number of books, including: Syllabus Design for English Language Teaching, *Prenada Media* (2018); It's All About Transactional Speaking Skills, *Eliva Press, Moldova Europe* (2021); and Linguistics: Basic theory and Roles in ELT, *Prenada Media* (2021). His research focuses on English education and Linguistics.

Dr. Kaharuddin is currently a member of ASIA TEFL Association, Busan, South Korea.

Djuwairiah Ahmad, a Professor in English Education, was born in Makassar on June 19, 1970. She completed her undergraduate study in the English Education Department of IKIP Ujung Pandang, Indonesia, in 1992. She got her Master of Education majoring in English Education at State University of Makassar, Indonesia, in 2000. Then, she achieved her second master degree in TESOL at Victoria University, Melbourne-Australia in 2006. Lastly, she got her doctoral degree in Linguistics at the Faculty of Letters, Postgraduate Program of Hasanuddin University, Indonesia, in 2014.

Currently, she is the head of Language Center of Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar, Indonesia. She was previously the head of English Education Department for two consecutive periods (years of 2008 to 2015) and the secretary of the same department from 2000 to 2004. A number of books, written works, and published articles that have been produced by the writer include: *Translation* (Book, 2013), *Effect of Time Allotment on Test Scores for Academic Writing of Indonesian Learners of English* (Journal of Multicultural Education, 2021), *Exploring Student Achievement and Perceptions in an Online Flipped Grammar Course* (Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 2021). Her previous research interests were in English teaching and curriculum, materials development, and language assessment.

Prof. Ahmad is a member of Indonesian English Lecturers Association (TEFLIN), Asia TEFL, Indonesian Linguistic Society (MLI), and Association of America-Indonesia Scholarship Awardee Alumni (ALPHA-I).

Mardiana is a lecturer in English Language Teaching at the English Education Department, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Alauddin Makassar. She was born on August 15, 1969, in Pinrang, South Sulawesi. She studied at the Institute of Teacher Training and Education (IKIP) in Ujung Pandang, earning a bachelor's degree in English education in 1993. She earned a Master's Degree in English Education Department after completing her studies at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1996 and working as an English Lecturer at UIN Alauddin Makassar since 1999. She then obtained her doctorate at Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ) in 2012. Therefore, her strong interest in English education has provided her with numerous opportunities to participate in professional training programs at foreign universities, such as

four months. There are short courses at Ohio State University in Columbus and two-month courses at Gottingen University in Germany. She also spent two months in Canada (Montreal, Ottawa, and Kitchener) for a community outreach program and published inrespectable publications.

Ismail Latif is a lecturer at the English education study program of Institut Agama Islam Negeri Parepare. He was born in Bottoe Barru South Sulawesi on December 1963. After graduating from high school in 1981, he attended IAIN Alauddin Ujung Pandang from which he received a Drs degree in English education, and then he received a Magister degree in Management of Human Resources at STIE PATRIA ARTHA Makassar in 2003. He has written some academic journals such as, to name only the recent ones, The Effectiveness of Using Modifying Reading Text to Develop the First Year Students' Reading Skills at MAN 1 Parepare (2014), Using Pictures to Increase the Second Year Students' vocabulary Mastery at MTs Addariyah DDI Kaballangang Pinrang (2014). His research interest centers on English education such as Analysing Students' Needs in English Course for Students of Non-English Study Program at STAIN Parepare (2010). Integrating Moral Characters to Develop ELT Materials for Transactional Speaking Skills (2015). Besides, he has participated in some international seminars, symposiums, and conferences.

Burhanuddin Arafah obtained his PhD in English literature at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2003. He earned his Master's degree in American literature at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1995 and his Bachelor's degree in English literature at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1988.

He is currently a full Professor in English literature at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS, Indonesia. He has published eight books in English and literature and more than 70 research articles ranked in international journals published in English. He also has received 26 Intellectual Property Right Certificates from the Indonesian government.

His areas of interest are English literature, language education, and cultural studies. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS from 2009-2017. He is actively involved at the National Accreditation Board-Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in his position as Assessor.

Ray Suryadi is a lecturer at the English Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sembilanbelas November University Kolaka (USN). He completed his Bachelor's degree in English Education in 2008 and his Master's in 2013 at Makassar State University. In 2023, he published two articles in national journals, namely *The Impact of Kadatua Dialect on Students' English Pronunciation* (Lingual, Vol. 15, No. 1) and *Student's Perception on Learning Media Augmented Reality based at English for Specific Purpose Subject* (Epigram, Vol. 20, No. 1). He has also written some books such as *English for Physical Education and Sport, Skill of Speaking, Travel Around the World with English, Learning Physics and Chemistry with English.*

A Study of the Translatability and Untranslatability of Qur'ānic Arabic Particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in Some Selected Surahs: A Linguistic Perspective

Majda Babiker Ahmed Abdelkarim
Department of English, Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj
English Unit, Applied College at Dhahran Al-Janoub, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**Theoretically and in practice, the issue of translatability and untranslatability has been a controversial matter in translation studies and translation theories. This study, carried out from a linguistic perspective, examined the translatability and untranslatability of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in several surahs, specifically in terms of three renowned translations of the Holy Qur'ān which were sourced from The Qur'ānic Arabic Corpus, namely those of Abdelhaleem (2004), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930). A descriptive analytical method was utilized together with Jones' (2016) concept which asserts that the random treatment of laʿalla لَعَلَّ needs to be addressed. Findings of the study revealed that, the three translators have comparatively succeeded in rendering the Qur'ānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَّ into English. Most of the time, it is rendered as 'so that', 'so', 'that' and the model auxiliary 'may' that suggests the adverb 'perhaps'. The study concluded that, regarding the adequacy of the rendering, communication, and comprehension of the Holy Qurʾān these conjunctions and the model auxiliary are appropriate as they convey the intended notion of 'likelihood' or 'probability'.**

Index Terms—**Arabic particle, Holy Qurʾān, linguistic perspective, translatability, untranslatability**

I. INTRODUCTION

From the outset, it is worth mentioning that translatability is the ability of some type of meaning to be conveyed from one language to another without being subjected to significant change (Pym, 2004; Kenny, 1998). The issue of untranslatability has been a major challenge for numerous translators, especially the translators of the Holy Qurʾān. Several translation scholars and translation experts have found that untranslatability is a prevailing challenge when rendering one language to another due to the problem related to the features of a specific language and the individual's understanding of the nature of language, import and rendition. They also claimed that unrenderable words and phrases are predominantly associated with cultural barriers, linguistic difficulties, and translation issues.

Theoretically and in practice, the issue of translatability and untranslatability has been a source of controversy in translation studies and translation theories. Debates on the theme of translatability and untranslatability have also triggered much hypothesizing and are a crucial aspect of the translation paradigm (Fernandez, 2012; Aldahesh, 2014). Today, the issue of translatability and untranslatability is associated with the 'faithfulness' and 'accuracy' with which the original text can be translated.

The translatability and untranslatability of the Holy Qurʾān has been the subject of dispute since the revelation of Islam's holy book (Khalaf & Yusoff, 2012; Al-Abdullatif, 2018; Hidaya & Solihin, 2019). There have been numerous debates among Muslim and non-Muslim scholars together with translation experts as to whether the Holy Qurʾān should be rendered or be read in its Arabic native language. Some Muslim scholars argue that the Holy Qurʾān is linguistically stunning, vivid, unique, sensitive, and breathtaking. It possesses characteristics that are so rare and incomparable that even the most eloquent and eminent rhetorician of the epoch could not compete with it (Ushama, 2011; Peachy, 2013; Wild, 2015). Muslim scholars and translation experts conclude that the Holy Qurʾān is incomparable in both its form and content and the marvelous character of the Holy Qurʾān is verified by the perfection of its Arabic language, and therefore it cannot be rendered into the English language with complete faithfulness to the original (Alhaj & Alwadai, 2022; Nassimi, 2008; Alhaj, 2022).

In any language, there are writings in which there are lexical items that commonly appertain to the linguistic characteristics of that language. The Qurʾānic language also contains numerous such items. The Holy Qurʾān comprises Islamic cultural lexical items that do not exist in any other culture (Jalaluddin & Abdelkarim, 2023; Alhaj, 2023; Mounadil, 2023) and therefore present translation challenges. Since the language of The Holy Qurʾān is Arabic and it is

rich in Islamic thought, which is unfamiliar to non-Muslims, and since other people in quest of the truth should know the Word of Allah, it must be rendered into other languages.

Ultimately, to date and to the researchers' best knowledge, no study has been conducted, from the linguistic perspective, on the translatability and untranslatability (into English) of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ present in some selected surahs. Hence, this study contributes by addressing this research gap.

A. Objectives of the Study

The Holy Qurʾān has a full range of lexical items, each of which has been carefully chosen to convey a certain meaning accurately. For example, the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ is similar to a semi-verb as it carries the meaning of the verb.

The first purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the translators Abdelhaleem (2004), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996), and Pickthall (1930) have succeeded in translating the meanings of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ into English without distorting the meaning of the Arabic Qur'ānic source text. The second purpose of the study is to examine, from a linguistic perspective, the translatability into English of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in several selected surahs and analyze its limitations.

B. Research Questions

In line with the two purposes of the current study, the major research questions guiding this study are:
- To what extent have the translators, Abdelhaleem (2004), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930), successfully rendered into English the meaning of the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ?
- Are there differences between the three translations of the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ rendered into English by Abdelhaleem (2004), Al-Hilali and Khan (1996) and Pickthall (1930)?
- From the linguistic perspective, what are the challenges that impede the translatability, into English, of the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in several selected surahs?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, firstly, the notion of translatability and untranslatability of texts is explained as it is an issue that pertains strongly to the Holy Qurʾān. Secondly, several previous studies on the translatability and untranslatability of the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ are examined.

A. The Place of La'alla لعل in Qur'ānic Grammar and Its Grammatical Function

Linguistically speaking, La'alla لعل "so that or perhaps" is similarly unique in modern Arabic. La'alla لعل is a particle similar to a verb in that it must be followed either by a noun in the accusative halat alnusb في حالة النصب ; or by an attached pronoun which is grammatically considered to be in the accusative. After it, the verb "to be" is understood, therefore a predicate may follow in the nominative. La'alla لعل bears and implies the denotation and sense of the verb, and takes the end marks (حركات harakaat) of the past tense verb الفتحة al-fatha" (منصوب manSūb) which goes over the end of a word and is uttered as a short vowel "a"/æ/. It attributes words in the accusative case. It is one of the sister-particles of إن inna; after this particle, the infinitive verb "to be" is understood (Haywood & Nahmad, 1965; Webster, 1984).

B. The Concept of Translatability and Untranslatability

A text is considered untranslatable when it contains a word or expression that has no counterpart in another language. Catford (1965) distinguished between linguistic translation difficulty and cultural translation difficulty. The former is related to the dissimilarities or discrepancies between the source language text and the target language text. The latter stems from the absence in the target language text of applicable situational characteristics or contextual features. Nida (2004) employs the term 'loss in rendering' when the translator encounters lexemes in the source language text that do not have equivalents in the target language. Markedly untranslatability is remained a contentious and dispute issue (Ardakani et al., 2015; Khammyseh, 2015; Nozizwe & Ncube, 2014; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023; Abdel Haleem, 1992). At this point, there is reason to believe that translation is a possible and doable task and feasible goal, but there are still some linguistic idioms and items that are arduous and problematic to render which cause the problem of untranslatability (Mweri, 2010; Qawasmeh, 2022; Bahameed, 2008; Hatab, 2015). To conclude, linguistic untranslatability takes place in situations where the language elements or language constituents of the source language text cannot be replaced by adequately in morphological, one-dimensional, functional, or semantic terms because of a dearth of implication.

C. Previous Studies

Several studies have examined the phenomena of the translatability and untranslatability of the Holy Qurʾān. For example, Aldahesh (2014) carried out a study on the untranslatability of the Holy Qurʾān. The findings revealed that three major issues related to the translation of the Holy Qur'an are faced by Muslim scholars, academics and Qur'ānic translators; they are linguistic, cultural, and religious untranslatability. Alhaj (2022) explored the notion of (un)translatability and the difficulty of rendering into English the Qur'anic Arabic words for example 'heart' in Sūrat Al-tawbah (Repentance). The study identified ongoing challenges and the predicament of untranslatability, as well as

loss in the rendering. Also, the study showed that the translation into English of unrenderable Qur'anic Arabic words for example ,'heart' may produce rendition losses which is a common phenomenon in the rendering of the Holy Quran into English as a whole and of Sūrat Al-tawbah in particular. Khalaf and Yusoff (2012) studied the limitations of the Holy Qur'an's translatability. Their findings demonstrated that the translators have utilized various translation strategies such as transliteration, explication, cultural substitution, and footnotes to tackle the problems of ongoing linguistic challenges and the issue of untranslatability. Jones (2016) conducted a study to examine the Qurʾānic word laʿalla. The results of the study indicated that the rareness of the non-Qurʾānic Arabic of laʿalla meaning 'so that' and the related nonchalance which led grammarians and lexicographers to assert that the Qurʾānic examples of laʿallaلَعَلَّ caused Western grammarians and translators to convey or obtain the wrong meaning in translations.

Bleyhesh al-Amri (2007) explored Qur'an's translatability and untranslatability at the semantic level. The study found that the elicitation of untranslatability is not without reason. The translatability of the Holy Qur'an is not confined to its interpretation or exegesis; also of great significance is the issue of addressing some of its structural patterns, especially the functional ones. The study concluded that translatability rather than untranslatability should be emphasized. Jawad (2023) conducted a study to investigate the problem of rendering the Qurʾānic Arabic laʿʿalaلَعَلَّ and asaaعَسَّ . The results of the study showed that Irving and Al-Hilali and Khan are comparatively successful in translating Qurʾānic Arabic laʿʿalaلَعَلَّ and asaaعَسَّ into English. Furthermore, the two translators do not differ in their translation of Qurʾānic Arabic laʿʿalaلَعَلَّ and asaaعَسَّ although Irving's translation is more appropriate than that of al-Hilali & Khan.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Paradigm

For the present study, the researchers adopted the descriptive analytical method which involved close readings, comprehensive searches, and thorough explorations of the renderings to determine, from linguistic perspective, the translatability or untranslatability into English of the Qurʾānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in some selected Surahs. These three translations were selected because the translators have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The data for the study were taken from The Qurʾānic Arabic Corpus (Al-Hilali & Khân, 1996; Pickthall, 1930) as well as Abdel Haleem's translation of the Qurʾān (2004). The Qurʾānic Arabic Corpus was established by a language research team at Leeds University, West Yorkshire, England. Furthermore, This Corpus offers morphological and grammatical explanations and renderings for research investigators wishing to study the holy book of Islam and its Qurʾānic Arabic. A lengthy explanation for the choice of this or that rendering of the Holy Qurʾān is not pertinent to the current study. Suffice it to say that by means of a descriptive analytical approach, the three English translations by the translators of the Holy Qurʾān were explored and analyzed by the researchers in terms of context, linguistic analysis, and critical explanation (exegesis) or interpretations of the Qurʾānic text.

B. The Place of the Three Translations Presented in the Present Research

This section of the study describes the cultural and religious identity of each of the selected translators, along with the translation methods and procedures utilized by them, which obviously play an integral role in identifying the quality of their translations (Kidwai, 2017; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023). The three prominent translators selected for this research paper are notable Muslim and converts to Islamic scholarship. Pickthall (1930) was a convert to Islamic scholarship whose significant translation project established an enormously useful and rich intellectual tradition. His translation enabled the constantly increasing number of English-speaking Muslims to obtain some understanding of the meaning of the Holy Qurʾān in English. His translation is a literal one, but is nevertheless appropriate for the TL receptor. The Moroccan scholar Al-Hilali and the Pakistani scholar Khan are also well-renowned Muslim translators of the Holy Qurʾān into English (Ali, 2006; Kidwai, 2017; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023; El-Zeiny, 2011; Qassem, 2021). They are also significant figures in the literature of English translations of the Holy Qurʾān in this century. Their rendering is one of the most popular as they pay special attention to the exegetic level of meanings, making no attempt to render all the other levels of meaning, when no clash prevails (Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023; Qassem, 2021; El-Zeiny, 2011). In terms of quality and international acceptance, their translation ranks alongside that of Pickthall. Abdel Haleem's (2004) translation of the Holy Qurʾān is held to be the most understandable English-language translation, making him a well-known translator. One of the main characteristics of Abdel Haleem's rendering is its brevity, made possible by this translator's proficiency in both the Arabic and English languages. (Haleem, 2018; Hassanein, 2017; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023). Abdel Haleem applied a free-translation strategy and supplied footnotes which made the translation intelligible and accessible, unlike the translations of his predecessors. Abdel Haleem created an appropriately rendered version that is a great improvement on those of previous translators as it is comprehendible to most receptors. His translation provides a perfect linguistic reading and accordingly it is both accessible and compelling (Ibraheem, 2018; Aldahesh, 2014; Abdelkarim & Alhaj, 2023). To dispel any confusion or lack of understanding, Abdel Haleem employed translation between brackets or used a couplet translation strategy.

C. Data Collection Procedures

In order to explore the translatability and untranslatability into English of the Qurʾānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in some selected Surahs. Moreover, the English translations of the meaning of the Holy Qurʾān by the translators were

collected by the researchers. Moreover, verses (*ayahs*) containing the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ and their Qurʾānic commentaries in exegeses such as those written by Ibn Kathir (2009), Alt-Tabari (1981), and As-Sa'di (2012), were employed as the chief interpretative and explanatory sources used to probe the interpretation of the ayahs of the Holy Qur'an.

This study is based on Jones's (2016) assertion that the random treatment of laʿalla لَعَلَّ needs to be addressed. Hence, it is reasonable to consider all the cases and their contexts as a group. According to Jones, this allows linguistic structures to become evident.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research evidence on which this study was predicated includes *ayahs* taken from three translations of some selected Surahs of the Holy Qur'an. This evidence contains four examples of the Arabic Qur'ānic particle laʿalla لَعَل from the Holy Qur'an.

Example One
Source Surrah: Chapter (2) sūrat l-baqarah (The Cow) verse 21.
ST:(البقرة:21) يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ
Target text:

(1) Abdel Haleem: "people, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so <u>that you may be mindful</u> [of Him]". (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 22)
(2) Khan and Al-Hilali: "O mankind! Worship your Lord (Allah), who created you and those who were before you <u>so that you may become Al-Muttaqun</u>". (Al-Hilali & Khan, 1996, p. 5)
(3) Pickthall: "O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who hath created you and those before you, <u>so that ye may ward off (evil)</u> ". (Pickthall, 1930, p. 35)

The Analysis
1. The general intended meaning of the ayah
In this verse, Allah states His oneness in divinity and that none has the rights to be worshipped but He, for His both hidden and superficial grace and ostensible favours He has bestowed upon His servants. This ayah also joins the order to worship Allah alone and the interdiction on worshipping anything besides Him. It renders compelling proof that it is mandatory to worship Him and that the worship of anything besides Him is spurious (As-Sa'di, Vol. 1, p. 200).

2. Translatability and Untranslatability of Qur'ānic Arabic Particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in Sūrat l-baqarah (The Cow), verse 21.

Chapter (2) sūrat l-baqarah (The Cow)

(2:21:10)

laʿallakum

so that you may

لَعَلَّكُمْ

PRON   ACC

ACC – accusative particle
PRON – 2nd person masculine plural object pronoun

حرف نصب من اخوات «ان» والكاف ضمير
تصل في محل نصب اسم «لعل»

Verse (2:21)

The analysis above refers to the 21st verse of chapter 2 (*sūrat l baqarah*):

Graph 1. Syntactic Parsing Tree Bank of Verse (42:17) on QAC.
Source https://corpus.quran.com/treebank.jsp?chapter=2&verse=21

Here, the accusative particle laʿallakum لَعَلَّكُمْ is rendered into the conjunction "so that" by Abdelhaleem, Khan and Al-Hilali, and Pickthall because it suggests a reason for an occurrence. Markedly, the receptor can deduce that worshipping has not yet occurred, otherwise 'you' 'the believers' are being Godfearing, and righteous (Al-Muttaqun). That offers the meaning of possibility in the clause following 'so that'. Therefore, the model verb, 'may', is utilized by the three translators to allude to the linguistic situational meaning of لعل. This linguistic contextual meaning of لعل is better understood and less confusing for the TL (target language) receptor. The three translators' use of dynamic equivalence, that is 'so that' gives an accurate sense of the meaning of Qur'ānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَّ in English. In this regard, Muslim scholars of grammar and lexicography have always maintained that the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ does not clearly convey 'perhaps'. Sometimes, grammarians and lexicographers recognized in the abridge comments that the

Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ means 'so that'. Aṭ-Ṭabarī (1989) claims that the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ cannot here (in Sūrat l-baqarah, verse 21) connote any doubt on the part of God about what could take place if the bigots and unbelievers were to serve their Lord.

Example Two
Source Surrah: Chapter (42) Sūrat l-shūrā (Consultation) verse 17.
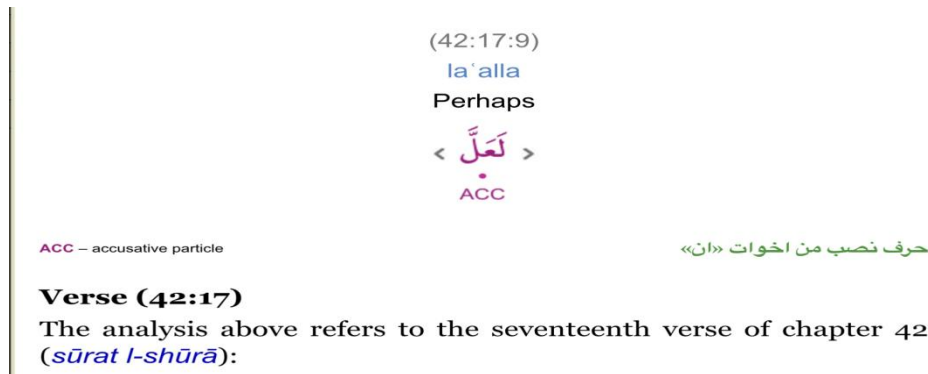**ST:(17:الشورى)** وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ
Target text:
  (1) Abdel Haleem: "How can you tell? The Last Hour <u>may well</u> be near". (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 312)
  (2) Khan and Al-Hilali: "And what can make you know that <u>perhaps</u> the Hour is close at hand?". (Al-Hilali & Khan, 1996, p. 656)
  (3) Pickthall: "It <u>may be</u> that the Hour is nigh". (Pickthall, 1930, p. 345)

The Analysis
1. The general intended meaning of the ayah
2. "That perhaps the Hour is close at hand. " This would encourage the believer (to do righteous deeds) for its own sake, and cast in him such horrifying threat as to urge him to be almost heedless about the life of the world. **Translatability and untranslatability of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ.in Sūrat l-shūrā (Consultation) verse 17.**


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(42:17:9)
la'alla
Perhaps
‹ لَعَلَّ ›
ACC
ACC – accusative particle                        حرف نصب من اخوات «ان»

Verse (42:17)
The analysis above refers to the seventeenth verse of chapter 42
(sūrat l-shūrā):
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Graph 2. Syntactic Parsing Tree Bank of Verse (42:17) on QAC.
Source https://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp?chapter=42&verse=17#(42:17:1)

The rendering styles of all the above-mentioned three translations have been carefully analyzed linguistically by the researchers who found that Abdel Haleem and Pickthall are quite close in their translation of the Qur'ānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَّ. Both Abdel haleem and Pickthall utilized the model auxiliary 'may'. It seems that both Abdel Haleem and Pickthall were influenced by each other, and their rendering styles are similar except for a few instances. For example, Abdel Haleem is quite different in his utilizing of the adverb 'well' and Pickthall in using the archaic 'nigh' and biblical style in his rendering of the ayah. The model auxiliary 'may' in the renderings of both Abdel Haleem and Pickthall conveys an accurate sense of 'likelihood' or 'probability' over time. Both Abdel Haleem and Pickthall are adequate in maintaining the linguistic and lexical context and preserve the intensity of the Message. Al-Hilali & Khan rendered the predicate of Qur'ānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَّ into a simple present tense phrase that suggests the future as its counterpart in its contextual meaning in English. Al-Hilali and Khan consider that the adverb 'perhaps' adequately implies possibility (Jawad, 2023; Emara, 2014; Jassem, 2014).

To conclude, the model auxiliary 'may' (a semi-verb) and 'perhaps' (an adverb) may create challenging for the receptor of the Holy Qur'ān in the target language, in sense that the word 'may' implies a future possibility. Regarding the pragmatic meaning or situational meaning of this verse, Abdel Haleem and Pickthall convey the meaning of "never knowing the definite time of the Hour (day of judgment l-qiyāmati الْقِيَامَةِ), i.e., likelihood. "Alternatively, the word' perhaps' also suggests future possibility.

Example Three
Source Surrah: Chapter (3) sūrat āl ʿim'rān (The Family of Imrān) **verse .72.**
ST : (72:ال عمران): الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَجْهَ النَّهَارِ وَاكْفُرُوا آخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ
Target text:
  (1) Abdel Haleem: "then at the end of the day reject it, <u>so that, they too may turn</u> back". (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 39)
  (2) Khan and Al-Hilali: "reject it at the end of the day, <u>so that they may turn</u> back". (Al-Hilali & Khan, 1996, p. 81)
  (3) Pickthall: "those who believe at the opening of the day, and disbelieve at the end thereof, <u>in order that they may return</u>". (Pickthall, 1930, p. 68)

The Analysis
1. The general intended meaning of the ayah

This indeed was one of their vexatious acts with which they meant to cast those Muslims who do not maintain firm faith in confusion regarding their belief; as they agreed that they are to display their belief in the morning by praying at dawn with Muslims; yet at the end of the day, they show up their apostasy in order that the ignorant among Muslims may say that they apostate because of a defect they surely know in our religion. Therefore, they said this "so that they may turn back" (Ibn Kathir, vol. 1, p. 227).

2. **Translatability and untranslatability of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in sūrat āl ʿim'rān (The Family of Imrān, verse 72).**

Here, Abdelhaleem and Khan and Al-Hilali render the accusative particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ into the conjunction "so that". Pickthall renders it into the model auxiliary 'may', accurately conveying the real sense of 'likelihood or probability'. Khan and Al-Hilali, Abdelhaleem and Pickthall's renderings also indicate the nuanced meaning or syntactic meaning of laʿallaلَعَلَّ .
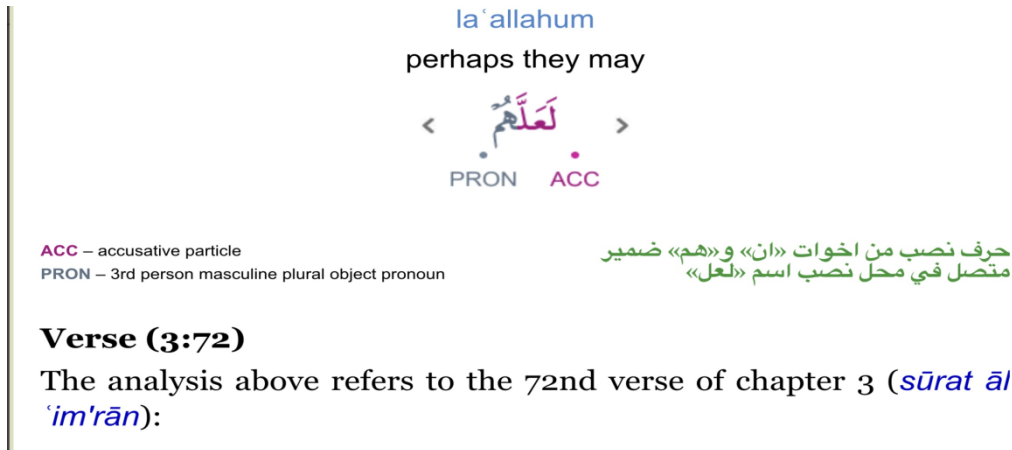
Graph 3. Syntactic Parsing Tree Bank of Verse (3:72) on QAC.
Source https://corpus.quran.com/wordmorphology.jsp?location=(3:72:16)

In this verse, the lexical expansion, 'so that they too may turn back' and 'so that they may turn back' rendered by Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali respectively, is a unique style used to best communicate a message and give a better understanding of the Holy Qur'ān in general and the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿallaلَعَلَّ in sūrat āl ʿim'rān (The Family of Imrān, verse 72) in particular. Pickthall uses 'that is' 'in order that' quite contrary to the Arabic text of sūrat āl ʿim'rān in general and the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿallaلَعَلَّ in particular. Abdel Haleem and Khan and Al-Hilali apply this style to preserve the grammatical context regarding the anticipation of the receptor of the Holy Qur'ān in the target language (English). Therefore, their translations seem better than that of Pickthall since their renderings of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ convey a better sense of the nuanced or syntactic meaning of the intended Message.

Example Four
Source Surrah. Chapter (23) sūrat l-mu'minūn (The Believers), verse, 100.
ST:(100:الموْمنون) : لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ
Target text:
   (1) Abdel haleem: "…so as to make amends for the things I neglected. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 219)
   (2) Khan and Al-Hilali: "So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!". (Al-Hilali & Khan, 1996, p. 464)
   (3) Pickthall: "That I may do right in that which I have left behind!". (Pickthall, 1930, p. 252)
The Analysis
1. **The general intended meaning of the ayah**

When a wrongdoer is dying, sees his fate and realizes the abhorrent nature of his deeds, he is filled with regret. Therefore, he asks that he be permitted to return to this world, not to enjoy its physical joys and indulge in its pleasures, but rather so that he can do the righteous deeds that he failed to do, for he had neglected his duty to Allah. Allāh, the Almighty tells us about the state of the disbelievers or those who were careless about the commands of Allāh, the Almighty, and what they then ask is to be returned to life to set right the wrongs they had committed during their lifetime (As-Sa'di, vol.6, p. 369).

2. **Translatability and untranslatability of the Qur'ānic Arabic particle laʿalla لَعَلَّ in sūrat l-mu'minūn (The Believers, verse 100).**

(23:100:1)

laʿallī

That I may

‹ لَعَلِّیَ · ›

PRON   ACC

ACC – accusative particle   حرف نصب من اخوات «ان» والیاء ضمیر متصل
PRON – 1st person singular object pronoun   في محل نصب اسم «لعل»

Verse (23:100)

The analysis above refers to the 100th verse of chapter 23 (*sūrat l-mu'minūn*):

Graph 4. Syntactic Parsing Tree Bank of Verse (23:100) on QAC.
Source https://corpus.quran.com/wordbyword.jsp?chapter=23&verse=100#(23:100:1

Here, the accusative particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَّ is rendered into the conjunction 'so that" and 'so' by Khan, and Al-Hilali and Abdel Haleem respectively. It is rendered into the model auxiliary 'may' by Pickthall that shows the real sense of 'likelihood or probability'. However, the meaning of the return from the dead in order do something right or to right previous wrongs is denoted by the conjunctions 'so that' and 'so".

With reference to renderings of the three translators for the accusative particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَ in sūrat l-mu'minūn (The Believers, verse 100), the meaning is very clear and the use of the conjunctions 'so', 'so that' and the model auxiliary 'may' have been used very carefully and appropriately in their respective contexts, thereby maintaining the intensity of the Holy Qurʾān in general and the nuanced meaning or syntactic meaning of the particle 'laʿalla' لَعَلَّ .

In the linguistic context, when rendering into English the Qurʾānic Arabic particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَ in sūrat l-mu'minūn (The Believers, verse 100), Abdel Haleem, Khan and Al-Hilali, and Pickthall take into account the receptor's expectations and the challenges he or she may face in understanding the verse. Hence, the over style is quite close to expression of the target language (English) through the translation of the Qurʾānic Arabic particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَ in sūrat l-mu'minūn (The Believers, verse 100).

The double conjunctions 'that' and 'so' which have been used by Pickthall ('That I may do right in that which I have left behind') are consistent with the style of the Qur'anic verse and are used appropriately in their linguistic context. The conjunction, 'so that', fully accommodates the expectation of the target language (English) receptor.

To conclude, the overall rendering of this verse maintains the Message by mean of conjunctions and model auxiliary words such as 'so that', 'so' and the model auxiliary 'may'. Moreover, the three translators' renderings of QurʾānicArabic particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَ in sūrat l-mu'minūn become so intense and crucial just by adjusting these conjunctional words and model auxiliary words. For example, 'so as to make amends for the things I neglected' is used by Abdel Haleem; 'So that I may do good in that which I have left behind' was rendered by Khan and Al-Hilali; and 'That I may do right in that which I have left behind' is rendered by Pickthall. This gives the better possible sense of the intended meaning of the Holy Qurʾān in general and the Qurʾānic Arabic particle laʿallaَّ لَعَلَ in sūrat l-mu'minūn in particular.

V. CONCLUSION

The usage of dynamic equivalence by the three translators (i.e., 'so that') gives an accurate sense of the meaning of Qurʾānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَ in English. In this regard, Muslim scholars of grammar and lexicography have always maintained that the Qurʾānic Arabic particle 'laʿalla' does not clearly convey 'perhaps'. Sometimes, grammarians and lexicographers recognized in the abridged of comments that the Qurʾānic Arabic Particle laʿalla لَعَلَ means 'so that'. Also, it was found that the three translators have comparatively succeeded in rendering the Qurʾānic Arabic laʿalla لَعَلَ accuratelyinto English. Most of the time, it is translated as 'so that', 'so', 'that' and into the model auxiliary may' to suggest the adverb 'perhaps'. To conclude, the model auxiliary 'may', a semi-verb, and 'perhaps' as an adverb, and conjunctions such as 'so', 'so that' and 'that', may pose difficulty in terms of their semotactic suitability for the receptor of the Qurʾānic Message in the target language (English), since the word 'may' suggests a subsequent possibility. The conjunctions, 'so', 'so that', and the model auxiliary 'may', have been used by the three translators. In regard to rendering adequacy, communication and comprehension of the Holy Qurʾān these renderings seem more appropriate as they convey the real sense of 'likelihood or probability'.

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Majda Babiker Ahmed Abdelkarim is currently a faculty member at King Khalid Saudi Arabia and formerly at Jazan University. Dr. Majda received her Ph.D., in Translation Studies from Omdurman Islamic University in 201 in translation studies. Dr. Majda has published numerous papers in indexed journals and several books on translation studies.

Formerly at Jazan University, **Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj** is currently a faculty member at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. Drs. Alhaj received his first Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Khartoum in 2003, his second Ph.D. in Translation Studies from Omdurman Islamic University, in 2014, his third Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Sudan University of Science and Technology in 2018, and his fourth Ph.D. in Pure Linguistics was obtained from Bahri University. Drs. Alhaj has published 190 papers in indexed journals and 50 books, 12 of which have been translated into ten languages internationally. Drs. Alhaj received the King Khalid University Award for Scientific Research Excellence (First Rank) in 2020.

Language Maintenance: The Case of Modern Standard Arabic Among Bilinguals

Nisreen N. Al-Khawaldeh[*]
Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

Omar I. Alomoush
Department of English Language, College of Arts, Tafila Technical University, Tafila, Jordan

Eman M. Al Khalaf
Department of English Language and Literature, School of Foreign Languages, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan

Yazan S. Almahameed
Department of English language and Translation, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Amman Arab University, Amman, Jordan

Abdullah A. Jaradat
Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, The Hashemite University, Zarqa, Jordan

Abstract—This study explores how Jordanians, especially bilinguals, can maintain the usage of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Despite the importance of this topic, it is a fairly unaddressed area of research in the Arabic context in general and Jordan in particular. The study contributes to knowledge by raising the awareness of Jordanians and authorities about the means necessary to maintain the usage of MSA among Jordanians. Data were collected via face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 50 Jordanian linguists and thematically analysed. The results revealed that many factors could contribute to the maintenance of MSA, including education systems, governmental policies, society, the media, and international relations. Specific actions to maintain MSA might include designing language policies in favour of MSA across different sectors; obtaining official recognition and social support; encouraging the dedication and motivation of educationalists, language specialists, and individuals; and raising awareness of the value of MSA. The study concludes with pedagogical implications and recommendations for further research.

Index Terms—bilingualism, identity, language maintenance, MSA, language policy

I. INTRODUCTION

Language has a fundamental value in the life of every nation. It is a tool for expressing thoughts, creating harmony between people, embodying cultural identity, and constructing civilizations (Khan, 2020). Maintaining an official language is vital to preserving national identity, which in turn necessitates adhering to a single language policy for the official language in multi-lingual and cultural contexts.

Language maintenance refers to 'the preservation of the use of a language by a speech community under conditions where there is a possibility of a shift to another language' (Ferguson, 1981, p. 530). It represents the ability of a language to preserve usage across domains by resisting the pressure of the dominant language (Baker, 2011) and considering the degree of its actual usage by speakers (Pauwels, 2016). Language maintenance remains a significant concern for families, educators, and linguists who endeavour to maintain target languages for the next generation (Abdelhadi, 2017; Cunningham, 2020).

Jordanians frequently switch between numerous vernacular varieties known as *ammiyyah* or *darijah* and English and rarely switch between these dialects and MSA. As a result, they commonly use a colloquial Arabic known as Jordanian Arabic (JA), resulting in concerns about a gradual decline in MSA in Jordan. This issue is worth further investigation, as it is clear that communication using MSA is a case of language death (Bani-Khaled, 2014).

The future of MSA is controversial among researchers and linguists (Al-Omari, 2013; Al-Attiyah, 2013). Though MSA is the most formal and prestigious form of Arabic in Jordan, it is a dialect that belongs to everyone and no one (Jaradat & Al-Khawaldeh, 2015). MSA has lately been affected by various sociolinguistic phenomena, including diglossia, code-switching, Arabization, and Englishization, that may indicate a deterioration (Bani-Khaled, 2014; Mizher & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2014; Atek et al., 2020). Combining MSA with English and colloquial varieties of Arabic

[*] nal-khawaldeh@hu.edu.jo

is commonplace in many Arab countries, including Jordan, and has affected youths' linguistic competency when writing in MSA (Khuwaileh & Shoumali, 2000; Albirini & Benmamoun, 2022; Alrwaita et al., 2022). Englishization and Arabization may also lead to English becoming a lingua franca, a medium of instruction, and a standard in chatting and texting. These factors imply that MSA is in danger of language death when its speakers cease to use it (UNESCO, 2003, p. 2) and pass it on to subsequent generations (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). Such challenges necessitate designing a comprehensive language policy for MSA as the official language of Jordan.

The ramifications of native language loss should not be neglected (Triebold, 2020). Endangered language communities risk losing cherished cultural practices (Hoffmann, 2009). Language loss thus affects speakers, linguists, and their communities. Linguists may lose a source of information for feeding their research due to reduced available data from target language speakers (Almurashi, 2017). Hence, language revival attempts contribute to research prosperity, communal reconciliation, capacity building, and cultural tourism (Almurashi, 2017). The presence of many languages in the same country threatens the development of indigenous languages, which may ultimately lead to linguistic oblivion (ALRahal, 2014; TNhemachena, 2022). Folkhard (1972) argues that glorifying the vernacular language in every Arab country would reduce understanding amongst the Arabs, resulting in divergence among Arab cultures and the destruction of Arab cultural identity.

Researchers should investigate MSA maintenance not only among Arabs living in foreign countries but also among Arabs in countries where Arabic is the native language (Almurashi, 2017; Bouhdima, 2022). Therefore, the researchers were motivated to conduct this research to assist and encourage the community to maintain MSA as a shared native language. Hale et al. (1992) agree that linguists must prevent the contemporary deterioration of many of the world's languages by documenting them and convincing nations to invest in language revival. Investigating endangered languages and the required procedures to preserve them is a very important research topic (Migge, 2020). Despite its significance, the literature reveals a scarcity of research on MSA and Jordanian native speakers of Arabic. The extant research focuses on MSA in communication (Bani-Khaled, 2014; Mizher & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2014) and the extensive shift from using native languages to English, including the effects of acquiring Arabic as L1 and English as L2 (Palfreyman & Karaki, 2019). Currently, the research does not address how MSA could be revived as a mother tongue and maintained as the medium of communication among Jordanians, especially bilinguals. Thus, this study is the first of its kind and raises one research question: What policies could contribute towards a comprehensive maintenance of Modern Standard Arabic among Jordanians, especially bilinguals?

Overall, the researchers intend for the results of the study to raise bilinguals' awareness of the significance of preserving MSA and generate different ways for maintaining MSA. Similarly, the study may enrich existing theories or models for language maintenance and contribute to establishing Revival Linguistics, which Zuckermann coins as a new linguistic discipline and paradigm. This new paradigm concerns the universal constraints and mechanisms of language reclamation, renewal, and revitalization. It draws insights from one language revival endeavour in order to revive other sleeping languages worldwide (Zuckermann & Walsh, 2011). Overall, this study's outcomes may apply to all Arabic-speaking communities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language maintenance is a crucial issue that has recently attracted researchers' attention (Zhang & Tsung, 2019; Tseng, 2020; Bleaman, 2022). It is indispensable in shaping personal, social, and ethnocultural identities (Tseng, 2020). Numerous theoretical frameworks explain language maintenance, management, and policies (Weinreich, 1974; Fishman, 2001; Holmes et al., 1993; Spolsky, 2021).

The present study draws from Fishman's (2001) model for reviving endangered languages and Spolsky's (2021) updated theory of language policy. Fishman's (2001) model proposes steps to direct and focus efforts to achieve revitalization and maintenance more effectively. These steps include encouraging adults to acquire the language, establishing a socially united populace of active speakers using that language, encouraging literacy in that language, and boosting the usage of that language among people of all age groups within state education, families, the workplace, local government services, and mass media.

Spolsky (2021) notes that language policy and management are necessary to 'survive in a world threatened by pandemics, climate change, and irresponsible governments' (Spolsky, 2021, p. xi). Language policy in Spolsky's (2021) theory is classified into ideology, practice, and management across key domains (e.g., individual, family, education, imperialism, and the nation-state). Spolsky (2021) emphasises the individual benefits of enlarging one's linguistic repertoire, the various non-linguistic variables in shaping language policy, and the difference between managers and advocates.

The research on MSA includes focuses on the significance of teaching Arabic (Daud & Ghani, 2017), reasons for the lack of use of MSA (Albalooshi et al., 2011), attitudes toward employing MSA in daily life (Bani-Khaled, 2014; Mizher & Al-Abed Al-Haq, 2014), and errors in writing MSA (Al-Yaari et al., 2013). Few studies were conducted by Jordanian researchers on MSA. Al-Abed Al-Haq and Al-Masaeid (2009) claim that the growing use of English in Jordan threatens Arabic use in numerous domains. They argue that language planning is ideologized because Arabic is central to the religious ideology of Islam. Thus, preserving Arabic is a matter of protecting the language of Islam and its civilization. Despite their perception of English as the language of the future, Jordanians value the role of Arabic as an effective

vehicle in daily communication, the media, education, and the Islamic Arabic civilization. Jaradat and Al-Khawaldeh (2015) accentuates the importance of teaching MSA to non-native speakers as a lingua franca, liberating it from the dichotomous classification it is always confined to with the spoken varieties.

The interest of the Arab world in this field of language policy appears to be relatively limited (Majadly, 2021). Certain research has focused on the policies adopted by parents to maintain Arabic. Hamed (2018) found that Libyan mothers often instituted Arabic-only policies at home, celebrated Islamic rituals regularly, enrolled their children in Arabic learning at school, and allowed them to watch Arabic TV channels. Attaallah (2020) found that, among Arabs in Sweden, Arabic was used as the only means of communication within the family and the community; this measure was a greatly valued symbol of ethnic, cultural, and religious identity.

Generally speaking, most studies done on Arabic maintenance mostly concentrate on English-speaking countries. Most use the term 'Arabic' without specifying which Arabic variety was maintained. Little research has been conducted on the maintenance of MSA among native speakers of Arabic. Consequently, this study explores whether MSA is maintained among the Arabs residing in Arabian countries and how the language can be maintained.

III. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study explores Jordanians' opinions about how MSA could be revived and maintained in Jordan, especially among bilinguals. Data were collected from 50 Jordanian linguists via semi-structured face-to-face interviews.

The interview is valid as a method because it serves the study's purpose. It facilitates collecting in-depth opinions, which may be used to determine how to maintain MSA. This research method is also flexible since it enables an in-depth investigation of the interviewee's social life (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The researcher may thus collect descriptions of the real-life experiences of the participants and their interpretations of the underlying meanings. According to Berg (2007, p. 96), conducting interviews enables interviewees to 'speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings'. The interviews were thematically analysed by exploring the data for specific patterns and meanings to find themes. The data were examined for broad themes, coded, and then reviewed to represent the relevant content.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results revealed the participants' suggestions regarding an effective process for maintaining MSA, which were classified under different themes: Responsibility of the education system, society and the media, governmental policies, and the international relations. Each of these themes is a domain in which policy work and processes should change to support the maintenance of MSA. It appears that many ways could support reviving MSA, and no one particular way could unavoidably work alone to maintain it. As an alternative, a multidimensional approach may be indispensable. This finding indicates that maintaining the usage of MSA necessitates some joint efforts and better collaborative action by several parties, including individual speakers, linguists, the community, the media, governments, and Arabs, more broadly.

A. Responsibility of the Education System

The participants revealed great outrage due to the disappearance of MSA as a tool for communication. They ascribed the absence of MSA in communication to the educational system; for example, one participant stated, '*it's our schools' fault*'. They highlighted the vital role that educational institutions could have in the revival process of MSA, stating, '*To be honest, our educational system should hold the great responsibility of encouraging the use of MSA among bilinguals*'. The education system could play a role in maintaining MSA on different levels: the emotional, the theoretical, and the practical. On the emotional level, all educational institutions should work hard to instill a love of MSA in younger generations in the early years of their education through many activities. For example, one participant stated, '*teachers themselves should inculcate the love of MSA among them', and 'they should act as their model in using MSA as their medium of communication*'. This could encourage younger generations to taste the aesthetic aspects of Arabic.

Many participants also stated that teachers should promote interest in research among their students by presenting examples of Islamic thought and Arab literature. For example, one participant said '*as simple as that motivating students to explore Arab libraries and see their most brilliant works*'. Teachers could play a significant role in explaining the origins of MSA in their students' minds and shaping the latter's experience and attitudes regarding the language. Influencing students in such a manner would be important due to the negative feelings regarding MSA expressed by several speakers. Such attitudes make it challenging for linguists and other interested members of society to gain support for revitalization. Thus, this finding indicates the decisive role that language attitudes can play in maintaining a target language.

On the theoretical level, a robust educational system needs to encourage learning and using MSA by redesigning the school and university curricula to stimulate their ambition. One participant stated, '*it is noticeable that there is a huge gap between our curricula and its implementation. What is given in MSA in textbooks does not require them to use it*'. Designing new educational materials written in MSA without mistakes preserves Arab cultural heritage in schools and

universities and may enable students to achieve proficiency in MSA; as clarified by a participant '*They are not provided with motivating competitive materials and activities, I think they should be revisited*'.

Planning a specific course at the school and university level about MSA and its significance to the community is important. For example, one participant stated, '*Ask any bilingual about the importance of MSA; you will be surprised by their answers. They are not fully aware of this gift given to them by Allah since Arabic is the language of the Holy Qur'an'. We should raise their awareness of its significance since it is not only symbols but a method of thought, an integrated vision extended by a unique civilized experience'.* A special course for teaching Arabic through the *Qur'an* could help link the MSA to its origin, enhancing the understanding of the *Qur'an* and MSA. For example, one participant said '*I believe that the Holy Qur'an should be our main source for teaching Arabic and other materials as you will not only learn religious rituals and commercial transactions terms, but also science and standard Arabic rules'.* The newly designed materials should be more connected to cultural heritage and history. For example, students could customize an Arabic language journal in school that can be published containing students' ideas under the supervision of their proficient teachers; as suggested by a participant '*Why not we encourage them to use MSA in producing their creative works and publish them in a special journal'*.

On the practical level, participants saw that school reform should spare no effort to handle the issue of MSA as a medium of learning, teaching, and communication, such as when one participant stated, '*Imagine the fruitful outcome of using MSA in learning, teaching, and communicating inside and outside classrooms'.* Magboul (2013) attributes the deficiency of MSA in educational institutions in Arab countries to the many 'profit-driven' schools that have advanced the learning and use of foreign languages at the expense of MSA.

Even teachers of Arabic courses use colloquial Arabic rather than MSA. Teachers and instructors at high academic institutes should be encouraged to use MSA through an authorised policy to encourage young generations to use it. For example, one participant stated, '*Teachers will not use* it *unless there* is *a strict policy that dictates using MSA with and emphasizing its significance for them'*. Teachers should therefore strive for correct pronunciation and eloquent Arabic style in their readings, explanations, and addresses to their pupils because; as noted by one participant 'the students will not learn the MSA if their teachers are incompetent in Arabic'. Teachers themselves should use MSA as a medium of communication while teaching Arabic and other sciences because it would make them good examples for their students to follow.

Teachers, therefore, require training to obtain Arabic skills, such as a professional certificate. They should also be trained in new methods and techniques that depend on understanding and communicating instead of memorising and teaching grammar as a separate topic. They should use MSA in teaching other disciplines to achieve the desired goals; as stated by one participant '*science, maths, social sciences, ...should be taught using MSA'*. Teachers must fully prepare their classes to satisfy the wishes of their students, help students listen to their lessons, and respond to their advice. The teachers must make their students understand that MSA is the means to understand other sciences, and they will not receive the full benefit unless they learn the application of the rules of MSA.

Accordingly, students should practice speaking MSA in general education to contribute to their educational environment. Providing free courses and seminars for beginners, illiterate orphans, and parents will help eliminate illiteracy and complement the roles of school, community and family. As one participant stated, '*I think with more supportive courses, students will be competent in using MSA'*. Encouraging the use of MSA would promote understanding the importance and use of the Arabic worldwide. Some participants stated that schools should offer weekly intensive MSA teaching sessions to allow students to develop their MSA proficiency on an ongoing basis. A participant emphasised the importance of providing daily lessons at libraries to encourage students to read books and stories written in MSA and submit reports on those works in perfect MSA; A participant stated that '*I have never heard of free library classes given to students when one of their teachers is absent'*.

Moreover, special dictionaries that distinguish between Arabic words and those of foreign origin could be disseminated to students to help them quickly determine the difference as stated by a participant '*It is a good idea to encourage students to hold a MSA pocket dictionary as that of English'*. Furthermore, educational supervisors should assess teachers' ability to teach MSA proficiently; for example, one participant observed that '*If teachers are aware that their MSA usage will be evaluated, I am certain that they will excel'*.

In addition, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Culture should work collaboratively to establish centers or institutes at universities that aim at strengthening MSA for native speakers and teaching it to native speakers of other languages. For instance, one participant affirmed that, '*Sometimes I feel that the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, and the Ministry of Culture work independently. There should be strong liaising between them for the sake of encouraging and maintaining MSA usage'.* Such centers and institutes could work on highlighting the relationship between Arabic and technologies, empowering Arabic learners, and educating community members about the significance of Arabic and its various uses. This would help create a generation that believes in the significance of MSA and wishes to instil it in others. They could also collaboratively design brochures of some expressions in MSA and distribute them; as suggested by one participant, '*Distributing brochures and* mini dictiona*ries in MSA is an interesting and beneficial idea'*. This, in turn, will make them feel that Arabic is as important as other languages. Another idea that emerged was distributing mini-dictionaries for visitors on board or touring the Arab countries.

Additionally, these three parties could cooperate in designing a national test for Arabic language proficiency similar to English ones. Vigorous policies are requisites, among which is the one related to teachers. Teaching educational courses in MSA in schools and universities should be executed in a simpler and more attractive way. Increased hours should be allocated to teach the student how to express themselves and write stories or dramas in MSA. These results also align with Johnson's (2016) findings that education (i.e., curricula) plays a significant role in creating adult speakers of a language.

Arabic linguists could complement the role of educational institutions. There should also be a convergence between universities and communities for the overall process of reviving MSA; as one participant noted, '*Linguists, researchers, and specialists should* work *hand in hand towards this worthy goal*'. They should determine distinctive ways to transform language from the theoretical to the everyday, such as by speaking MSA everywhere. In this way, language scholars remind people of MSA's significance and how they can make it a lifestyle. They could also try to Arabicize concepts recently appear in other languages.

Moreover, interpreters of the *Holy Qur'an* should use MSA to enable non-native speakers to use MSA properly, for example, by developing a workshop for the Arab Linguistic Association to use worldwide. This means that more research should be published in Arabic. This finding supports Ladefoged's (1992) claim that, 'In this changing world, the task of the linguist is to lay out the facts concerning a given linguistic situation' (p. 811). Linguists and community members should train native speakers to speak MSA and conduct their research in this language. They should organise annual exhibitions to demonstrate novel practices for teaching the MSA. In addition, they could conduct research exploring how advanced technologies may raise MSA competency and proficiency at the school level. Additionally, researchers should work to make internationally recognised indexes, such as Scopus and Thomson Reuters, publish studies in Arabic. This finding accentuates the role of linguists in making the revival effort successful. Consequently, it is consistent with Thieberger's (2002) finding that linguists should provide rigorous theoretical consideration of how the fruitful language revival process works.

B. Governmental Policies

The participants also emphasised that even with awareness of the role of education and linguists in language maintenance, these efforts still may not be fruitful. The government is likely to be far more powerful in determining the destiny of such efforts; as one participant asserted, *'Whatever we do as teachers, specialists, and linguists to promote MSA usage will not work out unless we are backed by governmental support'*. Therefore, the government should produce a national plan for promoting MSA based on the high-quality practice, such as when one participant stated, '*designing a comprehensive national plan concerning MSA usage is a must*'. This type of intervention will require a long preliminary period of sensibly discerning, listening, learning, and describing the target community precisely, but it would help to assist and inspire language maintenance advocates. The government shoulders the responsibility of raising the economic and social status of the people, which may help to promote the language. This idea was accentuated by a participant, '*The government must be held accountable for working hard on elevating the status of Arabic speakers in and outside the country*'. This is because any influx of wealth to the nation can help to advance the community's status and, consequently, elevate the standing of the language, for example, by offering monetary resources for establishing and funding revitalization programmes. This suggestion supports Dorian's (1998, p. 13) argument that when people witness an ongoing proliferation in prosperity; specifically, they stated 'it may be that its usefulness lies above all in the fostering of a middle class with the social self-confidence to insist on traditional identity and heritage.' In other words, an improved economic and social status results in self-possession that assists in maintaining languages (Nettle & Romaine, 2000, p. 31).

Some participants believe that there should be a political decree that Jordanian universities use MSA, such as when one participant stated, '*Enforcing a political decree for employing MSA is a necessary step in the right direction*'. The government can also issue specific rules that necessitate the use of the language in official contexts at home and abroad; these measures would make knowledge of the MSA more cherished in the public and foreign spheres. Germany is a good example; it is a country with significant pride in its official German language and uses it in every context worldwide. Governmental recognition could also enhance the language's prestige. The government should also allocate funds and incentives for establishing an academy of the Arabic language comparable to that of the Hebrew language, which was established to serve many purposes. These purposes include investigating and compiling the Hebrew lexicon consistent with its historical layers, studying the structure and offshoots of the Hebrew language, and directing the expansion of Hebrew in light of its potential, and its daily and academic needs through setting its vocabulary, grammar, and characters. Several charitable groups and associations could also support the utilisation of MSA by people in general.

Maintaining MSA could also be achieved through arranging competitions for all ages with a special focus on young people and giving prizes could be a step in the right direction; as emphasized by one participant '*Never ever underestimate small endeavours, such as organizing contests to foster using MSA. This could help a lot*'. The government should also consider promoting cultural tourism to Arabic-speaking countries to learn about these cultures and languages. Campaigns that raise awareness of MSA, for example, with a slogan that 'Our language is our identity' may stimulate passion and interest in MSA. One promising step that might facilitate the revival process of MSA is the governmental acknowledgment of MSA as the official language for official affairs, electronic apps, and programmes.

'What could also help is to see and hear MSA everywhere in public institutions, programmes, and so on'. For example, Arabic should be used on road signs and in the names of shops. This means unifying the language in the country to be MSA in all aspects. The government could also require and accredit MSA proficiency as a condition for graduation and applying for a job in Arab countries. Their efforts would culminate in good marketing for establishing specific offices in foreign countries for teaching MSA to use when visiting Arab countries. The government could design toys or games specifically for teaching MSA. This highlights that, with the government's help, communities could be empowered to promote MSA.

C. Responsibility of the Media

The participants emphasised the significance of the media in promoting the use of MSA. The media can play a crucial role in augmenting the prestige of a target language; as one participant noted, '*The mass media should undertake the task of asserting* [MSA's] *significance and popularizing the standard Arabic language due to [the media's] impact on the expression of opinion, ability to guide people, and persuasive power'*. Enriching the prestige of a language is essential to saving it from being abandoned. People may feel it is essential to preserve their language if it is used in the media. Using the MSA in media could prove that the language can function successfully in the modern era and offer native speakers of Arabic more opportunities to hear the language frequently. MSA could be used in different forms of television content, including news coverage; documentaries; and educational, health, and political programmes, to reinforce pride in the language. Radio can be used to promote people's awareness of the significance of MSA and can contribute to the development of an educated and cultured generation that could become the core of a scientific Arabic society. Depicting the use of MSA as a scientific language could reinforce the view that Arabs do not simply imitate others in pursuit of prestige and modernization. One participant suggested that new media forms using MSA aimed at children be developed. Such content should suit children's learning styles and promote the use of MSA. As the participant noted, '*We should pay more attention to our children and encourage them to start adopting vernacular and foreign languages through watching cartoons'*. Specific attention should be devoted to the support that technology can offer, as both technology and social media represent effective and accessible means of communication for MSA speakers.

D. Social Responsibility

The participants affirmed that languages might vanish if their speakers did not appreciate the value of saving their mother tongues. The process begins with native speakers, who should reinforce the value of MSA and appreciate using it, exemplified by one participant's statement that '*There is a strong relationship between language and the social actor (human), where without the existence of language, speakers would not exist and vice versa'*. Another participant stated that '*Speakers of MSA should not feel inferior; rather, they should be proud of themselves'*. It is due to their feelings of inferiority toward foreign cultures and languages that modern generations have started boycotting MSA. Al-Omari (2013) claims that society is responsible for promoting other languages at the expense of MSA, for example, by naming shops and restaurants in English or by the job seekers who demand that curriculum vitae be written in English. Thus, MSA may only be saved with the help of the language community, as in the case of France and Germany. Baker (1988) asserts that a speaker's attitudes are learned, not inherited predispositions. Furthermore, they are one of the most essential factors for maintaining a language. Muliawati and Yusnida (2022) likewise assert that language maintenance cannot be achieved if there is a negative perception of the language, which is illustrated in one participant's statement that '*If we continue to feel that speakers of other languages are much better than us, we will not preserve MSA'*. Any language will not be preserved unless its speakers genuinely want to utilise it in daily interaction. Consequently, raising public awareness and increasing positive attitudes towards the target language may play a significant role. Jordanian Bilinguals must realise that MSA is as prestigious and essential as any other language. Thus, Jordanians should have a stronger interest in learning and using MSA. Each sector must implement and analyse each strategy to see which programme, method, and approach work best for the community's needs and wishes.

Ongoing initiatives by Jordanians are needed to reclaim MSA and stop imitating others and the obsession with foreign cultures, as mentioned by one participant, '*We should take the initiative to stop blindly imitating others just because they are globally recognized'*. These initiatives could persuade young people that MSA is useful, relevant, and desirable worldwide. People should stop thinking that growth and evolution are directly connected to learning foreign languages; instead, MSA should be the primary language. This would make them appreciate MSA.

Parents should encourage their children to speak MSA daily at home; as one participant stated '*You frequently hear parents saying, "we want our kids to be perfect in speaking English"; why not MSA?'*. A special focus should be on talking with kids in MSA because they acquire language rapidly and spontaneously. When they are six, they have a unique linguistic ability, which could make them a leading user of MSA, such as when one participant stated, '*The family should be responsible for preserving MSA, as they must help their children speak it in thei*r *first years of* life *so that* they *believe that MSA is their mother tongue'*. Parents and their children should listen to videos of speakers proficient in MSA. '*The easiest way to develop proficiency in MSA is through listening to various types of movies. Besides learning the language, you will learn its culture as well'*. This finding meshes well with other researchers' (Aziz et al., 2020; Yusuf et al., 2022) findings that parents play a significant role in spreading the target language. Jordanians should frequently watch various films and documentaries in MSA. People should also place a particular

focus on reading the *Holy Qur'an*, understanding its vocabulary, and using this language in daily life '*Considering our rich source*, the *Holy Qur'an', which* has been *preserved till now, we have to rely on* it *heavily for learning words, expressions, grammar*, and so on'. Jordanian EFL learners could also replace commonly used foreign terms with MSA ones; as suggested by one participant '*E*ncouraging children to read and learn the Holy Qur'an would help them acquire more MSA lexicon and eventually use it'.

Furthermore, the number of native speakers of Arabic is increasing abroad; they quickly adopt the foreign language as their lifestyle and forget using Arabic as their medium of communication; as noted by one participant '*It is a disaster that many families are keen for children to learn and use the foreign language and this phenomenon is expanding, despite the risks it entails*'. Therefore, this is a reminder that they also must continue using MSA and teaching it to their kids. This idea supports Nhemachena's (2022, p. 167) call for emphasising the significance of 'socializing agent and the initiator of language policies that drive the linguistic decisions of the family'. These outcomes are consistent with Fillmore's (2000) and Chimbutane and Gonçalve's (2023) results that emphasise the significance of the family in maintaining the target language through regular communication with their children at home and with outside community.

E. The International Relations

The participants also emphasised the necessity of international joint efforts, such as when one participant stated, '*It is the responsibility of all Arabs and the Islamic nation*; *facing this challenge must be a collective confrontation to find effective solutions*'. The participants asserted that preserving MSA is the duty of all Arabs, so any initiative in one country should be supported by others.

> How will nations survive if their children abandon using their language? Therefore, preserving MSA has now become a sacred, national, and legitimate duty in light of the sway of the electronic invasion that is taking place now. There must be an Arab national project in which all Arab governments participate to develop new mechanisms to save MSA from this collapse and retreat.

The participants suggested that an active and influential language policy should be applied across Arabic-speaking countries to resolve the issue of the absence of a unified mother tongue and linguistic fragmentation. The latter was highlighted by Suleiman (2004) '*Yes, a project or a unified language policy adopted by all Arab governments and Arab and Islamic institutions, even if it is under the umbrella of the League of Arab States, or an umbrella that the Arabs accept*'. A unified MSA language planning policy should be designed, adopted, implemented, and evaluated across Arab countries. Hence, foreign learners of Arabic and Arab learners of foreign languages will not face the problem of dealing with many varieties of Arabic. This finding meshes well with Jaradat and Al-Khawaldeh's (2015) call for teaching MSA Arabic as a lingua franca for learners of Arabic. Considering MSA an essential part of their identity, all Arabs should work hard to preserve it. Nofal (2011) and Ennaji (2005) emphasised the significance of Arabic for uniting all members of a community. According to Fishman (2011), a strong sense of identity could motivate language maintenance. Accordingly, this finding supports Sabbah's (2015, p. 60) call for the *'Arabs to take serious actions to stop any deterioration of their language as language represents their identity'*.

The participants also call for resolving the issue concerning MSA being sometimes unable to produce scientific terminology for generations overwhelmed by technological revolutions and crises such as COVID-19 as stated by many participants, *'The Arab nation needs modern linguistic terminology'*. *'Arabs should absorb all new scientific terms; this requires specialists to make their considerable efforts in choosing useful and valid terms for various new aspects of science, invention and thought'.* They advocate developing an MSA corpus as a fundamental step to enable practical experience in its implementation.

> MSA is still in urgent need of more corpus and dictionaries to accommodate many of general and specialized vocabulary mentioned in foreign books as this would ensure that the Arabic language keeps pace with the civilization development.

Language planning and corpus planning are usually inseparable since corpus planning promotes the standardisation of the national language (Yashiro, 2012). It aids in the codification and elaboration of MSA linguistic terms needed to cope with new fields of use in diverse contexts. Language specialists should convene to develop strategies to benefit from technological developments to develop and preserve MSA through the planning of MSA corpora. Language specialists could also benefit from Arabicization by creating Arabic-derived terminologies for representing foreign neologisms within Arabic. This technique could help preserve the linguistic purism, standardise the scientific content, and facilitate access to science and technology databases (Al-Qahtani, 2000). Thus, specialists across the Arab world should adopt a well-organized strategy in order to promote Arabicization at higher education institutions. Storing huge text and speech databases on computers will be essential for further implementation, assessment, and research. This strategy aligns with other researchers' (i.e., Allwood & Hendrikse, 2003; Sabbah, 2015) outcomes, accentuating the value of corpus planning. Implementing NLP applications is required to facilitate understanding and learning MSA.

Overall, the findings support Fishman's (2001) and Spolsky's (2021) models since MSA maintenance could be achieved gradually and with support from many sectors. The essential task is approaching the problem from all directions by boosting the power of MSA, creating a community of practice using different immersion techniques, extending its usage to many domains, and enhancing coordination in the planning and implementation of the language. The findings support Kendall's (2001) call for more extensive joint efforts of national and regional sectors and

grassroots at homes and schools.

V. CONCLUSION

This paper aims to emphasise the significance of MSA in communication by illuminating the necessary safeguards for its usage. Any efforts require enthusiastic society members, families encouraging respect and loyalty to MSA, an improvement of the political status of MSA, and support from educational institutions, the media, and linguists. All these factors contribute to an effective language policy. Attaining governmental recognition can be advantageous for increasing the official status of MSA, procuring fiscal resources to promote its usage, and promoting its use in various communities. The supreme role of academics is that of advisor and organiser, as determined by the community's needs. Although the maintenance process of MSA requires a great deal of knowledge, expertise, and efforts across sectors, it can result in personal, educational, and governmental empowerment, as well as a greater sense of pride among the people for their heritage and purpose in life.

These findings can benefit learners, teachers, researchers, linguists, and other segments of the Arab community. The study concludes with recommendations for further research avenues, such as promoting the importance of Arab nationalism in maintaining MSA, exploring ways to change Arab's negative attitudes toward MSA, and stimulating the widespread use of MSA as a lingua franca. This study presents several ways to build successful language policies to be adopted nationally and internationally and calls others to implement them.

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Nisreen Naji Al-Khawaldeh completed her PhD in Linguistics at the University of Bedfordshire (United Kingdom) in 2014. She is currently an Associate professor at the Department of English Language and Literature at the Hashemite University. She has wide-ranging teaching and assessment experience in different universities in Jordan. She is interested in General Linguistics, TEFL, Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, Translation and Discourse Analysis. She participated in different related conferences and has many publications in these fields.

Omar Ibrahim Alomoush is an Associate Professor of linguistics at Tafila Technical University, Jordan. He holds a PhD in linguistics from the University of Liverpool, UK. His research interests include onomastics, sociolinguistics, English and globalisation, language policy and planning, linguistic landscape, Arabic semantics and pragmatics. He has published several papers in sociolinguistics and linguistic landscape in prestigious journals such as Asian Englishes (Routledge), English Today (Cambridge University Press) and International Journal of Multilingualism (Routledge). His email is alomoushomar@ttu.edu.jo.

Eman Mohammad Al Khalaf is an associate professor of linguistics at the University of Jordan with expertise in experimental syntax and semantics. She earned her MA and Ph.D. degrees in linguistics and cognitive science from the University of Delaware. Eman's career is marked by a record of exceptional research published in esteemed academic journals.

Yazan Shaker Almahameed is a Ph.D. holder in English Linguistics with eight years of teaching experience. He is currently acting as the head of the English Language and Translation Department at Amman Arab University. He is concerned with scholarly research papers in general linguistics, specifically syntax, semantics, discourse analysis, pragmatics and phonetics. During his academic experience, he has published more than fourteen research articles in reputable journals and taught courses for both bachelor's and Master's students. His email is yazanalmahameed@aau.edu.jo.

Abdullah Ahmad Jaradat graduated from linguistics department at the University of Kansas in 2007 and he is now an Associate Professor of English at The Hashemite University, Jordan. He has been teaching English semantics and pragmatics. He chaired the Dept. of English Language and Literature, and also directed The Language Center at HU. He has published several research papers on discourse analysis and sociolinguistic topics. His previous and current research interests are English writing, English proverbs, and second language learning.

The Impact of Utilizing YouTube Videos via the Blackboard Platform on Developing the Interpreting Skills of Saudi Translation Students: King Khalid University Faculty's Perspectives

Mohammed H. Albahiri
Faculty of Education, King Khalid University, Abha, Asir, Saudi Arabia

Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj*
English Unit, Applied College at Dhahran Al-Janoub, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Today, YouTube videos are considered one of the most influential means of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). As a result, this study was carried out to investigate the perspectives of the EFL and translation staff at King Khalid University on the impact of utilizing YouTube videos via the Blackboard platform on developing the interpreting skills of Saudi students of translation. To attain the objectives of the study, the two authors adopted the descriptive survey method because of its appropriateness. For the collection of data, a 15-item questionnaire was distributed to a sample comprised of 100 EFL and translation staff members who were randomly selected from several colleges of King Khalid University during the 2023 trimester. The findings of this study showed that a majority of EFL and translation staff members had positive attitudes towards utilizing YouTube to develop certain components of interpreting competence of Saudi students of Translation. The participants also believe that YouTube videos can be used to teach both translation and interpreting, particularly in terms of improving the speaking and listening skills of Saudi students in translation and enabling them to interpret and render texts fluently, accurately, and confidently. Also, participants believe that YouTube videos can help these students divide the text into distinguishable parts or perceptible units.

Index Terms—interpreting, competence, faculty perspectives, students of translation, YouTube videos

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the advent of the Information Age around the 1970s, technology has been finding its way into education. For example, the utilization of the Blackboard platform has greatly increased in universities and colleges around the world today. Blackboard is a learning management system (LMS) that essentially provides users with an education support plan and assists with the planning, dissemination, and assessment of students' learning outcomes (Tseng, 2020; Little-Wiles & Naimi, 2011; Moonsamy & Govender, 2018). Literature has shown that the Blackboard platform has a great impact on teaching and learning both within and outside the classroom.

Learning takes place in a setting or context, which is influenced by teachers who are responsible for providing education and promoting learning, whether this is online or via face-to-face classes (Pittaway, 2012; Bryson & Hand, 2007; Garrett, 2011). The Blackboard platform offers students the opportunity not only to participate more in their learning but also to acquire and cultivate knowledge independently by using Web-based resources. Instructors need to adapt their role and teaching practices to make this transition to a part-digital learning environment, and students will have to do the same (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Anderson, 1997; Brophy, 1988). Moreover, students also need to take active control of their own learning and/or training. Additionally, distance learning requires technologies such as the Blackboard platform, the Internet, and supportive software tools. King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia is one of those universities that have adopted the Blackboard platform (Carvalho et al., 2011) to improve teaching and learning, and was well prepared in terms of financing, acquiring, and implementing technology.

The pervasive adoption of Blackboard over a relatively short period has initiated a tremendous need for scholarly research, analytical studies, high-level achievers, perspectives, and opinions around the globe. Literature on the Blackboard platform online and in long-distance education is abundant in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, especially in terms of the transition to studying from home during the COVID-19 crisis (Almogren, 2022; Almelhes, 2021; Khan et al., 2022).

Today, translating and interpreting are essential for human communication as they enable people to get to know each other, communicate with others, and share information. As English is a universal language, millions of human beings

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* Corresponding Author

around the world study it, and the population of every country, including Saudi Arabia where it is first taught to students in primary school, should be learning it.

The advantages of utilizing YouTube videos for the teaching and learning of English have been well-documented by researchers, instructors, and academics. For example, Multisilta et al. (2012) reported that YouTube is not only one of the most public and popular Internet sites but also the second most visited sight after Google (Allgaier, 2020; Alhaj & Abahiri, 2020). Several studies have revealed that YouTube videos are a popular source of information for science, education, politics, marketing, health, entertainment, learning, and teaching. In 2005, "Me at the Zoo" was the first video to become available online on YouTube and countless videos have been posted ever since.

A. Objectives of the Study

The first aim of this study was to investigate the impact of utilizing YouTube videos to develop the interpreting skills of students of translation in general and their speaking competence in particular. This investigation involved seeking the opinions of staff members of the King Khalid University EFL faculty members. The second purpose of the study was to examine the extent to which YouTube videos can help improve the speaking skills of Saudi students in translation and enable them to interpret and translate with fluency, accuracy, and confidence. To achieve the study's two objectives, the authors prepared a survey comprising 20 statements. Participants responded to each statement on a five-point Likert scale.

B. Research Questions

Aligned with the two objectives of the study, the research questions guiding this study are:
1. What are the opinions of King Khalid University's EFL faculty members regarding the usefulness of utilizing YouTube Videos for the development of various interpreting skills required by Saudi students of translation?
2. To what extent can YouTube videos help improve the speaking and listening skills of Saudi students of translation and enable them to interpret and translate texts with fluency, accuracy, and confidence?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Using YouTube Videos for Teaching and Learning

Over the last two decades, YouTube videos have evolved and steadily increased in popularity. YouTube has become a fruitful and pertinent platform for social media users because it offers various views and activities. Moreover, they can improve the English teaching and learning process. Its content can be employed by EFL students or students of translation to improve the four basic language skills and interpreting competence (Saed et al., 2021; Alhaj & Abahiri, 2020; Albahlal, 2019; Mustafa, 2018). Moreover, YouTube videos can help EFL or translation students develop cooperative skills, teamwork, the ability to communicate, technological competence, brainstorming, creative thinking, information sharing, and knowledge associated with English learning and teaching, as well as forms of knowledge information.

Today, YouTube videos are considered the most influential means of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). EFL students or students of translation can watch YouTube videos to improve various areas of competence such as spoken and written skills and to develop various interpreting strategies (Brook, 2011; Sherman, 2003; Othman, 2023). Indeed, YouTube video is a tool that is extremely valuable and immensely helpful for both EFL faculty members and students because it can play a pivotal role in teaching and learning English as a foreign language, particularly since it offers numerous sources.

B. The Role of YouTube Videos

Today, YouTube videos are a basic element of the Internet and have become part of everyday life for many people. With the emergence of social networks and innovative smartphone devices, the reputation and influence of YouTube videos have greatly increased (Yang & Qian, 2011; Spathis & Gorcitz, 2011; Che & Lin, 2015).
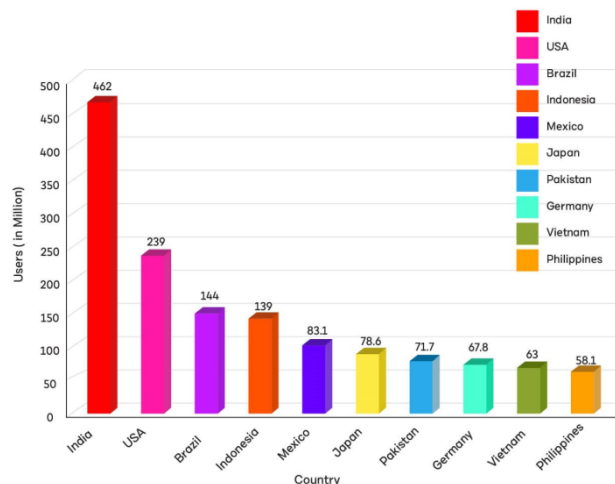
Figure1. YouTube Users by Country as of October 2023
(https://www.globalmediainsight.com/blog/youtube-users-statistics/#second)

A plethora of YouTube videos have been designed for educational or instructional purposes and can play an important role in representing information or determining approaches and discovering techniques to improve teaching and learning practices. They support the process of learning as they enable EFL or translation students to develop their reading, writing, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, and translation skills, utilizing the Blackboard or other community technology that facilitates the sharing of knowledge with other EFL students regardless of time and location.

YouTube is a well-known, dedicated video-sharing platform, with more than 1,000,000,000 users, accounting for nearly 33% of the Internet community (YouTube, 2016). YouTube videos allow their users to communicate, perceive, cooperate, and, first and foremost, evaluate their communication system. In 2016, it was reported by YouTube that a considerable number of hours are spent every day by YouTube users, therefore racking up billions of views daily. The advancement of multifaceted digital components and devices has encouraged users to engage with YouTube via different hardware platforms and interfaces such as Blackboard, laptops, PC hardware, smartphones, and tablets. Moreover, the communication style that Blackboard staff members utilize for relationship-building with their EFL students is another significant advantage of this technology. Moreover, research on utilizing YouTube videos via Blackboard has revealed that these videos help strengthen relationships between teachers and their EFL students. YouTube videos give EFL students and students of translation opportunities to listen, perceive, and identify how native speakers communicate with others. It has been shown that such videos enable students to make quicker and better progress in terms of improving their language and translation skills and enhancing their interpreting competence (Nofrika, 2019; Utz & Wolfers, 2022; Almurashi, 2016).

C. Previous Studies

Numerous studies have been carried out concerning the utilization of YouTube videos to develop language competence and linguistic skills. These studies have brought forth tremendous advantages, particularly in teaching and learning. However, to date, and the best of the current researchers' knowledge, no study has been conducted to investigate the opinions of faculty members regarding the impact of utilizing YouTube Videos via the Blackboard platform to develop components of interpreting competence of Saudi students of translation at King Khalid University. Thus, this study will address this literature gap and research vacuum.

Again, it is important to point out that many researchers have examined the use of YouTube in improving students' language competence and linguistic skills. For example, in their study, Alhaj and Albahiri (2020) found that the utilization of YouTube videos is significant as it can enhance students' retention capability through visual aids and help students overcome the fear of speaking.

The findings of a study carried out by Saed et al. (2021) revealed substantial progress in the speaking performance of EFL students exposed to the YouTube video experiment rather than the traditional group. The study also indicated that the experimental group of EFL students showed comparatively further improvements than the traditional group.

Binmahboob (2020) reported that English language teachers believe that YouTube videos are a very useful teaching tool as they help improve the speaking skills of high school students. The study also demonstrated that high school teachers have positive attitudes toward YouTube videos.

Boltiziar and Munkova (2023) examined the effect of utilizing subtitled YouTube videos in listening comprehension lessons on EFL students' listening skills and their trustworthiness from the perspective of the second language learner. The authors found that EFL students made considerable progress during the first two quarters of the term and greatly benefited from being able to meet their requirements when learning online.

Nofrika (2019) discovered that there were three types of YouTube videos often watched by students of art and students of social sciences. YouTube videos of the former comprise music videos, talks, comedies, chat shows, and call-in shows. The latter include simulation and instructional videos.

Othman (2023) showed that some EFL high school students in Sudan appreciated the importance of listening skills, although a few of them did not understand how YouTube videos could assist and support them. The study also found that EFL high school students' ability to process information was improved by watching YouTube videos. Moreover, most were able to reply to questions, though many still struggled to give an appropriate answer to questions, and a significantly greater number were able to adjust to differences in communication style.

Mahmudah (2022) found that YouTube videos as learning and teaching material and academic resources in English language courses or classrooms can improve students' English skills. The findings of the study also indicated that numerous articles show the extent to which English learning materials are provided by YouTube videos. The study concluded that EFL staff members, researchers, and instructors can reap benefits from this useful knowledge and acquire knowledge from the YouTube English videos platform used to improve the language skills of EFL students.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Approach

The descriptive survey method was adopted for this study as it was the most suitable approach given the two objectives and the research questions. It assisted in obtaining the opinions of members of the EFL faculty members at King Khalid University Faculty regarding the impact of utilizing YouTube videos via the Blackboard platform to develop certain areas of competence required by Saudi students of translation.

B. Study Sample and Ethics Approval Standards

Given the objectives of this study and the research questions, a descriptive survey method was considered the most appropriate for obtaining the opinions of King Khalid University's faculty members on the impact of utilizing YouTube Videos via the Blackboard platform as a means of developing Saudi students' skills in translation and interpretation. Moreover, a written informed agreement was collected from all the participants before the study was carried out by the two authors.

C. Study Sample

A random sampling technique was utilized whereby 100 EFL King Khalid University's staff members were selected from the English Language Center, the Applied College, the College of Sciences and Arts, and the College of Languages and Translation.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDY SAMPLE ACCORDING TO THE COLLEGE

The College	Frequency	Percentage
English Language Center	25	25.0
College Applied	25	25.0
Colleges of Sciences and Arts	25	25.0
College of Languages and Translation	25	25.0
Total	100	100

D. Study Instrument

The required data was collected via a questionnaire, the items of which were pertinent to the aims of this research. The first version of the questionnaire was presented to seven specialists in EFL and Translation to confirm the suitability of the questionnaire items and the extent to which they were adaptable to the participants. The final version of the questionnaire was developed after taking into consideration the comments and evaluations given by the professional staff members and experts in the field. Moreover, the questionnaire was piloted by a group of 20 EFL staff members. The two authors conducted a pilot study before distributing the questionnaire to all of the research participants; moreover, they also submitted the questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of 20 respondents. They reported that the items were obvious and simple to grasp. Also, the pilot study enabled the researchers to determine the difference in the time between when the first participant completed the questionnaire and when the last participant completed theirs which was 15 minutes. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.85 indicated a good degree of reliability.

TABLE 2
CRONBACH'S ALPHA FOR THE RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE (ALL SAMPLES: N=100)

Statement	No. of Items	Alpha
The overall reliability of the questionnaire	15	0.85

E. Data Analysis

The analysis of the research data enabled the researchers to draw several conclusions concerning the participants' opinions about and attitudes towards the utilization of YouTube videos via Blackboard to improve the interpreting skills of Saudi students of translation. A total of 100 EFL and Translation staff members took part in the survey. Statistical assessment was used to calculate the percentages of each item. Responses to the questionnaire items were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree); the highest grade (Strongly Agree) was given a five while the lowest grade was given a one (Strongly Disagree). The range calculated for the scale was 5-1 = 4: dividing this by the number of categories (five) gave 4/5 = 0.80 which was the length of each category of the five scales. Finally, the length of the category was added to the lowest grade of the scale, which was 1. Thus, the first category was calculated to be 1 to 1.80. And by adding (0.80) for the next category (which starts with the first category ending) to produce the second category, and so on for the rest of the categories. The following criteria were defined to analyze the results:

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO THE GRADIENT OF THE CATEGORIES USED IN THE SEARCH TOOL

Description	Range of Mean
Strongly Agree	4.21-5.00
Agree	3.41-4.20
Neutral	2.61-3.40
Disagree	1.81-2.60
Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the reliability and validity of the questionnaire had been verified, the findings for each questionnaire item were carefully examined.

TABLE 4

S No.	Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1	YouTube videos can prevent Saudi translation and interpretation students from making errors when interpreting.	Freq.	53	35	9	2	1	4.37	0.81	4
		%	53.0	35.0	9.0	2.0	1.0			
2	YouTube videos assist Saudi translation and interpretation students in jumping to conclusions about what is not indicated.	Freq.	62	34	4			4.58	0.57	1
		%	62.0	34.0	4.0					
3	Saudi translation and interpretation students are required to produce and share YouTube videos via Blackboard.	Freq.	12	25	17	28	18	2.85	1.31	15
		%	28.0	25.0	17.0	12.0	18.0			
4	YouTube videos help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve their phonological translation.	Freq.	35	31	19	9	6	3.80	1.19	13
		%	35.0	31.0	19.0	9.0	6.0			
5	Utilizing YouTube videos for the teaching and learning of translation and interpretation reduces translation students' anxiety during lectures.	Freq.	38	38	24			4.14	0.78	10
		%	38.0	38.0	24.0					
6	YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students comprehend the translation and interpreting material in depth.	Freq.	42	31	8	11	8	3.88	1.29	12
		%	42.0	31.0	8.0	11.0	8.0			
7	When viewing YouTube videos, Saudi translation, and interpretation students listen for polysomic, connotative, and denotative words that carry implied meaning.	Freq.	34	34	12	11	9	3.73	1.29	14
		%	34.0	34.0	12.0	11.0	9.0			
8	YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students divide the text into distinguishable parts or perceptible units.	Freq.	49	30	18	2	1	4.24	0.89	5
		%	49.0	30.0	18.0	2.0	1.0			
9	Saudi translation and interpretation students acquire interpreting skills better and more quickly by utilizing YouTube videos.	Freq.	41	40	18		1	4.20	0.80	7
		%	41.0	40.0	18.0		1.0			
10	YouTube videos can assist Saudi translation and interpretation students in rendering the meaning of unfamiliar expressions.	Freq.	61	30	9			4.52	0.66	2
		%	61.0	30.0	9.0					
11	On YouTube, it is not difficult to find materials for teaching translation and interpreting from Arabic into English and vice versa.	Freq.	48	35	4	10	3	4.15	1.09	9
		%	48.0	35.0	4.0	10.0	3.0			
12	I feel comfortable utilizing YouTube videos to teach both translation and interpreting skills.	Freq.	47	34	13	3	3	4.19	0.98	8
		%	47.0	34.0	13.0	3.0	3.0			
13	I feel that Saudi translation and interpretation students can better understand and comply with instructions for speaking or chatting when they watch YouTube videos.	Freq.	44	34	22			4.22	0.79	6
		%	44.0	34.0	22.0					
14	Watching YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve in various areas of interpreting competence.	Freq.	63	23	14			4.49	0.73	3
		%	63.0	23.0	14.0					
15	Saudi translation and interpretation students are invited to provide feedback after viewing YouTube videos.	Freq.	36	31	23	8	2	3.1	1.05	11
		%	36.0	31.0	23.0	8.0	2.0			
Mean* for Total								4.08	0.28	

In response to the statement "YouTube videos can prevent Saudi translation and interpretation students from making errors when interpreting", 34.0% of respondents agreed and 62.0% strongly agreed (ranking first in order of importance). This finding suggests that YouTube videos assist Saudi translation and interpretation students in jumping to conclusions about what is not indicated.

In response to the statement "YouTube videos can benefit Saudi translation and interpretation students in rendering the meaning of unfamiliar expressions", 30.0% of respondents agreed, and 61.0% strongly agreed, ranking this statement second. This positive finding is evidence that YouTube videos can assist Saudi translation and interpretation students in accurately rendering the meaning of unfamiliar expressions.

In response to the statement "Watching YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve in various areas of interpreting competence", 23.0% of respondents agreed, and 63.0% strongly agreed, thereby

ranking third. This positive finding indicates that YouTube videos help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve their interpreting competence.

Ranking fourth is the response to the statement "YouTube videos can prevent Saudi translation and interpretation students from losing up while interpreting" where 34.0% of respondents agreed, and 62.0% strongly agreed. This positive finding revealed that YouTube videos can prevent Saudi translation and interpretation students from losing up while interpreting.

In response to the fifth highest ranking statement "YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students divide the text into distinguishable parts or perceptible units", 30.0% of respondents agreed, and 49.0% strongly agreed. This finding demonstrated that YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students divide the text into distinguishable parts or perceptible units".

In response to the statement "Saudi translation and interpretation students can boost and comply with instructions of speaking or chatting when they watch YouTube videos", 44.0% of respondents agreed, and 34.0% strongly agreed ranking the statement in sixth place. This positive finding showed that Saudi translation and interpretation students can boost and comply with instructions for speaking or chatting when they watch YouTube videos.

In response to the seventh-ranked statement "Saudi translation and interpretation students learn interpreting more rapidly and better by utilizing YouTube videos", 40.0% of respondents agreed, and 41.0% strongly agreed. This positive finding showed that Saudi translation and interpretation students learn interpretation better and faster by utilizing YouTube videos.

In response to the eighth -ranked statement, "I feel more delightful and more convenient in employing YouTube videos to teach both translation and interpreting", 34.0% of respondents agreed and 47.0% strongly agreed .This finding indicated that staff members feel more delightful and more convenient in employing YouTube videos to teach both translation and interpreting.

In response to the ninth-ranked statement "It is not a difficult task to find materials in teaching translation and interpreting from Arabic into English and vice versa on YouTube", 35.0% of respondents agreed, and 48.0% strongly agreed. This finding showed that it is not a difficult task to find materials in teaching translation and interpreting from Arabic into English and vice versa on YouTube.

In response to the tenth the statement "Utilizing YouTube videos in teaching and learning translation and interpreting reduces translation students' anxiety in the lecture rooms", 38.0% of respondents agreed, and 38.0% strongly agreed. This finding showed that utilizing YouTube videos in teaching and learning translation and interpreting reduces translation students' anxiety in the lecture rooms.

In response to the statement that ranked in 11th place "Saudi translation and interpretation students are invited to provide feedback after listening to YouTube videos", 31.0% of the respondents agreed, and 36.0% strongly agreed. This finding showed that Saudi translation and interpretation students are invited to provide feedback after listening to YouTube videos.

In response to the statement "YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students comprehend the translation and interpreting material in depth." which ranked 12th, 31.0% of respondents agreed, and 42% strongly agreed. This finding showed that YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students comprehend the translation and interpreting material in depth.

In response to the 13th ranking statement "YouTube videos better help translation and interpretation Saudi students improve phonological translation", 31.0% of respondents agreed, and 35.0% strongly agreed. This finding revealed that YouTube videos better help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve phonological translation.

In response to the statement "Through the YouTube video, translation and interpretation Saudi students listen for polysomic, connotative and denotative words that carry implied meaning", 34.0% of respondents agreed, and 34.0% strongly agreed which ranked 14th. This finding revealed that, through the YouTube videos, translation and interpretation Saudi students listen for polysomic, connotative, and denotative words that carry implied meaning.

Finally, in 15th place, in response to the statement "The Saudi translation and interpretation students are called to produce and share YouTube videos via the blackboard", 25.0% of respondents agreed, and 28.0% strongly agreed. This finding revealed that Saudi translation and interpretation students are called to produce and share YouTube videos via the blackboard.

In answer to the first research question "What are the opinions of King Khalid University's EFL faculty members regarding the usefulness of utilizing YouTube Videos for the development of various interpreting skills required by Saudi students of translation?" the qualitative evidence showed that many of the respondents had positive opinions about the impact of utilizing YouTube videos via the Blackboard platform to develop certain skills related to the interpreting competence of Saudi students of translation. Moreover, the findings showed that YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students improve their interpreting competence. The findings of the study indicated that King Khalid University EFL and Translation staff members believe that YouTube videos can prevent Saudi translation and interpretation students from making errors when interpreting texts, as well as learning to interpret more rapidly and better by utilizing YouTube videos. The results of this study confirmed the findings of previous studies that examined the role of YouTube videos in improving students' retention ability, English language skills, and listening skills (Alhaj & Albahiri, 2020; Mahmudah, 2022; Othman, 2023; Boltiziar & Munkova, 2023; Al-Jarf, 2022).

In response to the second research question "To what extent can YouTube videos help improve the speaking and listening skills of Saudi students of translation, and enable them to interpret and translate texts with fluency, accuracy, and confidence?" the qualitative data indicated that a majority of King Khalid University EFL and translation faculty members had positive attitudes toward the use of YouTube videos as a means of improving the speaking and listening skills of Saudi students of translation and enabling them to interpret and render translations fluently, accurately and confidently. The participants believe that Saudi translation and interpretation students can improve and follow instructions related to speaking or listening when they watch YouTube videos. Also, participants believe that YouTube videos can help Saudi translation and interpretation students divide the text into distinguishable parts or perceptible units. These positive responses indicate that the respondents had positive attitudes toward the use of YouTube videos for teaching and learning English and improving translation skills.

V. CONCLUSION

The study aimed to gather the opinions of members of the King Khalid University's EFL and translation faculty regarding the impact of utilizing YouTube videos as a means of developing the skills and competence of Saudi students of translation. The results of the study suggest that the participants had positive opinions about utilizing YouTube to develop the interpreting skills of Saudi students of translation. They indicated that YouTube videos can help students interpret and render the meanings of unfamiliar expressions and prevent Saudi students of translation from making errors when interpreting. The participants also had positive attitudes towards utilizing YouTube videos to teach both translating and interpreting. They also expressed that they feel more delightful and more confident in employing YouTube videos to teach both translation and interpreting. Participants perceive that on YouTube it is not difficult to find materials for the teaching of translation and interpretation of Arabic into English and vice versa. Participants also perceive Saudi translation and interpretation students learn interpreting more rapidly and greater by utilizing YouTube videos. YouTube videos can also help Saudi translation and interpretation students divide the flow of discourse into distinguishable parts or perceptible units and comprehend the translation and interpreting material in depth.

Study Implications

King Khalid University's EFL and translation faculty should utilize YouTube videos for the teaching and learning of EFL and translation materials to add variety to the educational environment and to increase the engagement of EFL and translation students. Furthermore, the utilization of YouTube videos may also motivate and encourage EFL and translation students to learn the English language and translation independently outside the lecture room.

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Mohammed H. Albahiri is a full professor of Curriculum and instruction in the Faculty of Education at King Khalid University, Abha, Asir, Saudi Arabia. Mohammed received his PhD from The University of Strathclyde in Glasgow in 2010 A.D. Currently, Professor Mohammed is the Vice President of King Khalid University, a position he has held since March 25, 2020. Prof. Mohammed received "The Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau (SACB) Award for Scientific Research Excellence" in 2010. Prof. Mohammed has published numerous papers in indexed international journals.

Formerly at Jazan University, **Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj** is currently a faculty member at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. Drs. Alhaj received his first Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Khartoum in 2003, his second Ph.D. in Translation Studies from Omdurman Islamic University, in 2014, his third Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Sudan University of Science and Technology in 2018, and his fourth Ph.D. in Pure Linguistics was obtained from Bahri University. Drs. Alhaj has published 190 papers in indexed journals and 50 books, 12 of which have been translated into ten languages internationally. Drs. Alhaj received the King Khalid University Award for Scientific Research Excellence (First Rank) in 2020.

Rethinking Communicative Language Teaching in College English Teaching: Strategies and Lesson Plan

Li Jiang

Quality Integrated Education Department, Yibin Vocational and Technical College, Sichuan Province, China

Freda Bacuso Paulino

School of Advanced Studies Philosophy of Language Education, Saint Louis University, Baguio, Philippines

Abstract—Oral English competence is crucial for the learners' life and potential professional success. Numerous studies on communicative language teaching were conducted; however, there is a dearth of literature on the application of CLT strategies in Chinese vocational colleges. The objective of this study was to identify CLT techniques that can improve the oral English skills of vocational college students in China. Specifically, it sought to answer the following: (1) What CLT strategies can be adapted for improving the oral proficiency of Chinese vocational college students? (2) What activities can be designed integrating adapted CLT strategies to help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency? The study made use of a developmental research design using systematic document analysis as the method. Findings showed that group-oriented CLT strategies like role-play, pair and group work, interviews, information gap activities, etc., and individual-oriented CLT tactics like storytelling, picture description, and opinion-sharing activities can be adapted to improve Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency. To help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency, communicative language activities that integrate these identified CLT strategies were designed as instructors' guide in implementing CLT. Teachers are the primary change agents in educational practice, only by being more aware of what is truly going on in their classrooms can they assist students to achieve their learning goals. In the hands of a well-balanced instructor, CLT can breathe new life and enthusiasm into the classroom and truly make a difference in enhancing student's oral proficiency.

Index Terms—oral English proficiency, developmental research design, CLT strategies, CLT classroom activities, Chinese vocational college students

I. INTRODUCTION

English is often regarded as the worldwide language of commerce, science, and communication. It is the most widely spoken language in the world, with about 1.5 billion speakers, making it the international lingua franca of diplomacy, education, and business. Speaking English competence is crucial for English language learners' academic achievement as well as potential professional and personal success. The demand for high-quality English language instruction has significantly increased in recent years, with students from all corners of the globe seeking to acquire English proficiency. Government and English teachers in China are also working hard to expand the number of individuals who can successfully communicate in English. As educators in this domain, there is a persistent exploration of innovative teaching approaches to bridge the gap between conventional classroom instruction and real-world communication.

Oral language proficiency refers to the level of ability or competency that individuals possess to communicate effectively and fluently using spoken language. The level of oral language proficiency can vary depending on factors such as language background, exposure, and educational experiences. Accuracy and fluency are important terms to assess students' oral proficiency. For the development of oral English proficiency students must acquire pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar rules, and a deeper knowledge of English semantics and pragmatics. At the same time, learning English requires knowing how to communicate with others because oral proficiency is a multifaceted term.

Communicative language teaching (CLT hence after), sometimes known as the communicative approach (CA), is a method of teaching languages that stresses interaction as both a means and an end goal. According to CLT, the ability to communicate in the target language is the purpose of language instruction. CLT employs diverse strategies such as pair or group work, discussions, debates, role-plays, interviews, games, storytelling, opinion-sharing activities, etc. to foster effective communication. Many researchers state the effectiveness of CLT in improving students' speaking skills (Anggraini, 2018; Toro et al., 2019; AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019; Wael et al., 2019). However, its implementation in East Asian schools has been a concern raised by Littlewood (2006). Students in China have reported a grammar-focused approach with limited communication practice, highlighting the need for local teaching strategies (Savignon & Wang, 2003). Effective CLT strategies and practices are urgently needed to motivate students and empower their language learning experience. The scarcity of research in this field has resulted in a significant gap in our

understanding of Chinese vocational colleges' oral English language education. Although increasing efforts have been made to the CLT theory, studies on CLT strategies received less attention. Specifically, scarce research has been done on the application of CLT strategies in Chinese vocational colleges.

This research aims to identify CLT strategies that will enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral English proficiency. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following: (1) What CLT strategies can be adapted for improving the oral proficiency of Chinese vocational college students? (2) What activities can be designed by teachers to help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency?

This research hopes to bridge the gap between the principles or theories of CLT and Chinese vocational college teachers' oral English teaching practices. The results may enlighten Chinese vocational college English teachers or instructors on their oral English teaching practice. Moreover, the results will assist language educators, practitioners, and English teachers with new techniques and strategies that may help them endeavor to conduct classroom activities that help make a difference in students' oral proficiency.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. The Theoretical Foundation of CLT

Communicative language teaching emerged in response to Chomsky's use of competence and performance terminology in the late 1960s (Heng, 2014). Hymes (1974) introduces the notion of communicative competence as the socially appropriate use of language. Communicative competence has four subcategories: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). "Communicative language ability" refers to the capability to employ information in a context-appropriate manner (Bachman, 1990). Concern for effective communication has enabled us to consider the settings in which language is employed (Savignon, 1991). It emphasizes the social and cultural aspects of language use, helping learners become more proficient in both the linguistic and pragmatic aspects of communication.

On the other hand, communicative language teaching is widely accepted as a method of language instruction (Richard & Rodgers, 2001; cited in Liao, 2004). Its main objective is for learners to gain communication competence, also known as communicative ability (Hymes, 1971; cited in Savignon, 2005). As maintained by Richards (2006), the term "communicative language teaching" refers to a collection of generally accepted principles that can be used in many ways depending on the educational situation, the learners' age, level, learning objectives, and other factors. Richards (2006) generalizes that the ability to use language for a variety of tasks and activities, adapt our language usage to the situation and the listener, create and comprehend a variety of texts, and maintain communication despite barriers are all aspects of communicative competence. Communication in a variety of real-world settings helps to shape language for learning. The use of interactive learning to improve communication skills is recommended. "Negotiate the meaning" and "apply communication strategies" are taught to the students. The core of communicative language teaching is a shift from form to communication (Cook, 2003). Communicative language teaching emphasizes meaningful and interactive language use, focusing on the practical application of language skills rather than solely on grammar rules. By integrating authentic activities, tasks, and role-playing, this approach aims to create an engaging and interactive learning environment.

B. Principles of CLT

Richards (2006) highlights the following as the overarching principles of the CLT approach at the time: (1) The fundamental objective of language learning is meaningful communication; (2) Give students a chance to practice what they have learned; (3) Have patience with learners' mistakes as it is a sign that they are improving their communicative ability; (4) Offer opportunities for students to improve their accuracy and fluency; (5) Link various skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing together because these activities frequently co-occur in real life, and (6) Encourage students to infer or find grammatical rules. One of the strengths of communicative language teaching is its ability to provide learners with opportunities to engage in authentic and purposeful communication, fostering their fluency and confidence in expressing themselves in real-life situations. The emphasis on communication also encourages learners to take an active role in their own learning process.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study made use of the developmental research design using document analysis as the method. Developmental research design is the "systematic study of designing, developing, and evaluating instructional programs, processes, and products that must meet the criteria of internal consistency and effectiveness" (Seels & Richey, 1994, p. 127). This design enabled the researcher to consider the effectiveness of needs, programs, and criteria when developing instructional materials to facilitate instruction (Friese et al., 2018).

B. Instrumentation and Data Gathering Tool

The main data-gathering tool used in the study was printed and electronic documents (computer-based and

Internet-transmitted) material. These documents include journal articles, books, instructional manuals, and review papers among others. These documents focused on communicative language teaching, specifically CLT strategies, that were used as a basis for surfacing CLT strategies that can be adapted for improving the oral proficiency of Chinese vocational college students.

C. Data Gathering Procedure

(a). Phase A. Conducting a Systematic Review of the Literature

Since the study utilized the document analysis method, a systematic review of the literature was used in surfacing relevant CLT strategies in language instruction. In the selection of relevant literature, inclusion criteria were considered. The inclusion criteria included primary research published in peer-reviewed journals and research articles or scientific papers that dealt with the use of CLT strategies at the senior high school to college level. The databases were Google Scholar, EBSCO, and ERIC, and those are accessible to the researcher. Research articles, dissertations, or scientific papers on CLT strategies in language instruction in senior high school to college level were published from 2000 to 2023. In choosing the literature for the systematic review, the following factors as suggested by Flick (2018), were considered: (1) authenticity, (2) credibility, (3) representativeness, and (4) meaning. The significant points on the CLT strategies that can be adapted for improving the oral proficiency of Chinese vocational college students will be carefully read and collated for analysis. After that, themes were derived based on the description and application of the identified CLT strategies. Finally, the themes focusing on CLT strategies were discussed and corroborated to answer the first question.

(b). Phase B. Designing the CLT Activities (Sample Lesson)

After surfacing appropriate CLT strategies through systematic review, language learning activities integrating the use of CLT strategies were developed. The activities were designed to help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency.

D. Treatment of Data

Thematic analysis was done to address the first research question. Following a comprehensive examination of the gathered CLT techniques, the data was analyzed through coding and categorization processes that aligned with its unique features. Through this method, pertinent themes related to CLT strategies that could enhance the speaking skills of vocational college students were uncovered. These themes were analyzed and discussed further. The corresponding findings were the basis for crafting CLT activities that could be used to help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency. This addressed the second research question.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1: What CLT strategies can be adapted to improve the oral proficiency of Chinese vocational college students?

As a result of the document analysis, two main categories of CLT strategies were identified: (a) Group-oriented CLT strategies are those that are done in groups, and (b) Individual-oriented strategies may be done individually. The activities differ depending on the level of the language lesson. Through document analysis, communicative language teaching strategies like role-play, pair or group work, information gap, interviews, discussion, debate, etc. were identified.

A. Group-Oriented CLT Strategies

(a). Pair or Group Work:

Pairwork is a very beneficial and effective method in language instruction. It is an essential technique for promoting the growth of listening and speaking abilities. Abundant research journals demonstrated that pair or group work could effectively increase students' motivation to speak English actively and foster interactions between learners (Storch, 2002; Brandl, 2008; Kayi, 2006; Sakarkaya, 2013; Toro et al., 2019; Ho, 2020). Pair work has two noteworthy points: firstly, it provides purposeful, realistic listening and speaking practice; and fosters a welcoming, favorable educational atmosphere in the classroom. Group work is a collaborative practice to encourage conversation in the TL in a more extensive group environment. This activity maximized students' talking time and minimized the teachers' teaching time.

Here is an example of how pair work can be applied in Chinese vocational tourism English courses. Students can be paired up and assigned a local place to feature and present in front of the class. They can create a tour of the city, highlighting the historical landmarks, top-rated restaurants, and popular tourist destinations. Through this strategy, students are encouraged to practice using descriptive language to feature tourist spots.

According to Liao (2000), pair or group work can be a solution to solve difficulties encountered in implementing CLT in a Chinese context. The tactics of group work, which depend on the participation of the entire class during class sessions, are embraced by student-student interaction. Such exercises involve all students, not only the minority of energetic students who generally engage in a regular class, which is an efficient approach to engage the entire class.

(b). Discussion

Discussions can be informal and formal, making students interact and express their points of view while using the target language. Using the Discussion Technique in teaching speaking was able to improve the students' fluency and accuracy (Azizah, 2018). A discussion might be held for various reasons after a content-based lesson. In their discussion groups, the students can seek to draw a conclusion, exchange viewpoints on a situation, or identify problems. According to Kayi, it is usually preferable to avoid forming huge groups for practical group discussions since silent students may avoid contributing in such settings. In every discussion session, groups should be changed so that students may collaborate with diverse individuals and develop openness to alternative viewpoints. Finally, regardless of the purpose of class or group discussions, students should always be encouraged to raise questions, paraphrase views, indicate support, seek clarification, etc.

(c). Debate

Debate is a crucial technique for improving students' speaking abilities. A body of literature works demonstrated that debate techniques improved students' speaking ability in making questions and giving explanations (Pradana, 2017; Arung & Jumardin, 2016; Tianame et al., 2019; Afri et al., 2021; Azizah, 2018). Two opposing parties endeavor to defend their ideas, opinions, and arguments during a debate to express thinking, opinion, and reasoning. Students learn to speak a second language by interacting. For example, they can debate whether the use of cell phones is advantageous or disadvantageous to students. Through this activity, the students exercise their speaking skills as they present arguments supported by evidence. Debate is an excellent exercise to develop students' argumentation skills and oral competence. Debate offers transferable abilities to other academic endeavors and life in general. Debaters, most obviously, build their public speaking skills. Talking confidently in front of others benefits many aspects of life. It may not suit basic-level students but it a good training for high-level students.

(d). Role-Play

Role play is a commonly used communicative language teaching strategy. It can be an effective motivational learning tool for various topics, fostering greater interaction among students and improving their speaking skills (AL-Garni & Almuhammadi, 2019). Instructors can set up scenarios in a hotel and assign different roles to students, such as customers, hotel managers, or hotel receptionists. The students then complete tasks such as check-in, check-out, or handling complaints and claims. Role-playing is an oral activity typically done in pairs to develop students' communicative abilities in a specific scenario. This activity allows students to practice their TL communication skills in a low-pressure setting. Most students prefer to talk in pairs rather than speaking in front of the rest of the class. If it is adopted in Chinese vocational colleges, teachers should prepare vocabulary and language structures in advance for fear that students with limited vocabulary cannot perform well.

(e). Dramatization

The use of drama as a tool rather than an end goal gains significance in teaching a foreign language (Masoumi-Moghaddam, 2018). Drama creates a setting for listening and meaningful language output, requiring the students to use their language resources and strengthening their language skills (Chauhan, 2004). When paired with pedagogical strategies for instruction and acquisition of English conversation, it can foster learning settings favorable to learning English dialogues. For example, students can act out a scene about a tourist who gets lost in a foreign country and needs to communicate with locals using their limited language skills. Dramatization connotes the philosophy of learning by doing i.e., acting is a way of learning by experience. It allows learners to acquire a new language and grasp new concepts by taking on different roles in which they utilize language to make meaning out of ideas. Drama tactics combine actions, ideas, and emotions and encourage learners to produce language by utilizing their personalities and life experiences, making the learning process more active, exciting, communicative, and contextual (see Masoumi-Moghaddam, 2018, for more).

(f). Gallery Walk

Similar to how artists may display their works in an exhibit, a Gallery Walk is an activity that enables students to look at and present their most recent work in the classroom. Gallery Walks activity involves students turning around, completing various tasks, and reflecting on the suitable answers provided by other groups. Each 'walk' contains a unique query related to each critical lesson topic. A body of works of literature has acknowledged that improving students' speaking abilities is practical (Otoyo, 2018; Young, 2021; Namaziandost et al., 2018). This strategy is student-centered rather than lecture-based, allowing students to interact with the content. Instructors can modify the Gallery Walk for various subjects and grade levels. The social and mobile aspect of the gallery activity is fun for students.

(g). Running Dictation

Running Dictation is an activity that promotes teamwork cooperation, problem-solving skills, and memorizing techniques. According to Jaya et al. (2020), Running Dictation can improve students' listening comprehension achievement. Aisyah and Hidayani (2018) stated Running Dictation is expected to improve students' speaking skills in English. Nurdianingsih and Rahmawati (2018) also stated it is a creative approach that can be applied in a variety of

ways, and it is easy to prepare, explain, set up, and adapt. For instance, the teacher can choose a passage or short story related to a specific vocation, like customer service or hotel management. Running Dictation requires the combined use of many skills, including speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Implementing this strategy can help establish a fun and attractive classroom environment, making it more enjoyable and engaging for everyone involved.

(h). Games

Games are typical activities in a communicative language teaching classroom practice. Communicative games can be alternative communicative techniques with a challenge, rules, procedures, and winners. It is a mixing exercise that encourages students to engage in open conversation. There are a variety of games like playing cards, fishbowls can be utilized to engage students in oral English practice with prepared open questions before hands. Games can be a valuable addition to a teacher's repertoire if they are used properly and are not portrayed as the solution to all language acquisition problems (Savignon, 2001). Teachers can also bring structure to this exercise because it is less organized than others.

(i). Interviews

Research articles reveal that interview is a good strategy for getting participants to speak English actively, confidently, and fluently compared with the traditional teaching approach (Kayi, 2006; Brandl, 2008; Maca, 2020). An interview is a pair-based oral practice that aims to improve students' communication skills in the TL. It is a good idea for the instructor to provide Chinese vocational college students with a rubric so they are more aware of the questions they may ask and the general direction to go; students can also prepare their interview questions. Because this activity is highly planned, the instructor can examine students' replies more closely. It can focus on a specific component of grammar or vocabulary while remaining a broadly communicative exercise and providing students with communicative benefits. Because it is most advantageous to lower-level speakers, this exercise should be utilized largely in lower-level language classrooms.

(j). Information Gap

Research papers indicate that information gap activities effectively improve students' speaking abilities (Nakahama et al., 2001; Abdul, 2013; Afrizal, 2015; Irona & Ratmanida, 2018; Sartika, 2016; Owen et al., 2019; Panjehkoubi et al., 2015; Duyen, 2021). An information gap task is a communicative language teaching strategy in which one student lacks the knowledge to accomplish a task or solve a problem and must speak with his peers to complete the missing information. To fulfill each other's task, the partners must work together to inquire about and provide the necessary information. An information gap can take the format of an opinion gap when the participants differ in their opinions. The gap is filled during active communication. Information gap activities can develop into matching exercises, jigsaw activities, interviews, reading cues, communicative games, etc. It is a frequent technique used in communicative language teaching. For example, students can be given different brochures detailing tours and attractions, and they need to correctly identify the prices and services provided. This strategy promotes active listening, questioning, and accurate information exchange. It applies to Chinese vocational college students because it has a clear direction for them to take active communication and thus improve their oral proficiency in the process.

(k). Jigsaw Activities

The jigsaw strategy sets up classroom exercises that make learners rely on one another to succeed. Like other information-gap exercises, Jigsaw activities combine language and topic instruction while successfully fostering meaningful conversation. Adapting this strategy in Chinese vocational college English, students are divided into small groups and will be assigned scenarios like conflict resolution, email etiquette, or intercultural communication. Each group member assumes a role (e.g., team leader, coworker, customer/client). Students research best practices for their scenario, and they create a roleplay script. Groups are mixed up later so that students are paired with others who researched different scenarios, allowing them to practice their roleplay scenarios. A study by Hattie and Clark (2018) found that the jigsaw method benefits students' learning. They encourage the development of communication techniques, including rephrasing, asking for clarification, probing, providing, and following simple, more explicit directions, and explaining. In an EFL classroom, the jigsaw is a cooperative learning method that necessitates everyone's collaborative effort to make the outcome since each group member has a piece of information needed to complete a group task. Jigsaw puzzles foster student engagement and passion while focusing on language use to achieve learning objectives in an EFL classroom (Qiao & Jin, 2010).

B. Individual-Oriented CLT Strategies

(a). Opinion Sharing

Opinion-sharing activities could be activities in which students compare values, attitudes, or beliefs, such as a rating activity in which students name six criteria in descending order of significance that they could consider before selecting a date or spouse. It is a content-based practice designed to develop students' conversational skills while discussing something meaningful to them. Opinion sharing is an excellent technique to encourage more introverted students to open up and share their thoughts. If a learner is passionate about a topic or subject, he will speak up and express his

thoughts. With this activity, respect is essential. If students do not believe that the instructor or their peers value their viewpoint, they will be reluctant to share. They will not benefit from the communicative benefits of this activity.

(b). Picture Description/ Reconstruction

Learners are given one picture and must describe what it depicts, which is a common approach in a speaking exercise. Usually, instructors can assign tasks as each participant has a picture, which is part of the whole story. Students are encouraged to talk to each other and construct the entire story without showing their photographs. The learners' creativity, imagination, and public speaking abilities are all encouraged by this practice. Anggraini (2018) demonstrated that picture reconstruction as a kind of communicative language teaching technique is an effective strategy for improving students' speaking skills. For instance, students are assigned to describe pictures of famous tourist destinations, hotel interiors, or various hospitality scenarios. Through this strategy, students can consolidate their language skills by using course-specific vocabulary, grammar structures, and phrases depicted in the pictures. The learning exercises used in CLT are engaging and promote actual spoken dialogue without placing much emphasis on grammatical structure. Because this activity is less structured than others, instructors can offer structure drills before conducting classroom activities for lower-level students in Chinese vocational colleges. Instructors should add it to the activity if specific language or grammar is required in students' dialogues or to complete the task.

(c). Referential Questions

Questioning techniques are crucial for interaction and communication. Wahyudi (2017) showed that questioning strategies can help students improve their oral proficiency, especially fluency. As per Hussain (2003), the most effective teaching strategy is questioning, and this tendency has not altered over time. Posing thoughtful questions encourages communication between the instructor and learners. According to Shomoossi (2004), questions play an essential part in second language acquisition in the classroom, and referential questions boost student production. Referential questions often involve students reflecting personally on their own emotions, attitudes, and experiences—information that is only known to them at the moment the question is asked. By asking students referential questions, learners' interests are engaged. The questioning strategy could boost student involvement in the classroom, especially in speaking courses.

(d). Storytelling

Storytelling is a fantastic approach to sharing ideas and experiences. Ample research has proven to support the use of the storytelling strategy to improve oral communication abilities (Mokhtar et al., 2011; Arroba & Acosta, 2021; Hassan & McKee, 2022). Storytelling has the power to grab the attention of the audience. Storytelling promotes creative thinking. It also assists students in expressing thoughts in the format of beginning, development, and conclusion, including characters and settings. Using this strategy will improve students' listening abilities while having fun. Meanwhile, it can help improve their vocabulary, communicate more fluently, and improve their recall of events. Using storytelling allows EFL students to converse, participate, and actively practice their oral communication abilities. For vocational college students in China, using pictures or graphics to assist students, also called visual storytelling, is a better way to help them engage in conversation.

(e). Presentation

Oral English presentations require the students to use English to communicate an idea to one or more interlocutors, which encourages students to "take initiative, think beyond the mandated textbook, and use language creatively, purposefully, and interactively" (AL-ISSA & Al-Qubtan, 2010). For instance, students are assigned to deliver an oral presentation on a topic of their choice related to their vocational field. The presentation may include their opinion on the topic and why they hold that point of view. Students will gain the speaking skills necessary to interact with others when they learn how to provide an effective oral presentation. Brooks and Wilson (2014) state oral presentations allow students to participate in an endeavor that necessitates the use of English to communicate ideas and negotiate meaning with a larger group of language learners. Miles (2009) reveals that most students see presentation sessions as a chance to get better at using English. Presentations provide valuable opportunities for students to apply their language skills in real-world situations, boosting their confidence and oral proficiency in their respective vocational fields.

In summary, all these CLT strategies have their own uniqueness, and emphasize the interactive and communicative nature of students and their peers or between a teacher and their students. They can be adapted strategies to enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency since they maximize students' exposure to the TL and expand their talking time in class. CLT has made room for a wide range of methodologies, approaches, and techniques. It is a holistic approach emphasizing communication.

RQ2: What communicative language activities can be designed using CLT strategies by teachers to help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency?

To address the objective of enhancing Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency, the researcher devised a sample lesson plan showcasing the application of CLT strategies within classroom instruction. The lesson plan incorporates various communicative language activities that leverage CLT strategies to promote active language use and foster students' speaking abilities. These activities are designed to encourage meaningful interactions among students and emphasize practical communication skills.

LESSON PLAN

Topic: The E-world is All Around Us (160 mins)	
Objectives	To develop students' understanding and communication skills in the context of the digital age and equip them with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital landscape confidently, critically evaluate e-technology's impact on society, and participate responsibly.
Learning Competences	In this lesson, the students are expected to: 1. describe the e-world; 2. argue on the positive and negative aspects of the e-world; 3. act out their roles in a dialogue; and 4. craft an e-cyber world etiquette.
Teaching resources and materials	Computers, mobile devices, website resources; pictures of tapes and iTunes, snail mail and WeChat, printed books and e-books; textbooks, PPT presentations, and worksheets Extra reading material: https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/silvercascade/impact-of-gadgets-in-our-life-40978/ https://accountlearning.com/advantages-disadvantages-online shopping/ YouTube videos do you prefer shopping online or in a store A Ted talk https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKx2lfobPuU

Teaching Procedure		
Warming-up	Compare the following three sets of pictures and then comment on the rapidly changing e-world. Talk about the electronic devices used, their influence, and the changes e-technology has brought to us.	Discussion and Running Dictation
Presentation	The positive and negative aspects of the e-world; The e-world makes communication convenient; The e-world leads to a communication crisis; Shopping online versus Shopping in a store	Debate
Practice	Role-play the dialogues.	Role-play
Production	Discuss in pair and groups cyber world etiquette tips and try to add more tips on e-world etiquette.	Group work
Wrap-up	Use modern search engines to prepare a report on Dress Code in the Workplace /Micro-blog Job-seeking/ The Origin Story of Perfume/ Cyber……	

1. Step 1: Discussion and Running Dictation

In this communicative language activity, the teacher will present three sets of pictures on a PowerPoint (PPT) slide. The students will be asked to compare these pictures and discuss the rapid changes brought about by e-technology in our world. The teacher will guide the students to talk about how e-technology has revolutionized various aspects of our lives, such as reading e-books on phones instead of buying printed books, chatting online instead of writing letters, shopping and studying online, reflection, and other relevant examples.

After the initial discussion, the students will be divided into several groups. Prior to the activity, sheets of paper containing information about the communication crisis in the e-world will be placed around the classroom walls. Each group will select runners and a writer. A runner from each group will run to their designated sheet of paper, read and memorize the information as much as possible, and then run back to dictate the text to the group's writer. The next runner in the group will then go to the sheet of paper, read and memorize the text, and take turns dictating to the writer. This process will continue until all group members have participated.

After completing the activity, the students will compare their dictated answers with the original text provided on the sheets of paper. They will identify and correct any mistakes in the sentences they dictated during the activity.

2. Step 2: Debate

In this activity, students will engage in a debate on the positive and negative aspects of the e-world. They will be given two topics to debate: "The e-world makes communication convenient" and "The e-world leads to a communication crisis." The teacher will provide students with scaffolding by highlighting the positive aspects, such as feeling more connected and exchanging ideas conveniently, while also pointing out the potential negative impacts, such as affecting relationships with family and friends and reducing face-to-face conversations.

Next, the students will participate in a debate on another topic, "Shopping online vs. shopping in a store". They will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each method of shopping, considering factors like convenience, variety, social interaction, and potential risks.

After the debate, the teacher will present a YouTube video that illustrates different perspectives on the topics discussed. The video will further enrich the student's understanding of the subject matter and expose them to diverse viewpoints.

3. Step 3: Role-Play

In this language activity, students will be paired off and provided with dialogue scripts. Each pair of students will choose their role from the given options. In the dialogue, one student will represent Mary, who represents the old generation, while the other two students will represent Susan and Tom, who are representatives of the younger generation. Mary will be portrayed as Tom's mother in the play, and Susan will be portrayed as Tom's friend.

Students will take turns role-playing the dialogues in each circle. In Circle One, Mary and Susan will interact in the

dialogue, and in Circle Two, Mary and Tom will interact. This role-playing exercise will allow students to practice using English in a conversational and realistic context, embodying different characters and exploring various generational perspectives.

After the role-playing sessions, students will individually complete worksheets related to the dialogues. These worksheets may include reflection questions, vocabulary exercises, or comprehension tasks that encourage students to consolidate their understanding of the language used in the dialogues and reflect on the content and themes discussed.

4. Step 4: Group Work

In this activity, students will be divided into groups and tasked with creating an e-cyber world etiquette post. The content of their posts should include guidelines and suggestions for proper online behavior. The contents may sound like (1) "Remember to leave a good impression on the Internet; (2) Keep consistent behavior online and offline; (3) Follow the rules of the established forums and debate with others politely; (4) Show respect to other netizens and pay attention to your Internet language; and (5) Take good care of your personal privacy and information security". Here is an example of what their posts may include: "Remember to leave a good impression on the Internet: When you interact online, be mindful of your words and actions. Treat others with kindness and respect, just as you would in the real world. Your online presence reflects your character, so aim to leave a positive impression on others". Encourage students to design their posts creatively and appropriately, using language and expressions that are engaging and suitable for the online context.

5. Step 5: Presentation

In this activity, students will work in groups of four and choose one of the provided topics: Dress Code in the Workplace, Micro-blog Job-seeking, The Origin Story of Perfume, Cyber Love, etc. The objective is for students to utilize search engines to gather relevant information on their chosen topic and create a presentation. Suggested steps for the activity can be 1) topic selection; 2) conduct research; 3) organize information; 4) create presentations; 5) presentation delivery; 6) comment and discussion; 7) Q&A session; 8) reflection.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Through a developmental research design using a systematic document analysis approach, this paper found that group-oriented CLT strategies role-play, discussion, pair or group work, interviews, information gap activities, etc., and individual-oriented CLT strategies storytelling, opinion-sharing activities, etc., can be adapted for improving Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency since they emphasize the interactive and communicative nature of language learning. CLT strategies that dwell on task-based and learner-centered activities, as well as on the use of authentic language input, can promote students' engagement in speaking tasks. Thus, it is vital to use tested activities and materials in creating and selecting speaking-based language learning exercises.

The communicative language activities integrating CTL strategies may help enhance Chinese vocational college students' oral proficiency. The designed communicative language activities advocate teaching for transformation to change the status quo in Chinese vocational schools and integrate varied approaches and techniques. With proper implementation, the designed communicative language activities may serve their purpose of helping EFL teachers facilitate communicative language teaching to improve their students' speaking skills.

Policymakers, curriculum developers, and professionals in teacher education should focus more on increasing teachers' knowledge of CLT and the implementation of CLT, which is essential for effective pedagogical practice in EFL classrooms. Specifically, curriculum designers need to include CLT training in teaching speaking as part of the language teaching and learning curriculum so that EFL students have appropriate opportunities to practice in the classroom and be exposed to real-world situations where they will be using the language.

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Li Jiang (was born in 1988, in China) has obtained a B.A. in English Education from Yibin University and an M.A. in Foreign Languages and Applied Linguistics degree from Chongqing University. She is currently a PhD candidate in Language Education at Saint Louis University, Philippines. From July 2014 up to the present, she has been teaching public courses in College English. Her research interests included College English teaching, theories, models of research in education, and research in language and literature.

Freda B. Paulino is an English professor at Saint Louis University, Philippines. She finished her Master of Arts in English as a Second Language and her Doctor of Philosophy in Language Education for her master's and doctorate degrees, respectively. Aside from her teaching responsibilities, she serves as a research mentor, research panel, and research reviewer. Her research interests include intercultural communication, integration of technology in language teaching, and language and media. She has published three research papers; the latest publication titled "Of Tongues and Ties: Surfacing Inclusive Strategies in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms" was published in Cogent Education Journal by Taylor and Francis.

King Khalid University EFL Students' Perspectives on Teaching Professional Ethics: A New Ethical Pedagogical Review

Mesfer Ahmed Mesfer Alwadai
College of Education, King Khalid University, Abha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj
English Unit, Applied College at Dhahran Al-Janoub, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—This study was carried out to discover King Khalid University EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics from an ethical and pedagogical perspective. To attain the three objectives of the study, the two authors adopted the descriptive survey method because of its suitability. For collecting data, a 15-item questionnaire was distributed to a purposive, randomly selected sample containing 100 male and female EFL students from various colleges of King Khalid University during the first semester of 2023. The findings of this study showed that both male and female participants had a higher number of positive responses concerning teaching professional ethics for teaching and learning. Moreover, the majority of participating EFL students at King Khalid University had a positive perspective on teaching professional ethics in education. It was also apparent that, in the areas of teaching, training and learning, there are various fields of teaching professional ethics. This is due to the significant impact of academic settings of universities in general and King Khalid University in particular on the future of their university students. Moreover, it is both the fundamental role and primary responsibility of universities to offer education that will make communities more urbane. The results of the present study also indicated that the character of EFL staff members which includes self-esteem, presence of mind, intelligence, and level-headedness, adapting based on the ability to adapt lesson plans based on students' interests, needs, and preferences are the underlying factors that influenced the participants' perspectives on teaching professional ethics at King Khalid University.

Index Terms—teaching professional ethics, ethical pedagogical, perspective, EFL students, King Khalid University

I. INTRODUCTION

Professional ethics is a truly rational thought approach that aims to understand what ethics should be taught in educational institutions. It also entails a set of recognized ethical conduct and moral actions that offer appropriate social relationships for employees as they go about their daily work responsibilities (Dehghani, 2020; Sobhani Nejad et al., 2015). Ethics teaching and learning look inevitably interconnected. Moreover, the moral perspectives of teaching and the good nature and ethical character of the instructor are often taken for granted in educational institutions and the communities in which educators live and work. Outshined by behavioral theories associated with teaching and learning, using effective teaching strategies to grade and evaluate, classroom discipline, classroom conduct and other considerations, though inherently important, are scarcely viewed from a moral viewpoint (Campbell, 2008).

As a result, rules of professional conduct must be developed and used by the teaching community. An ethical code, when properly imposed, raises the power, position, and reputation of the educational institution in general and the instructor in particular (Carr, 2005; Strike & Soltis, 2015; Hargreaves & Goodson, 2002). Professional ethics is really a rights charter and is responsible for the protection of having the authority to make decisions and the freedom to act in accordance with one's professional knowledge base. Furthermore, professional ethics is a term that refers to fixed standards of behavior within the teaching profession (Begley, 2012; Hariparsad, 2008; Jensen, 2013). For any profession to be respected and have self-esteem, its staff must have and meet certain professional ethics. A profession can only grow when its staff has self-respect and respect for their contribution as a professional to their community.

Professional ethics play a pivotal role in promoting the field of education and enhancing ethics in different educational institutions, especially when it comes to teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), thereby creating an upbeat atmosphere for raised efficiency and output (Jensen, 2013; Beck, 1992; Banks, 2020; Biesta, 2015).

Today, English courses mainly focus on language skills, linguistics, literature, and translation. Meanwhile, ethical growth and the teaching of professional ethics have been ignored and disregarded, especially concerning interaction with EFL students (Din, 2023; Ilyas, 2015). However, giving heed to teaching professional ethics and moral improvement in education leads to higher-quality education as classes are taught by highly qualified and ethical

educators (Hansen, 2008; Campbell, 2003). Apart from linguistic skills, language knowledge, and skill functions, EFL students have tremendous potential and significant capacity for critical thinking, ethical decision-making, ethical thought, and moral logic (Birch, 2009; Cam, 2012). Moreover, EFL students are anticipated to have the expertise necessary to perform their work in a trustworthy, appropriate and accurate manner.

Broadly speaking, teaching professional ethics to teachers and other education staff extensively comprises the basic professional responsibility of teachers and educators towards their occupations, academic field, academic work, academic institution, and society as a whole (Light, 1974; Carr, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 1990). This involves conformity to the rules, duties, and ethics in their communication with students, work colleagues, family and the community at large (Hogan, 1973; Alderson & Morrow, 2020). The professional and personal characteristics, capabilities, perspectives, and ethics acquired by educators usually become subjects of educational studies and the modern roles of educators in an improving community highlight the significance of teaching professional ethics (Callahan, 2012; Zipin, 2006; Carroll & Shaw, 2013).

Numerous studies have been conducted that have painstakingly investigated teachers' perceptions about teaching professional ethics; however, to the best of the two authors' knowledge, exploring EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics has gone predominantly unnoticed. Therefore, to have a better picture of the importance and perceptions of ethics, EFL students need to be scrupulously examined. This study is of considerable importance for specific reasons. First, very few studies have been immersed in EFL students' perceptions of teaching professional ethics. Secondly, studies on King Khalid University EFL students' perspectives about teaching professional ethics have gone largely unobserved and the results of the present study can throw light on how these EFL students identify teaching professional ethics. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to investigate the perceptions of teaching professional ethics among Saudi EFL students to set the launching platform for improving academic proficiency and quality of learning in the lecture halls.

A. Objectives of the Study

This study, which included male and female EFL students from King Khalid University, has three major objectives. The first objective is to identify EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics. The second objective is to explore the extent to which EFL students appreciate the facets of teaching professional ethics. Finally, the third objective is to determine the factors which impact male and female EFL students' perspectives on professional ethics in teaching.

B. Questions of the Study

In accord with the three key objectives of the study, the questions leading this research are:
1. What are the perspectives of EFL students at King Khalid University on teaching professional ethics?
2. To what extent are the teachings of professional ethics elements in education appreciated by EFL students?
3. What are the factors that affect male and female EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Concept of Teaching Professional Ethics in a Nutshell

Wiggins (2006) describes ethics as the thoughtful study of morality. With this description, education in the ethics of teaching should concentrate on the quality of teachers' conduct, its understanding of appropriateness and significance, its true aims, and all of the various types of disputes or opinions for which it makes accommodations (Thompson, 1997; Crigger & Godfrey, 2014). Teaching is an occupation in its own style and one that demands great professional competence and requires its own moral code. Moreover, fostering ethics in the classroom is important for effective technique (Watson et al., 1998; Regan, 2012; Hauser, 2020; Alwadai & Alhaj, 2023). Since teachers play a significant role in their surrounding environments, it is crucial to provide them with ethics and conduct and attempt to make them familiar with the rules of ethics (Hafferty & Franks, 1994; Alwadai & Alhaj, 2023). Consequently, teachers with professional teaching ethics will make attempts to improve the mental, ethical, moral, and socially responsible factors among their students. Accordingly, the moral classroom is a setting that instructors and their students will relish – a place of uniformity, learning, and a place of moral improvement.

Teaching professional ethics is best framed as part of a teacher's professional identity rather than a knowledge base and skills. Most of the central determinants of a teacher's personality operate not within the academic curriculum, but in the more nuanced and less commonly known "non-academic curriculum". Moreover, teaching professional ethics as a form of "moral education" of which formal ethics teaching is only a minor part, and any endeavor to evolve a general ethics curriculum must recognize the comprehensive cultural circles within which the curriculum must operate (Callahan & Bok, 2012; Hansen, 2019; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006). Fittingly, to nurture moral maturity in students, both the prescribed curriculum and implicit curriculum must be dealt with by professional educators.

The standards of teaching professional ethics principally include cultural patterns of professional practice mirrored in the workplace (Frick, 2011; Vogel, 2012; Frick & Gutierrez, 2008). Moreover, proper ethics enables teachers to perceive intrinsically ethical characteristics, to evaluate ethical behavior and actions, and to develop one's own system of rules for work.

B. Teaching Professional Ethics at Universities

It is significant to identify the matter of ethics in higher education by realizing that ethics is essential to the core principles of a university as a whole organization. The goal of the university is not only to teach values and morals but it also should strive to be an integrity-driven organization with ethical means. A university without principles or ethics in the way it works as a moral society or organization would be a contradiction of terms (Saat et al., 2004; Ali et al., 2010; Arasteh et al., 2010). In a university, just as it does in a beneficial business society, ethics must play a leading role. The university's role is not merely limited to teaching ethics but must be viewed as a moral establishment, too. With the university concentrating more on enterprising revenue-generating activities to maintain itself, ethics is an overriding factor and essential consideration. Ethics should play a pivotal role in a university and not simply a minor role (Kafi et al., 2018; Petrick & Quinn, 1997; Davis, 2002). The code of ethics of an organization of tertiary education deems a university as a social morality with its ethics, moral code, and regulations. The establishment of ethical codes in the education system is only beginning as there are a myriad of problems that indicate certain difficulties.

To conclude, it is important to note that professional ethics in general and teaching professional ethics in tertiary education, in particular, have a commonly specified decorum between academic faculty and students (Campbell, 2008; Farahani & Farahani, 2014; Gorzin et al., 2017; Alghanmi, 2023). In numerous colleges around the globe, rules improved the codes of teaching professional ethics. In this context, most moral codes, values and ethics have been honored and respected.

C. Previous Studies

Several have been carried out regarding EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics at colleges and universities. These studies have brought great benefits, particularly to the realm of professional ethics. However, up to now and to the best of the two present authors' knowledge, no research paper has been conducted to explore King Khalid University EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics. Therefore, this study will address this research void.

Again, it is important to note that a plethora of research papers have investigated EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics at colleges and universities. For example, in their study, Bahat and Ernas (2023) found that significant disparities were found across different groups regarding their perspectives on curriculum-based information, student protection, and respecting student evaluations depending on their academic year. Moreover, differences were perceived in teacher competence depending on gender. Further, the students' level of education brought about discrepancies in their perceptions of curriculum-based information.

Aki et al. (2021) found that professionalism is the theme that is thought to be the most important in teachers' perceptions toward the principles of teaching professional ethics. Saat et al. (2004) found that students' perspectives about instructors are greater concerning ethics. Furthermore, the study also found that the likeliness of participants committing immoral actions is rather low compared to the likeliness of their counterparts doing so.

Alemi (2020) examined EFL students' perceptions of ethics in the lecture halls. The findings showed that all of the EFL students participating in the study perceive ethics as a central aspect of the classrooms while their viewpoints diverged in ranking some ethics. The findings also demonstrated that the EFL students' consideration of ethics focused on their instructors' behavior and ethics in the classroom.

Rodzalan et al. (2016) found that the levels of ethics of Malaysian undergraduate students were heterogeneous. The results also showed that undergraduate engineering students in Malaysia have a lower level of ethics compared to social science and science students. Relating to gender differences, female students seem to have a higher level of ethics than their male colleagues.

Davis and Welton (1991) found that students' perceptions of decent good behavior develop toward society's expectations during academic life and college culture. Naaz (2015) found that the professional ethics of all three teacher-training institutions in the study have a medium ethics score. The study also showed that there is no significant difference in the professional ethics of student teachers at chosen institutes in terms of gender and discipline. In another study carried out in 2017, Naaz also found that student teachers in public institutions have stronger, more positive attitudes toward professional ethics while student teachers in private schools have moderately positive attitudes toward professional ethics. The study also revealed that there is a significant difference in the professional ethics as viewed by student-teachers in public and private schools.

Ozcan et al. (2013) found that teacher students' considerations are negative in terms of teachers' behaviors inside the classroom and teachers' professional ethics. Sheveleva (2020) found that students mostly observe teachers' professional behavior as it relates to their own career aspirations. Students observe the complacency of teachers' personal traits with ethical standards and gauge the employment instruction and job directives to be the groundwork for the content of the ethical rules of teachers.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Investigative Approach

The descriptive research method was employed for this research paper as it was the most appropriate approach given the three objectives and the three research questions. It supported the gathering of King Khalid University EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics.

B. Study Sample and Ethics Approval Standards

Given the purposes of this research paper and its questions, a descriptive survey method was regarded as the most proper for attaining the viewpoint of King Khalid University EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics. Moreover, written informed consent was collected from all the participants before the study was conducted by the two authors.

C. Study Sample

A random sampling technique was adopted whereby 100 EFL King Khalid University students were chosen from the English Language Center (Abha), Dhahran Al-Janoub Applied College, The Colleges of Sciences and Arts (Dhahran Al-Janoub), and the Faculty of Languages and Translation.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF STUDY SAMPLE ACCORDING TO COLLEGE

The College	Frequency	Percentage
English Language Center (Abha)	30	30.0
College (Dhahran Al-Janoub) Applied	30	30.0
Colleges of Sciences and Arts (Dhahran Al-Janoub)	20	20.0
Faculty of Languages and Translation (Abha)	20	20.0
Total	100	100

D. Study Instrument

The required data was gathered through a questionnaire, the items of which were applicable to the three objectives of this research paper. The initial version of the questionnaire was distributed to five specialists in teaching English as a foreign language to verify the suitability of the questionnaire items and the extent to which they were appropriate for the participants. The last version of the questionnaire was improved after considering the criticisms, remarks and assessments given by the EFL experts. Moreover, the questionnaire was piloted by a group of 25 EFL students. The two authors conducted a pilot study before distributing the questionnaire to all of the study participants; furthermore, they also submitted the questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of 25 respondents. They reported that the items were clear and easy to comprehend. Also, the pilot study allowed the two authors to identify the difference in the time between when the first participant completed the questionnaire and when the last participant completed theirs which was 20 minutes. The reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.83 showed a good degree of reliability.

TABLE 2
CRONBACH'S ALPHA FOR THE RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE (ALL SAMPLES: N=100)

Statement	No. of Items	Alpha
The overall reliability of the questionnaire	15	0.83

E. Data Analysis

The analysis of the survey data enabled the two authors to reach a conclusion regarding the participants' perspectives on teaching professional ethics. A total of 100 EFL King Khalid University students participated in the survey. Statistical assessment was utilized to compute the percentages of each item. Responses to the questionnaire items were recorded on a five-point Likert scale (i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree); the highest grade (Strongly Agree) was given a five while the lowest grade (Strongly Disagree) was given a one. The range calculated for the scale was 5-1 = 4. Dividing this by the number of categories (five) gave 4/5 = 0.80 which was the length of each category of the five scales. Finally, the length of the category was added to the lowest grade of the scale, which was 1. Thus, the first category was calculated to be 1 to 1.80. And by adding (0.80) for the next category (which starts with the first category) to produce the second category, and so on for the rest of the categories. The following criteria were defined to analyze the results:

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO THE GRADIENT OF THE CATEGORIES USED IN THE SEARCH TOOL

Description	Range of Mean
Strongly Agree	4.21-5.00
Agree	3.41-4.20
Neutral	2.61-3.40
Disagree	1.81-2.60
Strongly Disagree	1.00-1.80

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the reliability and validity of the questionnaire had been verified, the findings for each questionnaire item were carefully examined.

TABLE 4

Ser No.	Statement		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
1	I view that teacher-student relationships are extensively known as an important factor in student motivation.	Freq.	53	35	9	2	1	4.37	0.81	4
		%	45.0	34.0	8.0	7.0	6.0			
2	I view most EFL staff members are not conversant with the notion of professional ethics in the classroom as much as they know about different teaching methods.	Freq.	62	34	4			4.58	0.57	1
		%	60.0	36.0	4.0					
3	Professional ethics play a key role in promoting EFL staff members' and students' perception of pedagogical ethics in classrooms or lecture rooms.	Freq.	12	25	17	28	18	2.85	1.31	15
		%	27.0	26.0	14.0	14.0	19.0			
4	EFL staff members should be punctual and on time for online or offline classes.	Freq.	35	31	19	9	6	3.80	1.19	13
		%	34.0	32.0	18.0	8.0	8.0			
5	EFL staff members should foster, support and motivate students to follow the rules and regulations of King Khalid University in classrooms, examination rooms and on campus.	Freq.	38	38	24			4.14	0.78	10
		%	37.0	39.0	24.0					
6	EFL staff members should devote particular attention to developing the poor language performance of students.	Freq.	42	31	8	11	8	3.88	1.29	12
		%	43.0	32.0	8.0	12.0	5.0			
7	EFL staff members should not intentionally make deceptive statements and fraudulent statements about their colleagues.	Freq.	34	34	12	11	9	3.73	1.29	14
		%	33.0	35.0	12.0	11.0	9.0			
8	EFL staff members' professionalism impacts the role of their pedagogy which, in turn, positively affects their students' ability to learn efficiently.	Freq.	49	30	18	2	1	4.24	0.89	5
		%	48.0	31.0	16.0	3.0	2.0			
9	It is part of EFL staff members' responsibility to keep an eye on students'' behavior and ethics in addition to teaching, and training them.	Freq.	41	40	18		1	4.20	0.80	7
		%	40.0	41.0	17.0		2.0			
10	I view improving the professional ethical behavior of the University students must be consistent with enhancing the professional ethical behavior of its EFL staff.	Freq.	61	30	9			4.52	0.66	2
		%	59.0	32.0	9.0					
11	I view teaching like other professions has professional ethical norms and standards. Therefore, EFL staff members should commit to professional ethics in their work.	Freq.	48	35	4	10	3	4.15	1.09	9
		%	46.0	37.0	4.0	10.0	3.0			
12	I view by the increase of commitment of EFL staff members to professional ethics, their students' self-esteem has increased too.	Freq.	47	34	13	3	3	4.19	0.98	8
		%	45.0	36.0	12.0	5.0	2.0			
13	EFL staff members should be free from bias against male and female students.	Freq.	44	34	22			4.22	0.79	6
		%	42.0	36.0	22.0					
14	EFL staff members should adapt their lesson plans based on students' interests, needs, and preferences.	Freq.	63	23	14			4.49	0.73	3
		%	60.0	25.0	15.0					
15	EFL staff members should not accept gifts from their students.	Freq.	36	31	23	8	2	3.91	1.15	11
		%	35.0	35.0	20.0	8.0	2.0			
Mean* for total								**4.08**	**0.38**	

* The mean of 5 degrees

In response to the statement "I view most EFL staff members are not conversant with the notion of professional ethics in the classroom as much as they know about different teaching methods", 36.0% of respondents agreed and 60.0%

strongly agreed (ranking first in order of importance). This finding suggests that EFL staff members are not conversant with the notion of professional ethics in the classroom as much as they know about different teaching methods.

In response to the statement "I view improving the professional ethical behavior of the University students must be consistent with enhancing the professional ethical behavior of its EFL staffs", 32.0% of respondents agreed, and 59.0% strongly agreed, ranking this statement second. This positive finding is evidence that EFL students feel that improving the professional ethical behavior of university students must be consistent with enhancing the professional ethical behavior of its EFL staff.

In response to the statement "EFL staff members should adapt their lesson plans based on their students' interests, needs, and preferences", 25.0% of respondents agreed, and 60.0% strongly agreed, thereby ranking third. This positive finding indicates that EFL staff members should adapt their lesson plans based on students' interests, needs, and preferences.

Ranking fourth is the response to the statement "I view that teacher-student relationships are extensively known as an important factor in student motivation" where 34.0% of respondents agreed, and 62.0% strongly agreed. This positive finding revealed that EFL students feel that teacher-student relationships are extensively known as an important factor in student motivation.

In response to the fifth highest ranking statement "EFL staff members' professionalism impacts the role of their pedagogy which, in turn, positively affects their students' ability to learn efficiently", 31.0% of respondents agreed, and 48.0% strongly agreed. This finding demonstrated that EFL staff members' professionalism impacts the role of their pedagogy which, in turn, affects positively their students' ability to learn efficiently.

In response to the statement "EFL staff member should be free from bias against male and female students", 42.0% of the respondents agreed, and 36.0% strongly agreed, ranking the statement in sixth place. This positive finding showed that EFL staff members must be free of bias against male and female students.

In response to the seventh-ranked statement, "It is part of EFL staff members' responsibility to keep an eye on students' behavior and ethics in addition to teaching and training them", 41.0% of the respondents agreed, and 40.0% strongly agreed. This positive finding showed that it is part of the EFL staff members' responsibility to keep an eye on students' behavior and ethics in addition to teaching and training them.

In response to the statement, "I view by the increase of commitment of EFL staff members to professional ethics, their students' self-esteem has increased, too", 36.0% of respondents agreed and 45.0% strongly agreed ranking the statement in eighth place. This finding indicated that EFL students see that because of the increase in commitment of EFL staff members to professional ethics, their students' self-esteem has increased as well.

In response to the ninth-ranked statement "I view teaching, like other professions, has professional ethical norms and standards. Therefore, EFL staff members should commit to those professional ethics in their work", 37.0% of respondents agreed, and 47.0% strongly agreed. This finding showed that EFL teaching, like other professions, has professional ethical norms and standards. Therefore, EFL staff members should commit to professional ethics in their work.

In response to the statement "EFL staff members should foster, support, and motivate students to follow the rules and regulations of King Khalid University in classrooms, examination rooms and on campus", 39.0% of respondents agreed, and 37.0% strongly agreed, ranking this statement tenth. This finding showed that EFL staff members should foster, support and motivate students to follow the rules and regulations of King Khalid University in classrooms and examination rooms and on campus.

In response to the statement that ranked in 11th place "EFL staff members should not accept gifts from their students", 35.0% of the respondents agreed, and 35.0% strongly agreed. This finding showed that EFL staff members should not accept gifts from their students.

In response to the statement "EFL staff members should devote particular attention to developing the poor language performance of students", which ranked 12th, 32.0% of respondents agreed, and 43% strongly agreed. This finding showed that EFL staff members should devote particular attention to developing poor language performance of students.

In response to the 13th ranking statement "EFL staff members should be punctual and on time for online or offline classes", 32.0% of respondents agreed, and 34.0% strongly agreed. This finding revealed that EFL staff members should be punctual and on time for online or offline classes.

In response to the statement "EFL staff members should not intentionally make deceptive and fraudulent statements about their colleagues", 30.0% of respondents agreed, and 49.0% strongly agreed which ranked 14th. This finding revealed that EFL staff members should not intentionally make deceptive and fraudulent statements about their colleagues.

Finally, in 15th place, in response to the statement "Professional ethics play a key role in promoting EFL staff members and students' perception of pedagogical ethics in classrooms or lecture rooms", 26.0% of respondents agreed, and 27.0% strongly agreed. This finding revealed that professional ethics play a key role in promoting EFL staff members' and students' perception of pedagogical ethics in classrooms or lecture rooms.

To answer research question 1, "What are the perspectives of EFL students at King Khalid University on teaching professional ethics?" the qualitative data showed that the majority of EFL students had positive attitudes towards the role of teaching professional ethics in learning and teaching because the success of any academic institution depends on

teaching and learning them. Moreover, improving the professional ethical behavior of university students must be consistent with enhancing the professional ethical behavior of its EFL staff. The findings of the study revealed that the EFL staff members' professionalism impacts the role of their pedagogy which, in turn, positively affects their students' ability to learn efficiently. The results also confirmed the findings of previous studies which explored the importance of involving teaching professional ethics in both teacher and student curricula while also including various dimensions of teaching professional ethics for staff, and code of professional conduct, all of which have the prospective to impact the ethics of both staff members and students (Naaz, 2017; Bahat & Ernas, 2023; Aki et al., 2021; Alemi, 2020).

To answer research question 2, "To what extent is the teaching of professional ethics elements in education respected by EFL students?" the qualitative evidence showed that EFL students feel that teacher-student relationships are extensively known as an important factor in student motivation. The participants' positive responses showed that EFL students also see an increase in the commitment of EFL staff members to professional ethics, and their students' self-esteem has increased, too. Moreover, they see that teaching, like other professions, has professional ethical norms and standards. Therefore, EFL staff members should commit to professional ethics in their workplace.

To answer research question 3, "What are the factors that affect male and female EFL students' perspectives on teaching professional ethics" the qualitative evidence indicated that the personal characteristics of EFL staff members such as self-esteem, presence of mind, intelligence, cool-headedness, adapting lesson plans based on their students' interests, needs, and preferences are the underlying factors that influence the participants' perspectives on teaching professional ethics at King Khalid University.

V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this investigation was to find out the perspectives of male and female EFL students at King Khalid University concerning teaching professional ethics. This is because, in the learning and teaching process, professional ethics are the obvious choice to teach to both EFL staff members and EFL students because of its effect on the learning, teaching, and training processes. Today, addressing the subject of teaching professional ethics in teaching, learning, and training typically parallels that of teaching moral standards. Determining how EFL students view professional ethics learning at King Khalid University helps staff members and their students to enhance their teaching and learning appropriately. Therefore, teaching professional ethics is important to fostering professional ethics in the classroom. However, teaching professional ethics must be predicated on the ethical pedagogical and instructional cornerstone. The findings of this study revealed that the majority of both male and female EFL students at King Khalid University had a positive perspective on the facets of teaching professional ethics in education. It was also apparent that in the areas of teaching, training, and learning, there are various fields of teaching professional ethics because of the significant effect of academic settings of universities in general and King Khalid University in particular on the future of their university students, and because of their fundamental role and primary responsibility to offer education that will make communities more cultivated.

Pedagogical Implication

The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the teaching professional ethics literature and educational attainment, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia because it appears to be fully in line with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 in the field of education. It offers perspectives on how EFL students will cope when faced with moral situations. It also demonstrates EFL students' morality in Saudi Arabia and serves an indicator of what extent they have prepared to enhance the ethicality of the Saudi community at large.

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Mesfer Ahmed Mesfer Alwadai is a full professor of Educational Course Design in the Faculty of Education at King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. Professor Mesfer is an academic with 20 years' experience in designing educational courses and professional development programs for staff in educational institutions He is also a creative and innovative designer of development and community initiatives. Prof. Mesfer received his PhD from Southern Illinois University, USA, Shawwal in 1435 AH (August 2014). Currently, he is Dean of the College of Science and Arts in Dhahran Al-Janoub Governorate, a position he has held since 7/24/1436 AH (5/14/2015 AD). Since 1436 AH/ 2015, he has been a member of the Council of King Khalid University. Prof. Mesfer was a part-time consultant for the Asir Region Development Authority and is a certified professional trainer for a variety of well-known local, regional and institutional organizations. Prof. Mesfer has also published numerous papers in indexed international journals.

Formerly at Jazan University, **Ali Albashir Mohammed Alhaj** is currently a faculty member at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. Drs. Alhaj received his first Ph.D. in English Literature from the University of Khartoum in 2003, his second Ph.D. in Translation Studies from Omdurman Islamic University, in 2014, his third Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from Sudan University of Science and Technology in 2018, and his fourth Ph.D. in Pure Linguistics was obtained from Bahri University. Drs. Alhaj has published 200 papers in indexed journals and 50 books, 12 of which have been translated into ten languages internationally. Drs. Alhaj received the King Khalid University Award for Scientific Research Excellence (First Rank) in 2020.

The Futility of Language as a Means of Communication in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Fam and Yam*, and *The Sandbox*

Muna M. Abd-Rabbo[*]
Department of English Language, Literature and Translation, Faculty of Arts, Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, Amman 11733, Jordan

Ghadir B. Zalloum
Department of English Language, Literature and Translation, Faculty of Arts, Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, Amman 11733, Jordan

Dima M. Al-Wahsh
Department of French and English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan, Amman 11733, Jordan

Abstract—**The three plays *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962) *The Sandbox* (1959) and *Fam and Yam* (1959) all display the absurdist tendencies to dispel the traditional view of language as the rational means of communication amongst mankind. In absurdist drama the world is portrayed as one that is meaningless and incomprehensible to the human mind. Language, which is confined to faulty human perception and subjectivity, is inefficient in the face of an unfathomable universe. A gap persists between the meanings in language and the world it purports to describe. In addition, the lack of fit between what language permits man to say and what he actually wants to say leads to a breakdown in communication and ultimately to the alienation of the individual. In absurdist works this chaotic sphere of existence is reflected in the dispensing of traditional elements in drama as well as in the illogical usage of language by the characters. Thus, absurdist drama acts as a counter-discourse to the previously dominant, essentialist discourse of realist drama. In this article a brief overview of the absurdist depiction of language's insufficiency in communication is presented to serve as a backdrop for the analysis of certain segments in Albee's aforementioned plays in order to assess the extent to which Albee's plays demonstrate the absurdist's notion of language's deficiencies. Thus, the sections chosen for discussion are those that showcase language's apparent shortcomings in generating human contact.**

Index Terms—**Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *The Sandbox*, *Fam and Yam*, Absurd**

I. INTRODUCTION

The three plays *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* *Fam and Yam* and *The Sandbox* by Edward Albee all portray the absurdist notion of language's futility in human communication. Instead of bringing individuals together, language in these plays divides the characters further apart. As is customary in absurdist drama, Albee's plays reflect the notion that, in a meaningless world where faith is practically non-existent, language falls short in the communicative process of human beings. There is no conventional progression of ideas; instead, the irrational and illogical speech of the characters leads to the ultimate conclusion, silence and the alienation of individuals. Nonsense in absurdist theatre is used to illustrate the confines of language and the loss of truth and meaning in a pointless universe. This article is an attempt to assess the instances that demonstrate the extent of language's ineffectuality in establishing human contact in the three plays mentioned above. First, however, a brief outline of the absurdist concept of language is presented to serve as a theoretical background for the analysis of the plays.

II. LANGUAGE IN THE THEATER OF THE ABSURD

The first person to use the term "theatre of the absurd" was Martin Esslin in his book *Theatre of the Absurd* (1961). Esslin discusses language in the theatre of the absurd stating that "the theatre of the absurd has regained the freedom of using language as merely one – sometimes dominant, sometimes submerged – component of its multidimensional poetic imagery" (Esslin, p. 396). Esslin also quotes George Steiner as saying "It is no paradox that much of reality now

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[*] Corresponding Author

begins outside language …the world of the word has shrunk…Language here belongs to the realm of pure subjectivity, and is thus void of objective reality" (Esslin, 1961, p. 397). Earlier on Esslin explains that Ionesco affirms the notion that language is an impossible means of communication and that the language of society needs to be deconstructed because it "is nothing but clichés, empty formulas and slogans" (Esslin, 1961, pp. 126-7).

In an introduction to the book *Absurdist Drama* (1965) retrieved online, Esslin argues that the loss of meaning that people felt after World War II also put language under the microscope as it was the recognized instrument of communication. The Theatre of the Absurd examines the limitations of language, but more specifically the "fossilized forms of language which have become devoid of meaning". Language has gone from being the most primary means of communication and has been reduced to a "kind of ballast filling empty spaces". Esslin adds that in the meaningless universe all arguments that offer to make sense of this world in the arenas of philosophy and politics become "empty chatter".

In the book *Theatre of Chaos* (2005), the writer William Demastes explains how Esslin distinguishes between existential theatre and absurdist theatre: "Whereas the existential theatre …presents an illogical counterrational position by using essentially rational methods of construction and presentation, the absurdist drama…reflects a counterrational vision by using a nonrational form" (2005, p. 55). Seen in this light it is clear that the absurdists employ an illogical form in order to convey the meaninglessness of the world around them.

William Oliver expresses a similar idea pertaining to the absurdist's utilization of form to reflect content. He posits that the absurdists do not shy away from "obscurity in art since they employ it as a direct symbol of the obscurity they find in life" (1956, p. 7). In addition, Oliver elaborates on the absurdists' lack of trust in language due to man's limited capabilities in the areas of perception, expression and self identification. Accordingly, the absurdists try to come to terms with "the gulf of our misunderstanding that exists between our desire and our definition of it, between our expression of ourselves and its apprehension by others" (Oliver, 1965, p. 8).

Due to the severe limitations of verbal language as a source of communication, some theater directors have dabbled in the use of non-verbal language, specifically sign language to express the primordial state of the human condition. In a review of the 2017 Deaf production of Albee's *At Home at the Zoo*, Stephanie Lim posits that the double-casting of the characters into both deaf and hearing ("Voice of") actors serves to further emphasize the "play's theme of miscommunication and the ambiguous relationship between man and beast exploring the imperfect nature of human interactions in heightened visual and physical ways" (2017, pp. 98-99). To escape the banality of Esslin's "clichés, empty formulas and slogans" (Esslin, 1961, pp. 126-7), theater directors have resorted to alternative means of communication in their ceaseless endeavor to capture the basic reality of the human condition.

III. LANGUAGE IN *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF*?

In the play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, the lack of communication in the traditional sense of the words between characters is established right from the start. Martha and George seem to be having two separate conversations at the same time. Martha tries to imitate Bette Davis in some Warner Brothers film when she repeats Davis' line in the movie "What a dump!" (Albee, 1962, p. 11). She assumes that George will catch on to her role play instantly; she does not realize that George has no idea what she is talking about and this angers her. Her subjectivity creates a barrier between her and her husband; she feels that her husband should easily interpret what is going on in her mind, but this initial scene reveals the limitations of language when a character tries to communicate an inner fantasy to another. The dialogue consists of several unfinished sentences as both characters do not give the other a chance to clarify his / her ideas.

> MARTHA: Aw, come on! What's it from? You know…
> GEORGE: …Martha…
> MARTHA: WHAT'S IT FROM, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE!
> GEORGE [*wearily*]: What's what from? (Albee, 1962, p. 11)

According to David Debruge in a review of the 2022 production of the play starring Calista Flockhart and Zachary Quinto, Martha and George most likely spend every evening engaging in "the same form of flagellations" and it is the "competitive spirit" of these linguistic battles that may paradoxically bring them together as much as drive them apart. In a short exchange within the opening scene, George makes a "balding joke" which Martha appreciates; she "raises her glass – a toast to a fresh barb, as if this were a tennis match and George had just scored a point. 'Swampy' she calls him – an innovation of her own" (Debruge, 2022). Their sport of words fluctuates, at times solidifying their bond, while at other times, tearing them apart. A major source of anguish within this marriage is the fictional narrative of their imaginary child. Unable to conceive, this couple has created a child from words to compensate for their lack of children. This illusory child constitutes the epitome of their linguistics resourcefulness, but as George warns Martha ahead of the guests' arrival, such a narrative must remain within their private sphere or else it will dissipate into nothingness.

As the doorbell chimes announcing the arrival of Nick and Honey, George warns Martha not to mention their imaginary child. Once again language presents an obstacle; Martha cannot comprehend the message that George is trying to get across. First George speaks in code, calling the kid "the bit", thinking that Martha will decode his statement immediately. He also does not want her to discuss their fictional son in front of others, but she gets angry, thinking that George is trying to control her and to take possession of the child.

GEORGE: …Just don't start over on the bit, that's all.

MARTHA: The bit? The bit? What kind of language is that? What are you talking about?

GEORGE: The bit. Just don't start in on the bit.

MARTHA: You trying to imitate, one of your students, for God's sake? What are you trying to do? WHAT BIT?

…GEORGE: Just leave the kid out of this.

MARTHA: [*threatening*]: He's mine as much as he is yours. I'll talk about him if I want to.

(Albee, 1962, pp. 18-19)

Here there is a clear breakdown in communication; Martha is at a total loss as to what George is talking about and she directly criticizes his language as the primary cause of her confusion. George does not want their private fantasy revealed in front of outsiders lest it fades in the blaring light of cold reality, but Martha cannot grasp that; she gets defensive and vows to do and say whatever she pleases. At the same time, George cannot comprehend Martha's desperate need to take full possession of the imaginary child narrative for her own self-preservation.

The couple's childless status comes under scrutiny by Mary Anne Barfield in her article "A Body of One's Own: Martha's Performative Physicality in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*?" in which she explores gendered spatiality in this play. Barfield focuses mainly of Martha's use of her body as a source of agency rather than inadequacy in opposition to the subordinate status quo of an infertile woman in 1960s society. Therefore, "Martha's body surfaces as a textual spacing all her own, by which she persistently negotiates gendered power, countering the pronatalist narrative which her infertility ought to have rendered her body powerless" (2018, p. 90). Martha feels possessive towards her fictional child since it shields her from the dominant, patriarchal, pronatalist discourse that surrounds her. The struggle that Martha faces in this patriarchal society manifests itself as a type of structural violence, or "Institutionalized violence supported by the dominant culture and system" (Qutami, 2022, p. 225). Language as a social determinant becomes a source of anguish for her, so she counters the monolithic pronatalist discourse by utilizing her words to reinforce the fantasy of her imaginary child.

Language as a means of misperception and vexation surfaces on numerous occasions in this play. In a later scene within the first act, George tries to provoke Nick by confusing him with a lot of empty chatter. At one point Nick gets frustrated because he does not know how to respond to one of George's questions:

NICK: [*snapping it out*]: All right…what do you want me to say? Do you want me to say it's funny, so you can contradict me and say it's sad? Or do you want me to say it's sad so you can turn around and say no it's funny. You can play that damn little game any way you want to you know! (Albee, 1962, p. 26)

The 'little game' that Nick refers to is a language game; George employs language not to establish communication with another human being but rather to confuse and humiliate his guest. In fact the whole first act or 'Fun and Games' is all about using language to tease and even hurt others through seemingly harmless games, or what George refers to as "exercising our wits" (Albee, 1962, p. 27).

On more than one occasion characters disagree over words, further reinforcing the limitations of language in general. When Martha praises Nick's specialization in biology instead of math saying that biology is "less abstruse" (Albee, 1962, p. 44), George tries to correct her into saying "abstract". Martha defends her diction and attacks George telling him "Don't tell me words" (Albee, 1962, p. 44). In another situation George and Nick cannot agree on whether one should say a 'bunch', 'gangle' or 'gaggle' of geese (Albee, 1962, p. 72). There is another dispute between Martha and George about whether one should say "I've got" or "I've gotten" (Albee, 1962, p. 100). Such indeterminacy of language springs from the barrier between characters' thoughts and the articulation of such musings.

In Act Two George expresses his desire to make some contact with Nick but to no avail. George tries to give Nick some advice about the future; he even tries to shout his words at him. However, Nick is too irritated with George to listen, and gives him a sarcastic answer then shouts out an obscenity at him.

GEORGE [after a silence]: I've tried to …tried to reach you…to…

NICK [contemptuously]: …make contact?

GEORGE: Yes.

NICK [still]: …communicate?

GEORGE: Yes. Exactly.

NICK: Aw…that is touching… (Albee, 1962, p. 73)

Here George and Nick touch upon the main theme in absurdist drama: man's inability to make contact through words. In a later exchange within the same scene George refers directly to man's fruitless effort to make some sense of the chaotic world around him by turning to art, music, government and morality:

GEORGE: …you endeavor to make communicable sense out of natural order, morality out of the unnatural disorder of man's mind…you make government and art and realize they are, must be both the same… (Albee, 1962, p. 73)

This 'unnatural disorder' of man's subjectivity is exactly what prevents humanity from coming to terms with the natural world that surrounds them, even if there is some semblance of natural order in the universe.

In the book *Edward Albee*, Gerry McCarthy takes up the issue of story-telling in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* McCarthy argues that Albee utilizes the various narrations of the characters to "challenge the way an audience makes

meanings and its prejudice in favor of everyday reality" (1987, p. 61). McCarthy continues to point out that Albee uses alcohol to create shifts in the characters' perspectives and in their narratives. For example the image of Nick and Honey as a golden American couple is shattered after an intoxicated Nick reveals that he married Honey because of a false pregnancy and because her father had a lot of money. Later on Nick and George turn the events of this story into a "burlesque fairytale" when they call Honey's father a church mouse (1987, p. 61).

McCarthy resumes his point about the flux nature of the characters' stories in this play, specifically George's story about the young man who accidentally killed his mother with a shot gun and his father in a road accident. This story surfaces several times in alternating forms during the course of the play's events. First it is the novel that Martha's father had prevented George from publishing. Then George claims that it is actually his life story, and later on this narrative reappears in the account that George provides of how the fictional child has died. McCarthy concludes by stating that "the reappearance of …this story as novel, then 'truth' then manifest invention, indicates how consciously Albee is aiming at undermining the illusion of fact" (1987, pp. 72-3).

However, it is worth pointing out that George's obsession with this story could bring to light the demons that have been eating away at him for so many years. He could be hiding a secret so horrendous that he cannot bring it to the surface in straightforward language. Therefore, he resorts to the words of fiction, but even that is insufficient in expressing George's innermost fears, regrets and apprehensions. At some stage in the play George draws attention to the blurred line between fantasy and reality when he tells Nick "Truth and illusion. Who knows the difference…?" (Albee, 1962, p. 119).

The submergence of reality and fantasy is a major theme in this play and it is portrayed through the mingling of fairy tales, nursery rhymes and real-life stories. The title of the play is itself an allusion to the nursery rhyme about the three little pigs and the Big Bad Wolf. Frank Ardolino traces the use of the line "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?" in the play and explains its metaphorical, sarcastic and ironic uses. It is first used by Martha when she and George return from the party in reference to a joke that Martha had made earlier that night. George cannot seem to appreciate the line and this upsets Martha as she blames him for his lack of sense of humor. After Martha confronts George about his successions of failures, George sings it "in a mocking way as if warding off her accusations" (Ardolino, 2003, pp. 113-114). He also chants it once again as Martha and Nick prepare to "consummate their lust, using it as a protective device against her blatant sexuality". The line appears at the end as Martha answers George that she is afraid of Virginia Woolf, the Big Bad Wolf, or "life without illusion" (Ardolino, 2003, pp. 113-114).

This line which is almost like a refrain takes on various meanings in this play. At the beginning Martha might be using it as an extension of role play. She assumes the part of Bette Davis and had performed this line at the party in an effort to win George's attention. However, she cannot get George to see her need for his external validation because of the breakdown in their communication. That is why the two of them end up using language to hurt the other and create more distance between them, rather than to express themselves in a manner that would bring them to a more harmonious understanding.

George sings this line in an effort to shield himself from the venom of Martha's verbal attacks. At the end of Act One George is almost crying as he begs Martha to stop spewing out all his failures; he even breaks a bottle against the portable bar after she screams that he is a big "flop" (Albee, 1962, p. 56). In a final desperate attempt to silence her he starts to sing "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf" loudly to drown her voice out. They have a battle of voices which culminates in a short silence which is only broken by Honey's announcement that she is going to be sick, thus bringing the first act to a tumultuous ending. Language in this riotous scene is a tool to cause pain and to try to stop it. Instead of a dialogue wherein there is a rational exchange of voices, here the voices rise against one another in a show of disorderliness that truly depicts a chaotic world as well as the human alienation that accompanies it. The only brief moment of tranquility in this scene is the split second of silence before Honey's speedy exit. The absence of words appears to be more favorable than the role words play in bolstering the blockade between this enraged couple.

In Act Two George mentions a second novel, what he refers to as an allegory or a bucolic, which actually turns out to be the story of Honey and Nick put within the framework of a fictional work. Once again story-telling takes an indeterminate form; George takes Nick's words and creates a sort of fairy tale which is meant to humiliate his guests in his game "Get the Guests". The characters in his 'novel' are Blondie and his wife Mousie; interestingly enough, Honey feels the story is familiar but it does not dawn upon her that it is about her until George comes to the part about the hysterical pregnancy:

> GEORGE: …The Mouse got all puffed up one day, and she went over to Blondie's house, and she stuck out her puff, and she said…look at me.
> HONEY [*hysteria*]: WHAT? …and then, WHAT?
> GEORGE [*as if to a baby*]: …and then the puff went away…like magic…pouf! (Albee, 1962, p. 89)

Narrative here is shown to be a mercurial unreliable entity; George takes real events and puts them into a fictional form that causes Honey to have a breakdown. George here is using this narrative to practice a type of emotional abuse which involves "manipulating and humiliating victims' emotions" (Al-Ghammaz, 2022, p. 219). Ultimately, Honey gets sick and resorts to more drinks later on to escape the brunt of this humiliating experience and ends up pathetically lying on the bathroom floor in the house of these strangers, alienated from the rest of the party, including her husband. Even

though Honey is depicted as somewhat of a featherhead, the fact that she cannot distinguish that the fairytale is about her and Nick further underpins the intermingling of fact and fiction, and accordingly, reality and fantasy.

The fickle form of narrative surfaces within the same act when George expresses some concern that Martha has completely lost sight of the flimsy line that separates fantasy from reality, especially after she mentions the imaginary child in front of strangers. Language poses a problem for George; he tries to articulate his concerns delicately and indirectly but Martha accuses him of using vague language and is insulted at his insinuation that she might be losing her mind:

> GEORGE: …but you've moved bag and baggage into your own fantasy world now, and you've started playing variations on your own distortions, and as a result…
> MARTHA: Nuts!
> GEORGE: Yes…you have!
> …MARTHA: Have you ever listened to your sentences George? …You're so frigging…convoluted…that's what you are. You talk like you were writing one of your stupid papers. (Albee, 1962, pp. 93-4)

Language is the obstacle that prevents George and Martha from fulfilling some breakthrough in their mutual understanding of one another. It increases the tension in their marriage and they end up declaring total war against one another. In addition, Martha's comment about George's papers is a hint about the allusive words of academics as well as philosophers. The universe is beyond being put into the words of scholars, philosophers and academics; consequently, man is left to his own devices, trying to come to terms with his alienation and to comprehend an incomprehensible world.

A scene that truly illustrates humanity's alienation is Martha's monologue at the beginning of Act Three. Here the silence is of no comfort to Martha who keeps calling out to the others and is horrified because she does not get a response from anyone. She is outraged and shouts out that she has been "Deserted! Abandon-ed! Left out in the cold like an old pussy cat!" (Albee, 1962, p. 109). Being alone she is faced with her own thoughts and she cannot confront them. As she describes her sadness and George's sorrow, she keeps interrupting herself with outbursts beckoning the other characters to appear before her and save her from facing her deepest reflections on her life. At one point she regresses to an infantile state of mind as she begins to address her absentee father in baby talk: "Daddy? Daddy? Martha is abandon-ed…Daddy White Mouse; do you really have red eyes? Daddy you have red eyes because you cry all the time" (Albee, 1962, p. 109). She then muses that she and George also cry all the time and put their tears in ice trays and then put them in their drinks. The frozen tears are just like the frozen words that never make it to the surface to melt the ice berg that has formed over many years in the midst of this marriage.

At some point in this Final Act Martha expresses her love for George, not to George, however, but to Nick. She tells a perplexed Nick that George is the only man who has ever made her happy. There is a tone of regret in her words as she expresses the sad situation of their marriage: "George and Martha: sad, sad, sad" (Albee, 1962, p. 113). She feels pity for George who made the mistake of loving her and must be punished for that. She then uses a series of illogical contradictions to express the ambivalent nature of their relationship. She describes George as someone "…who tolerates which is intolerable; who is kind, which is cruel; who understands, which is beyond comprehension" (Albee, 1962, p. 113). This chain of parallel paradoxes brings home yet another human mystery: the love that certain individuals share can so easily, but not completely transform into hatred. It pains Martha that George is so loving even though she keeps hurting him. She feels guilty about the way she treats him; it is beyond her comprehension why he is so understanding and patient with her despite her maltreatment of him.

David Debruge describes Martha and George as one of those couples who "feed on conflict" but adds that Albee also "insured that the audiences leave the theater with the assurance that…George and Martha really are in love" (2022). A substantial element that keeps them connected is, ironically enough, the same element that seems to divide them, namely language. Their twenty-year linguistic game of word sparring and dueling has safeguarded this couple against the cruel reality of their childless, and in terms of 1960s culture, meaningless existence. The language game is of a fluid, ever-shifting quality; in a sense Martha expresses that George's love for her comes to light for the most part in his ability to "keep learning the games we play as quickly as I can change them" (Albee, 1962, p. 113).

Therefore, this play may display what Matthew Roudane has termed "verbal insults" and "physical attacks," but in the final act it also features "a series of epiphanic moments" wherein the characters' "fundamental conditions are laid bare" (2017, p. 57). Accordingly, in wake of the exorcism scene in Act Three, as George and Martha find themselves alone without the protection of their fictional child narrative, their dialogue here consists of "thirteen brief questions…The questions are first tactical, then personal, and finally metaphysical" (2017, p. 57). In a sense, questions are language's method of embodying the unknown, meaningless aspects of existence. Questions are paradoxically the window that opens up into the shortcomings of language as well as the means to discover the truth whether it be ontological, dialogic or existential.

Since language, with all the complexities that the word battles played out in the previous scenes, has been exposed and its limitations have been laid bare, the dialogue at the end of this play becomes more simplified signifying the characters' attempts to transcend the cliches and stagnantly exhausted word play that creates barriers between individuals. As Roudane asserts, the language in the final segment "privileges a grammar of new beginning, however uncertain such new beginnings may prove to be" (2017, p. 58). In order for George and Martha to truly become

grounded in reality they must not just sacrifice their illusory son, but also the "kind of language that so animates this evening's actions" (2017, p. 61). Consequently, the overall language in the final lines indicate "their willingness not to return to sanity or happiness, but to begin the complex process of confronting their essential selves honestly" (2017, p.61).

From the passages highlighted in the preceding pages it becomes quite evident that the play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* underlines the constraints of traditional, verbal language in establishing genuine human contact in an unfathomable world. There is clearly a lack of fit between characters' desires and the words they utter, between inner reality and the outwardly expressed reality. Such a discrepancy results in an overall failure in communication and in the terrifying isolation that individuals experience.

IV. LANGUAGE IN *THE SANDBOX* AND *FAM AND YAM*

Albee's one act plays, *The Sandbox* and *Fam and Yam* also expound the theme of humanity's incapacity in initiating solid interaction through the power of words. According to Stephen James Bottoms in *The Cambridge Companion to Edward Albee*, these two plays "attack hollow rituals, obstacles to communication and the theater of realism" (2005, p. 24). The main hurdle that stands in the way of communication is language, especially the vacant phrases so often used in social encounters. These two one acts do not even give definable names to the characters, an indication of the universal significance of these figures in capturing the human condition as a whole.

In his discussion of *The Sandbox* Bottoms explains that the couple or Mommy and Daddy are unable to get in touch with one another because they have nothing substantial to say. Their exchanges are full of "banalities, clichés, and deflated words, emptied of real meaning" (2005, p. 26). As Zsanett Barna claims in an online article, "Mommy is a very commanding person, who has a peremptory tone of voice. This is one reason why there is no and there can be no genuine conversation between the couple" (2010). In the following exchange between Mommy and Daddy as they wait for Grandma to die, their lack of communication is quite apparent:

Daddy: (*After a pause*): Shall we talk to each other?
Mommy (*with that little laugh; picking something off her dress*): Well you can talk if you want to…if you can think of anything to say…if you can think of anything new.
Daddy (*thinks*): No…I suppose not.
Mommy: (*With a triumphant laugh*): Of course not! (Albee, 1959, p. 12)

After years of being subdued into just repeating "Whatever you say, Mommy" Daddy is incapable of coming up with anything meaningful to say. Mommy seems to be rather satisfied with this arrangement; she gets pleasure from Daddy's helpless inexpressibility. This couple does not really engage in any genuine conversation; they just exchange phrases that are devoid of any emotional significance. They are like robots programmed to utter certain words without giving them any consideration, thus emphasizing the absurdist notion of social language as being simply empty chatter. Even the Holy Bible is reduced to meaningless nonsense when Mommy "unfeelingly parrots the sacred sincerity of psalm 30, 11-12" (Bottoms, 2005, p. 26) when she thinks that Grandma has died. Such prayers have become empty rituals performed without sentiment for the sake of social conventions.

In his article entitled "The Absurdity of Mimesis: A History of Absurdist Criticism Related to the Plays of Edward Albee," David Marcia refers to Paul M. Cubeta who focuses on this play's "metatheatrics…as well as its use of ritual and devalued language" (2017, p. 23). By dispensing with the traditional elements of the theater Albee succeeds in exposing the hollowness of conventional drama and, in turn, with the dominant human discourse in general, thereby showcasing the "use of cliches to embody not only the character's need to conceal and dominate with language, but also the impossibility of communication itself" (2017, p. 23). The utter debasement of language here into both empty chatter and meaningless noises reduces humanity to its basest form; such a reduction serves to dismantle the fragile façade of modern human civilization.

The devaluation of language comes to light most noticeably in Grandma's lines. The character Grandma is only permitted to make noises without uttering any actual words. Bottoms argues that as Grandma come closer to her death, "she is infantilized shouting nonsense syllables and throwing sand at Mommy and Daddy" (2005, p. 27). Of course Grandma only makes meaningless sounds like "Ahhhh! Ah-haaaaa! Graaaaaa!" when she tries to make some contact with her daughter and son-in-law; however, when she directly addresses the audience, she is quite articulate as she recounts the details of her life story and the suffering she has endured under the hands of Mommy and Daddy. She has got so used to speaking and not being heard that she has practically lost her faculty of speaking with others; nevertheless, the audience offers her the chance to find her voice once again and speak out against the injustices that have befallen her. At one juncture she has a friendly chat with Young Man then resumes her story to the audience as she tells Young Man "Well…uh, I've got to talk some more…don't you go away" (Albee, 1959, p. 15). She has this urge to tell her story before her death; her speech to the audience is almost like a monologue. Just like Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*? Grandma can only find the words to express her inner thoughts when she is alone.

After there is a rumbling sound off stage, Mommy acts as though she is saddened by Grandma's imminent demise. Daddy feigns support, but Grandma mocks her daughter's pretentious attempts to appear grief-stricken:

MOMMY (*Barely able to talk*): It means the time has come for poor Grandma…and I can't bear it!
DADDY (*vacantly*): I…I suppose you've got to be brave.

GRANDMA (*Mocking*): That's right kid; be brave. You'll bear up; you'll get over it. (Albee, 1959, p. 18)

Mommy cannot hear Grandma's mocking nor can she hear Grandma as she shouts that she is not dead yet; the arrangement in this relationship is one in which Grandma's words never reach the ears of her daughter. Mommy has a miraculous recovery from her "mourning" when the lights come on again bringing in daylight. She mutters the previously mentioned prayer which Grandma mimics, gets up with Daddy and they both leave to "face the future" (Albee, 1959, p. 18).

Ironically enough Grandma, who is in least control of her mental capabilities and verbal faculties is the only character who exhibits any actual emotions. At the end of the play she tries to boost Young Man's confidence after he announces himself as the Angel of Death telling him he did his line well. The reality of the situation is that Young Man does not announce himself in an impressive manner:

YOUNG MAN (Prepares; delivers the line like a real amateur): I am the Angel of Death. I am …uh…I am come for you.

…GRANDMA (Her eyes closed, her hands folded on her breast again, the shovel between her hands, a sweet smile on her face): Well…that was very nice dear… (Albee, 1959, p. 19)

Albee takes advantage of this play to discredit the theater of realism. Bottoms points out some of the lines in the play which help Albee as he challenges the principles of the realistic theater and "dismantles its conventions, deftly and comically". Amongst such lines are when Grandma says "Don't put up the lights yet" when she is not ready to die and when she directly addresses the audience. Another example is when Young Man tells Grandma "I have a line here" which exposes the "artificiality of role-playing in the theater of realism" (Bottoms, 2005, p. 27).

Fam and Yam is also entitled "An Interview"; ironically enough, Fam the famous author in the play does not realize that he is being interviewed by Yam, the new young playwright. Only at the end of the play and after Yam phones from the lobby to thank Fam for the interview does the latter realize what has happened. The devaluation of language here acts to further express "the lack of a common language" which "can also be fostered in order to create an impassable gulf between characters" (Wasserman, qtd. In Marcia, 2017, p. 23).

When Yam first arrives at Fam's apartment, he claims he is there to write an article about Fam entitled "In Search of a Hero". However, Yam uses this fake interview to launch an attack on the theater industry under the false pretense of Fam's support. Yam severely criticizes prominent figures of the theater establishment, and Fam who is under the influence of one sherry after another "agrees cordially responding with trite phrases such as 'Oh my,' 'Oh yes…wonderful, wonderful' to Yam's rapid-fire accusations" (Bottoms, 2005, p. 25). Bottoms points out that the irony of the situation is that Fam hardly says anything at all but he still has entrapped himself. What he thought was simply an exchange of pleasantries with Yam was the interview and "what he jocularly agreed to with each sherry was his own undoing by criticizing the establishment of which he was a part" (Bottoms, 2005, p. 26).

Language is used here by Yam to mislead and trap Fam into backing up the charges that the young playwright is aiming at the theater institution. Yam distracts Fam with words of flattery and praise and keeps digressing from the article he is supposedly writing, or what Fam refers to as "an indefinite article" (Albee, 1959, p. 87). Fam is very cautious at first as Yam begins to blast the theater industry; eventually however, after Fam's succession of sherries, Yam is able to reel Fam in slowly and the experienced playwright agrees with Yam's attacks. At no point in their discussion does Yam mention that Fam's remarks are not off the record; he cleverly creates the illusion that the two are simply having a private amiable conversation that will not implicate anybody. At the end after Fam is shocked by Yam's off-stage revelation that everything that was exchanged between them is part of an interview that will be published; Fam shouts "THE INTERVIEW! THE INTERVIEW!" (Albee, 1959, p. 96) and according to the stage directions "His face turns ashen…his mouth drops" (Albee, 1959, p. 96).

From the preceding discussion of Albee's two one-act plays, it becomes apparent that Albee turns both traditional language as well as the conventions of realist drama against themselves. He utilizes the mercurial fluidity of Absurdism to both expose the limitations of essentialist discourse and exhausted theatrics and to challenge the hindrances of conventional narrative and drama in exploring the complexities of human subjectivity and interactivity. Grandma's sharp, lucid elaboration of her narrative which she projects to the audience contrasts deeply with the hollow cliché-like expressions of sentiment robotically imparted by her daughter and son in law. In *Fam and Yam*, on the other hand, Yam's seemingly conventional interview actually unleashes nuances of a shrill counter-discourse which deconstructs the dominant discourse of realistic theater as well as the speech repertoire of its literary critics.

V. CONCLUSION

The three plays *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? The Sandbox* and *Fam and Yam* by Albee all exhibit the same tendency towards diffusing language's function as the traditionally acknowledged means of communication amongst human beings. These plays are truly composed in the absurdist fashion wherein dramatic form, specifically the disconnected dialogues that ensue between characters reflects the emptiness of a world devoid of meaning and the harsh state of alienation that has befallen mankind.

Albee's three plays demonstrate the extent to which the theater of the Absurd becomes a whole polyphonic counter-discourse of its own, dismantling the dominant, monolithic essentialist discourse of realist drama. Its carnivalesque-like

attributes tap into the normally silenced avenues of human existence, thereby bringing to the fore humanity's inner struggles to come to terms with its tragic condition.

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Muna M. Abd-Rabbo is an associate professor of English literature in the Department of English Language, Literature and Translation at Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. She holds a PhD in English literature from The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan obtained in 2013. Her research interests revolve around the novel and literary theory, specifically critical discourse analysis, post-colonial studies and cultural theory.

Ghadir B. Zalloum is an instructor of Translation in the Department of English Language, literature and Translation at Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. She holds an MA degree in Translation from the University of Jordan obtained in 2003. Her research interests are in translation theories, strategies and studies as well as discourse analysis.

Dima M. Al-Wahsh is an instructor of English Language and Linguistics in the Department of French and English language and Literature at Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan in Amman, Jordan. She holds an MA degree in English Linguistics from the University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan obtained in 2006. Her research interests revolve around language acquisition, linguistics and language learning and teaching.

Power Relations in Institutional Discourse: A Conversation Analytic Approach

Morad Alsahafi

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—**Language is one of the dominant channels through which power can be exercised and struggled over during social interaction. In institutional discourse, power can interactionally be achieved and negotiated through the use of a variety of discursive resources at the disposal of discourse participants. This study employs a conversation analytic approach (CA) to data collection and analysis. The main objective of the study is to find out how power and control are exercised throughout the course of news interviews. Data analysis of a substantial extract from a BBC news interview with former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, revealed four discursive features of particular significance in terms of the management of power and control: questioning, interruption, topic-controlling, and formulation. These discursive control devices enable the interviewer to exercise power and control over the interviewee. The use of each of these discursive features is examined and the implications of the analysis for language teaching and learning are discussed.**

Index Terms—**institutional discourse, media interview, conversation analysis, power**

I. Introduction

The news interview represents a common type of the media interview that makes up the news. Heritage (1985) defined the news interview as "a functionally specialized form of social interaction produced for an overhearing audience and restricted by institutionalized conventions" (p. 112). This type of institutionalized interaction is developed for varying purposes, including the gathering of information, accountability, questioning, and reporting of the voices of political or public figures (Abdulkadir, 2023; Bannink & Albaladejo, 2018; Clayman & Heritage, 2002; Ekstrom & Kroon, 2011; Jagtiani, 2012; Huls & Varwijk, 2011; Montgomery, 2008). Montgomery (2008) identified four main sub-types of the news interview based on the role and social identity of the interviewee as well as the kinds of questions asked. These four sub-genres are interviews with: (a) correspondents and reporters (affiliated interview), (b) ordinary people (experiential interview), (c) experts (expert interview), and (d) political or public figures (accountability interview). Accordingly, the news interview can be used for reporting, expressing opinions, explaining, and accounting (Montgomery, 2008).

The accountability interview calls "a public figure to account in relation to an issue or event of the moment either for their own deeds or words or for the actions/statements of the institution with which they are associated" (Montgomery, 2008, p. 262). The participants in the news interview are the interviewer, the interviewee, and the imagined overhearing audience (Clayman & Heritage, 2002; Ekstrom & Kroon, 2011). It is worth mentioning that while news interviews in general, and the accountability sub-genre in particular, develop out of a news story, they "have the potential to feed into subsequent coverage—particularly by providing a topical resource in the form of quotation for a later news item" (Mongomery, 2008, p. 265). The present paper utilises conversation analysis of a substantial extract from a news interview with former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, to illustrate the dynamics of power and control in this common discourse genre. The following research questions guided the study: How does the interviewer exercise power over the interviewee and control over the interviewee's contributions to the interview through language? What are the main discursive features?

II. Literature Review

A. Language and Power in News Interviews

In the course of the news interview, the interviewer (host and conductor of the interview) and the interviewee (a political or public figure) typically compete by playing different institutionalised roles, each with his or her own commitment set. As a result, Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle and its four conversational maxims of quality (be true), quantity (be brief), relation (be relevant), and manner (be clear) are often purposely violated. Interview participants often intentionally flout some or all of these principles by using various discursive tools in order to meet their own needs. Among the distinctive aspects of the news interview discourse, the accountability sub-type in particular, is the control and power struggle it tends to involve. In his most often cited definition of power, Weber (1978) pointed out that the concept of power refers to "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (p. 53). According to Fairclough, power is "conceptualized both in terms of asymmetries between participants in discourse

events, and in terms of unequal capacity to control how texts are produced, distributed and consumed in particular sociocultural contexts" (1995, p. 1).

Ekström and Stevanovic (2023) pointed out that the concept of social power encompasses two basic types: the power-to (what actors can do) and the power-over (actors' influence over others). Whereas the former refers to actors' "capacities to accomplish actions and make a difference", the latter indicates actors' "abilities to govern the situation and action of others" (Ekström & Stevanovic, 2023, p. 3). Obviously, language represents one of the dominant channels through which power can be exercised during social interaction. Power can be interactionally achieved and negotiated through the use of various discursive resources at the disposal of actors engaged in a particular discourse event. As argued by Ng and Bradac (1993), language has the capability to reveal, create, reflect, and depoliticizes power.

It is worth stressing that the nature of interviewing is inescapably asymmetrical in the sense that one person is solely responsible for beginning and ending the interview, choosing the topics, asking questions, and introducing new issues. The relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee can be described as "negotiation of power" (Kress & Fowler, 1979, p. 63). As noted by Thornborrow (2002), "power is accomplished in discourse both on a structural level, through the turn and type of space speakers are given or can get access to, and, on an interactional level, through what they can effectively accomplish in that space" (p. 8). Interviewers may exercise power over interviewees due to the conversational possibilities at their disposal. For example, it is the interviewer who tends to drive what happens in the interview, plan, and control it. On the other hand, the interviewee might also use such oppositional devices as indirectness (implicitness), avoidance of confrontation, and manipulation of information. Evidence of these competing features can be revealed through careful examination of various linguistic choices made by interaction participants (Wenjie, 2019).

B. Conversation Analysis and Power

Conversation analysis (CA) has become an effective methodology for studying the nature of social interaction in institutional settings (Albert, 2017; Kasper & Wagner, 2014). An applied CA approach to analysing institutional discourse considers not language per se as its focus but rather how language can be used to exert power and control in social interaction (Hutchby, 2013; Sidnell, 2009). As noted by Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008), applied CA involves "an analysis of power, where power is viewed in terms of differential distributions of discursive resources which enable certain participants to achieve interactional effects that are not available, or are differentially available, to others in the settings" (pp. 216-217). Antaki (2011) identified six types of applied CA: foundational, social-problem-oriented, communicational, diagnostic, institutional, and interventionist. Institutional CA considers not only micro analysis of the interview in terms of turn-taking rules, adjacency pairs, and other conventions of interaction, but also their influence on the dynamics of interactional control and power. Ong et al. (2021) indicated that CA "provides a method for accessing power as a set of practices and normative orientations employed and negotiated in conversation, rather than an abstract concept" (p. 1219).

Thus, applied CA provides a useful analytical tool for understanding how power is "interactionally achieved" (Talmy, 2009, p. 206). As noted by Ekström and Stevanovic (2023), applied CA studies on power relations have increased recently, particularly in research on social interaction in institutional contexts (see, for example, Clayman & Heritage, 2021; Stephenson, 2020). This study utilises applied CA approach to data collection and analysis. The study's main objective is to analyse how power is exercised and struggled over through language in the news interview.

III. DATA AND METHOD

A. Participants

- The interviewer (IR): Owen Bennett-Jones: journalist and BBC's announcer who conducted the interview as part of his then institutional role as a BBC's correspondent and presenter.
- The interviewee (IE): Kofi Annan, a political figure who held an institutional position at the time of the interview as Secretary-General of the United Nations. In 1997, Mr. Annan became Secretary-General of the United Nations. In 2001, he and the United Nations were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their ongoing work in global peace and cooperation. His second term began in 2002 and runs through the end of 2006.
- Imagined/overhearing audience that does not actively participate (covert participation), likely to be socially and politically diverse.

B. Setting and Purpose

The interview lasted for half an hour and took place on BBC World Service at UN headquarters in New York. It was broadcast on the 18th of September 2004. The purpose of the interview, in my view, was to reach a wide and general audience who witnessed the interview. One of the obvious purposes of the interview was to add to the already existing political discourse concerning some of the most contentious topics in politics at the time of the interview, such as the war on terror, the situation in Sudan, and the US-led war on Iraq. Thus, as with other news interviews, this accountability interview is cued by the surrounding news items.

C. The Data

As noted above, the text (see the appendix) I shall be analysing is a substantial extract from a news interview between Owen Bennett-Jones (IR henceforth) of the BBC World Service and the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan (IE henceforth). I obtained the excerpts used in this analysis from the BBC News website archives [accessed 20 March 2023]. Analysis covers a corpus of about 1,348 words sampled from this interview. This particular news interview was chosen because it, as noted in the Interview program Archive on the BBC website, was one of the Interview program's episodes that made the headlines at that time. After the interview aired, it formed the basis for widespread reports that Mr. Annan, the then UN Secretary-General, admitted for the first time that the US-led war on Iraq was illegal. By the next day, newspapers and news channels in the UK, the US and elsewhere carried headlines such as "Iraq war was illegal and breached UN charter, says Annan" (the Guardian), "U.N. Chief Ignites Firestorm by Calling Iraq War Illegal" (New York Times), "Annan: US invasion of Iraq was illegal" (Al-Jazeera Online), and "Iraq war illegal, says Annan" (BBC Online).

D. Analytical Framework

As previously stated, this study employs CA to explore power relations in institutional discourse. Data analysis of the news interview transcript reveals four discursive features of particular significance in terms of the management of power and control in this interview. These are: questioning (employing different question-answer sequences to enforce explicitness), interruption, topic-controlling, and formulation. These linguistic features seem to enable the IR to exercise power and control over his IE. On the other hand, the IE, while being required by his interactional role in the context of the interview to be accessible to the IR's interrogations, struggles to use ambiguity and ambivalence as discursive devices to deal with the IR's critical questions. These control devices are applicable in many institutional discourse settings and are briefly discussed in the following subsections.

(a). Questioning

Heritage (2002, p. 1430) argues that news interview questions:
- set agenda for responses by establishing topical domains and requesting recipients; perform various types of actions within those domains;
- assert propositions and establish presuppositions with varying levels of explicitness;
- are frequently desired 'prefer' (in a conversation analytic sense) particular interviewee responses.

The way an interview question is constructed can significantly impact how the interviewee behaves during the course of the interaction (Clayman & Heritage, 2002; Heritage, 2002; Roca-Cuberes, 2014; Quirk et al., 1985).

(b). Interruption

A conversational turn refers to "continuous talk by one speaker, uninterrupted by the other speaker" (Taboada, 2006, p. 332). Zimmerman and West (1975) refer to conversational interruption as "an initiation of simultaneous speech which intrudes deeply into the internal structure of a current speaker's utterance" (p. 113). Although commonly used signals of backchanneling (e.g., I see, hmm) do not represent instances of turn change, other competitive forms of interruption in a conversation can function as a control device that can be used to claim the floor and display power and dominance (Cerny, 2010; Fairclough, 1989).

(c). Controlling the Topic

Related to the previously mentioned control devices in function, is the interviewer's right of choosing and controlling the topics to be talked about. The interviewer is able to control the interview as the one who initiates the first topic, and thus always gets the initial turn. As the interviewer's initial turn is often a question in news interviews, it leaves the interviewee in a position where he or she only has a responsive turn to answer the interviewer's posed question. As pointed out by Greatbach, whereas "news interviewers are effectively afforded sole rights to manage the organization of topics", the interviewees' roles are "limited to dealing with the topical agendas which interviewers' questions establish for their turns and, as such, in contrast to interviewers, are not able to shift from one topic or topical line to another" (1986, p. 441).

(d). Formulation

Formulation refers to "any commentary by one speaker, in whatever format, which may be taken to propose or imply a reworking of events described or implied by a previous speaker" (Antaki et al., 2005, p. 643). As argued by Vásquez (2010), the use of formulations in interactional contexts can fulfil two main functions at the textual and relational dimensions: "simultaneously perform the textual-level work of clarifying meaning, and they also serve the interpersonal functions of negotiating and establishing common ground among participants within an interaction" (p. 750). Heritage and Watson (1979) made a distinction between two different types of formulations, namely, gist and upshot. While a gist formulation aims to provide a summary of the preceding talk, an upshot is more likely to serve the agenda of the speaker as it provides an implication of the content of the previous turn. A formulation represents a first part of a particular type of adjacency pair, of which the second part is typically a preferred confirmation by the interviewee (Heritage & Watson, 1979). However, other possible responses to a formulation include a qualified confirmation or simply a disconfirmation (see Hak & de Boer, 1996).

The IR begins the interview by using a conventional interviewing procedure. He welcomes BBC listeners, introduces himself and his IE and thanks him for agreeing to be interviewed by the BBC. It becomes quite apparent throughout the course of the interview that the IE's contributions to the interview are controlled by the IR's uses of various control devices. As previously noted, data analysis focuses on four main devices employed by the IR: questioning, interruption, topic-controlling, and formulation.

A. Questions-Answers Sequences

Throughout the interview, the IR relies on questioning as a vehicle to drive the interview from one topic to another. The IR manages and controls the interaction through his reliance on his questioning authority. Thus, questioning appears to be one of the major linguistic devices that the IR uses to control the interaction. Data analysis reveals that the IR employs various forms of interrogatives, including yes/no questions, wh-questions, and declarative questions.

(a). Yes/No Questions

Yes/No questions (see, for example, turns 3, 11, 21, 25) can be effectively used to control the discourse. In turn 21, the IR uses the word 'honestly' to put even more pressure on the IE to overtly utter his position and to avoid getting what can be called a dispreferred second pair part of the question/answer adjacency pair.

3	IR	Do you agree with him?
11	IR	Can you tell us what the factors that would lead you to make this decision; this designation that it's genocide?
21	IR	But do you <u>honestly</u> expect elections in January?
25	IR	Are you bothered that the US is becoming an unrestrainable, unilateral superpower?

(b). Wh-Questions

The IR's employment of wh-questions (turns 11, 13) do not appear to be neutral. They entail conflict and clash of judgements over the crisis in Sudan and thus such critical questions are not meant to elicit information. The IE's response (turn 12) is limited to the defence of his own position as opposed to those of the report produced by the World Health Organization (WHO).

11	IR	I mean we have the WHO saying thousands are dying every month, what makes the difference to make it genocide?
12	IE	I think this is based really on the on the, don't don't get me wrong. I'm not…I've talked about the atrocious and systematic and gross violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law. But you have to start with the convention the language of the convention itself which indicates that the intent and the systematic attempts to eliminate a group an ethnic, so all that will have to be looked at.
13	IR	How long will it be before you're in a position to make that designation?
14	IE	I can't give you a time…

(c). Declarative Questions

Declarative questions are yes/no questions that are produced with rising intonation to solicit the IE's confirmation (Heritage, 2002; Roca-Cuberes, 2014). In turns 27, 31, 33, and 35, the IR uses four positive declarative questions produced with rising intonation. Turn 35 is an exact repetition of the same declarative question in 33. These declarative questions are proposed for the IE's confirmation. Clearly, such questions put more pressure on the IE because "positive questions have positive orientation and can therefore accept only assertive forms" (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 814). It is notable, in this context, that each of these questions is strongly designed by the IR to seek a confirmation (a 'yes' answer) regarding the legality of Iraq-war. Thus, the questions strongly invite the IE to confirm rather than to deny the IR's re-presentation of his (the IE's) stated position.

27	IR	Done without UN approval - or without clearer UN approval?
28	IE	Without UN approval and much broader support from the international community.
31	IR	So, you don't think there was legal authority for the war?
32	IE	I have stated clearly that it was not in conformity with the Security Council – with the UN Charter.
33	IR	It was <u>illegal</u>?
34	IE	Yes, if you wish
35	IR	It was <u>illegal</u>?
36	IE	Yes, I have indicated it is not in conformity with the UN charter, from our point of view and from the Charter point of view it was illegal.

As shown above, the IE's face is threatened because he has been imposed on when repeatedly asked such critical questions. In 36, the IE has been pressed to use the words 'yes' and 'illegal' to describe the American-led war on Iraq. As previously noted, this word (i.e., *illegal*) has been widely used in the media to describe his position and it seems to

inflict real damage on his policy objectives. In turns 28-36, the IE has been guided to gradually adopt such an overt critical view of the US-led war on Iraq.

The IR used 11 yes/no questions (turns: 5, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 31, 33, 35). In addition, two wh-questions were used (turns 11 and 13). Thus, the IR uses 13 of his 18 turns (72%) to ask questions. This sequence of questions allows the IR to control and determine what the IE talks about. Furthermore, the IR's critical and persistent questions are not, in my view, designed to elicit information about topics such as Sudan and the war on Iraq because "yes/no questions cannot be used to extend the scope of a conversation, because the questioner, in using them, restricts the information which is introduced" (Kress & Fowler, 1979, p. 68). In addition, the second person pronoun (you) is continuously used as the subject in these questions in order to maximize the level of involvement and thus to force directness. In the beginning, the IE has succeeded in being indirect through his diplomatic answers to many of these questions by turning over the meaning to avoid explicitness. Consider the following examples:

3	IR	And can I start by asking you about Sudan? The US Secretary of State, Colin Powell a few days ago described the situation there as genocide, do you agree with him?
4	IE	Uh.. I can't make that determination…In fact, I think the Secretary of States on his assessment says that they are preliminary investigations indicate there is a genocide. And we need to send a team out to do it very quickly and I hope the Council will do it because this the first time that a referral has been made to it on the Article 8 of the genocide convention. But, of course we don't have to wait for that determination to take action. Everybody agrees that we have a catastrophic situation in the region and serious crimes are being committed and we have to act now, not necessary wait for the result or to wait to put a label on it before we act.
31	IR	So, you don't think there was legal authority for the war?
32	IE	I have stated clearly that it was not in conformity with the Security Council – with the UN Charter.

As it can be seen, in 4, the IE starts with 'Uh' (a hesitation marker) which is an indicator of a planning process to provide an indirect answer to the IR's question in turn 3 "Do you agree with him?" During conversations, meaning is usually communicated and interpreted through the use of adjacency pairs (Paltridge, 2000). Thus, if the first part of the exchange is a yes/no question, the second speaker is expected to produce a yes/no answer in the second pair part. In turn 4, the IE's answer is "I can't make this determination." Such a reply represents an unexpected answer to the IR's yes/no question "do you agree with him?" By answering in such a way, the IE provides a dispreferred second part in order to get over the meaning to avoid directness. Politicians and diplomats often avoid giving direct and straightforward answers during news interviews in order to allow themselves enough space to deny and manipulate the meaning of their words later on. Furthermore, straightforward answers on controversial and sensitive topics might inflict real damage on their career prospects. Thus, the IE sometimes relies on the use of hedges (e.g., I think) in order not to take full responsibility of his speech (see, for example, 26 below). In his answer, the IE flouts Grice's maxims of quantity and manner since his answer is neither clear nor brief.

| 26 | IE | Well, I think over the last year, we've all gone through lots of painful lessons. I'm talking about since the war in Iraq. I think there has been lessons for the US and there has been lessons for the UN and other member states and I think in the end everybody is concluding that it is best to work together with our allies and through the UN to deal with some of these issues. And I do not think or I hope we do not see another Iraq-type operation for a long time. |

However, as has become obvious towards the end of the interview, the IE has been led by the IR' sequence of yes/no questions to reply directly and explicitly (turns 27-36). As shown above, the IR continues to press the IE until he gets the typical preferred second pair part of the adjacency pair (question/answer). Indeed, the IR appears to be like a police investigator or an experienced lawyer who addresses his questions to a witness in a court. The IE has carefully avoided the word "illegal" before by saying that the war was "not in conformity with the UN Charter". However, he has been pressed to use the word "illegal" and thus to overtly criticize the war on Iraq. This enforcement of explicitness appears to be caused by and resulted from the uneven distribution of power and control between the IR and the IE.

B. Interruption

Analysis of the data shows that interruption is a control device that has been employed by the IR to claim the floor. For example, the IE has been interrupted in turns 6 and 8. Clearly, the IE has not been given the chance to get the floor. Instead, the IR immediately interrupts him and continues to speak over the IE's attempt to take the turn. To do so, the IR marks his utterances at the beginning of turns 7 and 9 with louder voice. As a result, the IE couldn't continue his turn. These instances of interruptive overlaps clearly show that the interview is unilaterally controlled by the IR and therefore can be interpreted as a display of dominance. Interruptive overlaps (turns 6 and 8) tend to occur at a high rate during accountability news interviews, particularly at "turn boundaries" as shown below (see Bannink & Albaladejo, 2018).

5	IR	Is it that simple- isn't important to call it what it is?
6	IE	[Oh absolutely..]
7	IR	LET me let me quote what you said back in January. You said genocide has happened in our time. I think you were talking about Rwandan and Srebrenica.

| 8 | IE | [This is ..] |
| 9 | IR | RIGHT, that's right. States even refused to call it by its name to avoid fulfilling their obligations. Now, we have the United States call what it is and you, <u>you not</u>? |

C. Controlling the Topic

Thanks to his institutional role during the interview, the IR initiates all the topics throughout the interview. He has also driven the interview from the discussion of the situation in Sudan, to the war on terror, and finally to the war on Iraq (see, for example, turns 3, 15 below). Thus, discursively, the IE is left in a restricted position with an interactional role that has been limited to turn taking level; a role which is often interrupted and challenged by the IR as illustrated above.

| 3 | IR | Can I start by asking you about Sudan? |
| 15 | IR | Let me ask you about the war on terror. |

D. Formulation

Formulation (e.g., so you're saying) represents one of the effective discursive resources employed by the IR to negotiate meaning within the interview. Close analysis of the employment of this resource reveals important aspects of the dynamics of power and control. It is noticeable that the IR's formulations do not act as a form of cooperation as might happen between interactants in more intimate conversations. Instead, the IR's employment of formulations is, in my view, uncooperative in these contexts. To face the IE's indirectness, the IR tends to provide a biased paraphrase of what the IE has said. The IR also tries to draw out some implications (i.e., upshot) in order to clarify the meaning of the IE's indirect responses. Consider the following two instances of formulation in Examples 1 and 2 below.

(a). Example 1

21	IR	But do you honestly expect elections in January? It sounds impossible.
22	IE	You cannot have credible elections if the security conditions continue as they are now.
23	IR	And so, you're saying there's a good chance there will not be elections in January?
24	IE	Well, the judgment will have to be done, the judgment will have to be made by the Iraqi government which is going to run the elections who will be supporting them. Obviously there may come a time when we have to make our own independent assessment.

In turn 23, the IR provides a biased paraphrase of what the IE says in turn 22. As it can be seen, the IE's answer doesn't mean that "there's a good chance there will not be elections in January". However, as a result of the IR's upshot biased statement, the IE has been put in a defensive stance of a position that he doesn't take in his previous turn. In turn 24, the IE starts by using the discourse marker "well" which is, in this context, used as "a marker of insufficiency, indicating some problems on the content level of preceding utterance" (Jucker, 1993; cited in Locher, 2004, p. 117). Thus, the IE resists the IR's formulation by providing a replacement statement in the form of a disconfirmation which is, as noted above, the least preferred response. The IE's response is an attempt to clearly present his own position that the election in Iraq is an Iraqi internal issue which should be determined by the Iraqi government.

(b). Example 2

29	IR	I wanted to ask you that - do you think that the resolution that was passed on Iraq before the war did actually give legal authority to do what was done?
30	IE	Well, I'm one of those who believe that there should have been a second resolution because the Security Council indicated that if Iraq did not comply there will be consequences. But then it was up to the Security Council to approve or determine what those consequences should be.
31	IR	So, you don't think there was legal authority for the war?

As can be seen, in turn 31, IR provides a rewording of the IE's account in turn 30. The IR uses formulation for the purpose of control so as to offer the IE the conclusion and to enforce explicitness. Moreover, the IR tries to portray the IE as being in conflict with the United States and its allies. Through formulations, the IR aims at committing "the interviewee to a stronger (and more newsworthy) version of his position than he was not initially prepared to adopt" (Heritage, 1985, p. 110).

V. CONCLUSION

Utilising a conversation analysis approach, the current study addressed two questions related to the exploration of how power can interactionally be achieved and negotiated through the use of discursive resources by participants in media news interviews. Data analysis revealed that the employment of a variety of linguistic devices, such as questioning, topic-controlling, interruption, and formulation, enabled the IR to exercise power and control over the IE who attempted to challenge the interviewer's "question authority" (by sometimes being somehow evasive under the interviewer's critical questions). Power-over becomes visible during the course of the interview as the IR, thanks to his

claimed authority and discursive role within the context of the interaction, was the one who has control over the agenda of the interaction by sometimes taking on the roles of the "inquisitor" and "manager" of the disclosure (Bannink & Albaladejo, 2018; Huls & Varwijk, 2011). The IE, on the other hand, due to his restricted power during the social interaction, is expected to accept and answer the IR's questions. Such defined roles represent common practices in the media and are based on what Ekström et al. (2006, p. 29) termed "unspoken contract" between journalists and public figures.

Clearly, media interview discourse provides a rich and interesting authentic material that can be used in the second language (L2) classroom. In this regard, the results of the analysis in this paper offer some pedagogical implications. Firstly, the results can be used to raise learners' awareness of the various ideologies hidden within this form of spoken interactions. Secondly, teachers can bring to the attention of their students some of the interactional aspects of interviews, including the turn taking system, adjacency pairs, the use of hedges (e.g., I think, 'uh'), formulations (e.g., so you're saying), and the impact of suprasegmental phonemes (e.g., intonation and stress) in the context of L2 speech production. Thirdly, teachers can introduce their students to other important hidden interactional aspects such as relations of power and devices of control amongst interactants and then offer them some suggestions to improve their L2 oral performance. Finally, the news interview context, as analysed above, is a rich context to teach L2 questioning practices because this form of face-to-face interaction can be viewed as "a virtual laboratory of question design" (Heritage, 2002, p. 1444).

APPENDIX. INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

This text is extracted from an interview with Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan (IE) conducted by Owen Bennett Jones (IR) of the BBC World Service in 2004 [accessed 20 March 2023]. For easier reading, only minimal transcription conventions were added: [ ] speech overlap, ? rising intonation, underlined stress; ALL CAPS louder voice.

1	IR	Hello and welcome to the interview. I am Owen Bennet-Jones... Kofi Annan, thanks very much for agreeing to talk to us on this interview.
2	IE	I am glad to be here.
3	IR	And can I start by asking you about Sudan? The US Secretary of State, Colin Powell a few days ago described the situation there as genocide, do you agree with him?
4	IE	Uh.. I can't make that determination…In fact, I think the Secretary of States on his assessment says that they are preliminary investigations indicate there is a genocide. And we need to send a team out to do it very quickly and I hope the Council will do it because this the first time that a referral has been made to it on the Article 8 of the genocide convention. But, of course we don't have to wait for that determination to take action. Everybody agrees that we have a catastrophic situation in the region and serious crimes are being committed and we have to act now, not necessary wait for the result or to wait to put a label on it before we act.
5	IR	Is it that simple- isn't important to call it what it is?
6	IE	[oh, absolutely]
7	IR	LET ME let me quote you what you said back on January. You said genocide has happened in our time. I think you were talking about Rwandan and Srebrenica.
8	IE	[This is]
9	IR	RIGHT, that's right. States even refused to call it by its name to avoid fulfilling their obligations. Now, we have the United States call what it is and <u>you, you</u> not?
10	IE	No. No. We have sent several teams there. We have a human rights team and a human rights reporters. They gave us two reports but not describe it as such. And this why it is extremely important that it the Council's right in thinking in sending an independent commission of inquiry to go to Sudan and submit a report to us for that determination to be able to be made.
11	IR	Can you tell us what the factors that would lead you to make this decision this designation that it's genocide? I mean we have the WHO saying thousands are dying every month. What makes the difference to make it genocide?
12	IE	I think this is based really on the on the, don't don't get me wrong. I'm not..I've talked about the atrocious and systematic and gross violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law. But you have to start with the convention the language of the convention itself which indicates that the intent and the systematic attempts to eliminate a group an ethnic, so all that will have to be looked at.
13	IR	How long will it be before you're in a position to make that designation?
14	IE	I can't give you a time. We are going to be prepared to move as quickly as possible. But I also made it clear to the Council that we don't have to wait for the results to act. The situation is serious enough for us to take action to maintain the pressure on the government to do everything we can to assist the people in Sudan and they are going to support the expanded African force that is going to go into Sudan.
15	IR	Let me ask you about the war on terror. Do you believe that it has diverted attention from perhaps more important global issues?
16	IE	It's a sudden impact it's a sudden impact on the broader agenda. In fact, earlier this year I

indicated we should make a rebalance in the international agenda. Five years ago we came up with the millennium developmental goals in the fight against poverty, education, the fight against HIV, environmental degradation, but all that was pushed aside because there was so much focus on the fight against terrorism, so much focus on Iraq that the all the challenges cannot get the attention they need and we need to try and bring those up.

17	IR	So do you think that, you know there is a debate that's going on the United States, do you think that the world is a safer place than it was three years ago?
18	IE	I cannot say the world is a safer place honestly. When you look at what's happening around us, not just in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Burslan, in Madrid and in all the locations around the world and countries that live on the constant alert of terrorist threats.
19	IR	You mentioned Iraq. There's a plan to have elections in January. I've just read the comments from your envoy in Iraq and it sounds like it's going to be extremely difficult to hold elections.
20	IE	Absolutely there's a lot that needs to be done. We have helped the Iraqis set up a legal framework for elections. Despite the security situation, I took a calculated risk and sent in two teams: one led by Brahimi, that helped them set up the interim government and another one led by Karina Pereira, who is the head of our electoral division, and we helped them set up the legal framework for election political parties law, an independent electoral commission. And we've had some of the officers trained in Mexico and ready to go. And there are quite a lot of things the Iraqis have to do themselves. We will advise and assist them; they will be running the elections not us. We will be giving advice and assistance and I hope they will be able to do everything they have to do but of course security will be a factor.
21	IR	But do you honestly expect elections in January? It sounds impossible.
22	IE	You cannot have credible elections if the security conditions continue as they are now.
23	IR	And so you're saying there's a good chance there will not be elections in January?
24	IE	Well the judgment will have to be done, the judgment will have to be made by the Iraqi government which is going to run the elections who will be supporting them. IRviously there may come a time when we have to make our own independent assessment.
25	IR	Are you bothered that the US is becoming an unrestrainable, unilateral superpower?
26	IE	Well, I think over the last year, we've all gone through lots of painful lessons. I'm talking about since the war in Iraq. I think there has been lessons for the US and there has been lessons for the UN and other member states and I think in the end everybody is concluding that it is best to work together with our allies and through the UN to deal with some of these issues. And I hope we do not see another Iraq-type operation for a long time.
27	IR	Done without UN approval - or without clearer UN approval?
28	IE	Without UN approval and much broader support from the international community.
29	IR	I wanted to ask you that - do you think that the resolution that was passed on Iraq before the war did actually give legal authority to do what was done?
30	IE	Well, I'm one of those who believe that there should have been a second resolution because the Security Council indicated that if Iraq did not comply there will be consequences. But then it was up to the Security Council to approve or determine what those consequences should be.
31	IR	So, you don't think there was legal authority for the war?
32	IE	I have stated clearly that it was not in conformity with the Security Council - with the UN Charter.
33	IR	It was _illegal_?
34	IE	Yes, if you wish.
35	IR	It was _illegal_?
36	IE	Yes, I have indicated it is not in conformity with the UN charter, from our point of view and from the Charter point of view it was illegal.

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Morad Alsahafi is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Alsahafi was awarded a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Auckland, New Zealand in 2010. His research interests are in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, particularly heritage language maintenance and education, bilingualism, language planning (in local contexts), and language teaching and learning. He has most recently published in Sage Open and International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. His current research focuses on second language acquisition and issues related to heritage/community languages in Saudi Arabia.

Directive Speech Act Politeness in a *Pediksaan* Ritual: A Sociopragmatic Study

I Wayan Rasna[*]
Language Education, Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja, Indonesia

I Nengah Suandi
Language Education, Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja, Indonesia

Ida Bagus Putrayasa
Language Education, Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja, Indonesia

Ketut Paramarta
Language Education, Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja, Indonesia

Abstract—This study focused on the concern about the decrease in the use of language politeness among young people both in everyday communication and sacred Hindu rituals such as in a *pediksaan* ritual, in which not only the place is made sacred but also things related to the inauguration of a *sulinggih* (high priest) that is, performed in a *Geria,* home of a *brahmana,* who is still holding high the high cultural norms. This study analyzed the type of directive speech act politeness, the forms of language politeness, and the application of directive speech act politeness in the *pediksaan* ritual. The stages of a descriptive qualitative method were employed to achieve those objectives. The population of the study was the people involved in the activity of a *pediksaan* ritual. Since this event is rare, the population was directly used as the study's sample. The data were collected by observing the *pediksaan* ritual using a recording technique. The data collected were analyzed with a qualitative descriptive method. The study shows that the types of directive speech act politeness in this study are differentiated into linguistic politeness and pragmatic politeness; the forms of directive speech act politeness consist of (a) agreement maxim of suggesting; (b) sympathizing maxim of order and the politeness principles that consist of (a) the politeness principle that applies tact maxim; (b) the politeness principle that applies approbation maxim; and (c) the politeness maxim that applies sympathy maxim.

Index Terms—politeness, directive speech act, sociopragmatics

I. INTRODUCTION

Communication among speakers of the Balinese community can be in the Balinese language, in the Indonesian language, or in a code-mixing to create conducive communication (Guifoos et al., 2009; Rasna, 2019). Code-mixing is probably used, especially by those living outside Bali. This is because Balinese has *unda-usuk* (speech level), as put forward by Bagus (2009) and Suwija (2019). This requires its speakers to use the language appropriately and correctly to get a positive effect (Imai et al., 2016; Tsai, 2019). The use of *unda-usuk* in the Balinese language depends on the situation of the conversation, including the sociocultural context (Rahardi, 2017; Rasna, 2018). This condition influences people's behavior patterns (Boldyrevv & Dubrovskaya, 2016). *Basa madia* is used when a person reprimands others to show a more polite manner but does not want to show the difference in the cast, which reflects the behavior pattern of the society itself (Krennmayr, 2015). Usually, Balinese communicate in *basa singgih* (the high speech level) as the manifestation of speaking etiquette (Rasna, 2019). Speech etiquette requires habituation (Chaer, 2010) as one of the important components of language politeness to develop character (Rasna, 2017).

In an interaction, there will always be a speaker and an interlocutor or interlocutors who use speech acts in speaking to each other. Haryanti (2001) stated that types of speech acts contain implicature based on locution forces which can be classified into assertive, directive, expressive, and commissive. Verbal interactions occur in a learning process (Kusumah, 2019), showing the speakers' interconnection (Alwi, 1993). Hence, communication is concerned with the critical aspect of interaction, which is humanistic (Guifoos et al., 2009) as an engine that creates a harmonious relation to producing maximal performances (Boero et al., 2016).

The focus of this study was directive speech act politeness at the time of interpersonal interactions in a *pediksaan* (inauguration of Balinese Hindu priests) ritual` directive speech act politeness was selected because, in directive speech act, there are 29 sub-speech acts that require the use of language politeness. This is caused by the fact that the directive sub-speech acts such as ordering, advising, suggesting begging, warning, reprimanding, scolding, driving out, and

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[*] Corresponding Author.

prohibiting need a politeness approach in their performances to avoid hurting the feeling of the interlocutor and directive speech act is one of the most frequent speech acts used in everyday interactions, especially in the *pediksaan* ritual condition. *Pediksaan* is naturally a self-purification (Donder, 2008; Subagiasta, 2007; Titib, 2007). In the context of politeness and an increase in spirituality, it is not only related to the aspects of behavior and thought but also to the aspect of speaking as stated in the teaching of *Sthitaprajna* in Bhagawadgita II.54 as follows.

> *Shitaprajnasya ka bhasa samadhisthasya Kesawa/Stihitaadhih kim prabhaseta kim asita vrajeta kim// Bhagawadgita II.54.*

The excerpt above indicates the characteristic of *Shitaprajna,* who intensively performs *samadhi.* It is how he speaks, sits, and moves, including his linguistic expressions (Aderson & Lepore, 2013; Kennedy, 2002). This shows that a person who has been purified (in *the pediksaan* ritual) must be polite in thinking, behaving, and speaking. This is related to the behavior of speaking as social discourse practice (Kasper, 2011). Linguistic behavior is ideally related to age; the older a person, the more polite he or she is (E. Aziz & Aminudin, 2003; Horvath, 1985). *Diksa* is the manifestation of the *Dharma* teaching, as mentioned in *Virhaspati Tattwa* 25, which becomes everybody's obligation. In this case, *Dharma* manifests in seven acts: *sila, yajna, tapa, dana, pravrjya, diksa,* and *yoga.* If a person was not purified through the *diksa* ritual during his or her life (*sekala*) after his or her death, his or her spirit will be purified at the cremation ceremony (*niskala*)*,* which is called *ngaskara* ritual coming from the word *samskara* (Sanskrit) which means self-purification (Titib, 2007).

A speech act is an important topic in pragmatics and sociopragmatics. A directive speech act is a speech act intended by its speaker for the interlocutor to do an act that complies with what is mentioned in the speaker's utterance. To meet this, the speech act must be performed politely to address the interlocutor's feelings (Aziz, 2006). A directive speech act is a speech act that tries to influence the interlocutor to perform an act. In line with Yule (2002), a directive speech act is the type of speech act a speaker uses to order others to do something. This type of speech act states what becomes the desire of the speaker. Levinson (1983) states that the directive speech act is the speech act that encourages the interlocutor to do something, for example, proposing, begging, urging, challenging, ordering, and the like. Briefly, the speech act can "order" the interlocutor to perform an act, both verbally and nonverbally.

Politeness in the directive speech act is very important since the directive speech act is persuasive in character. With the presence of language politeness in directive speeches, it is expected that the interlocutor is not hurt or does not feel harmed. The *pediksaan* ritual, starting from the plan, the process of the event, or at the time of ritual, needs polite language, especially that which is concerned with directive speech act that is more often used for ordering. Thus, success in language politeness in directive speech act in the interactional function of language that expresses social relations and personal attitude (Ekawati, 2017).

Choice of words (diction) in language politeness must be considered when viewed from the situation, condition, and generation. Generation here means the age level of the speaker and interlocutor, the diction used also differs according to the age level. This conforms to Aziz (2003) and Eckert (1997) that change in a person's language use behavior phenomenon parallels his or her age. However, it is not uncommon for people who are adults or even old to behave like little children. In this case, the directive speech act, moreover the direct one, needs to be performed using language politeness, manifested by selecting dictions (Kuntarno, 2018).

Balinese is one of the variations of languages in the Austronesian language group. The use of Balinese itself can only be seen in Bali, and its spread to the areas outside Bali is very limited. The use of high-level Balinese is needed for certain situations, such as when speaking with strangers, the one with the high cast, or a priest.

Nugroho (2018) stated that the directive speech act is comprised of 29 sub-speech acts: which include ordering, advising, asking for permission, permitting, examining, asking for blessings, proposing, reminding, arbitrating, forcing, seducing, challenging, suggesting, begging, swearing, recommending, reminding, advocating, expecting, inviting, urging, interrupting, reprimanding, scolding, demanding someone to fulfill his or her obligation, persuading, welcoming, driving away, and prohibiting.

Polite language is a variation that keeps the interlocutor's feelings (Pranowo, 2009). In other words, language politeness emphasizes social values, social norms, and paying respect to others' feelings than one's own (Matsumoto, 1988). The forms of polite speech of directive speech acts can occur in speeches such as in the Geriya Mas Kayuputih environment. One of them is the following act.

> Mother: *Gus Tu, tolong buka gerbangnya! Ada yang datang* (Gus Tu, please open the gate! Someone is coming).

A mother's speech was addressed to her child when welcoming a guest to *geriya* (a *brahmana* cast home). The child immediately does what his mother ordered him to do: open the gate. In the speech, the mother asked her child to open the gate of their house. In this speech, there is a directive speech act of "ordering". The sentence "*Gus Tu, buka gerbangnya"* is the linguistic marker of the directive speech act of ordering. The language politeness is seen in using the word "*tolong".* With this word, the interlocutor does not feel burdened to do what the speaker wants him or her to do. The example above was the speech act of order that was found to be used in a *geriya.* In *geriya,* politeness in speech is mandatory. Ida Pedanda Istri Mas says that from day to day and from generation to generation, language politeness is dwindling and fading with time.

The problems investigated in this study were: 1) what are the types of politeness of directive speech acts in the *pediksaan* ritual? 2) What are the forms of politeness of directive speech act in the *pediksaan* ritual? And 3) how is the directive speech act politeness applied in the *pediksaan* ritual?

II. METHOD

This study used the design of a descriptive qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was employed to describe Balinese and Indonesian directive speech act politeness in the interpersonal interactions in the *pediksaan* ritual. The population consisted of the participants involved in speeches in the *pediksaan* ritual. The population was directly used as the sample of the study. The data were verbal as primary data in directive speech act politeness. The data came from the communication interactions among the speakers in the *pediksaan* ritual collected through a verbal recording process. The verbal data that came from video recordings were then described to obtain the needed data, namely, types and forms of directive speech acts, politeness, and gestures that might be important for the data as a whole. The data were sorted using the observation method with a recording technique inserted into a data card. The data card was used to record the context, dialog, form of speech, politeness principle used by the speaker, and type of language politeness. The data that had been collected were analyzed using a descriptive qualitative analysis technique.

III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Types of Directive Speech Act Politeness in the Pediksaan Ritual

As has been stated in the theory part, there were two types of politeness investigated based on the opinion of Agustini (2017), namely (1) linguistic politeness, which covers diction, intonation, and structure, and (2) pragmatic politeness.

(a). Diction Politeness

Diction (word choice) determines whether a speech is polite or not. The following shows the finding of speeches that are polite and those that are not that is related to diction.

Speech data:

(1) *Menjadi sulinggih siapapun boleh, tetapi melalui prosedur mekanisme Parisada dong.* (Becoming a high priest, anyone can, but it is through the *Parisada* mechanism procedure, isn't it?)

Data Context:

Speech (1) was spoken by a priest to the participants of a ritual of a series of events of a pediksaan in Geriya Amera Sari Seraya, Mataram.

Analysis:

According to the Indonesian Big Dictionary (2023), the word dong is usually used at the end of a sentence to give a sweetening or softening effect. Thus, speech (1) is felt to be more polite since it uses the word dong at the end of the sentence.

Speech Data:

(2) *Boleh sulinggih yang lain, boleh.*

Data Context: the same as above.

Analysis:

Unlike speech (1), speech (2) seems less polite, especially when the speaker is speaking in a formal situation. This is marked by using the question word at the beginning of the sentence without the particle *kah,* namely the word *Boleh.* It would feel more polite if it used the question word *boleh* plus the particle *kah* when asking question*s*. Hence the sentence is more polite. So it becomes *Bolehkah sulinggih yang lain?*

(b). Intonation Politeness

Intonation has a very much effect on the impression that it arises on the interlocutor. The speech will sound polite when the speaker speaks softly as a reflection that he or she can control his or her feeling or emotion when communicating with others. On the contrary, a speaker who speaks with a high tone while his or her interlocutor is at a short distance will give the impression that the speaker cannot speak politely.

Speech Data:

(3) *Menjadi sulinggih siapapun boleh, tetapi melalu prosedur mekanisme Pari- sadha dong* (Becoming a high priest, anyone can, but it is through the Parisada mechanism procedure, isn't it?)

(4) *Kalau misalnya mau dewe, ya ndah usah Lembaga Parisadha dong* (If for example you want it by yourself, right, no need for Parisadha institution, isn't it?)

(5) *Saya mewakili guru saya, boleh?* (I represent my father, may I?)

Data Context:

Speeches (4) and (5) were spoken by a priest to the participants at the time of a *pediksaan* series of rituals at *Geriya* Amerta Sari Seraya, Mataram, with some emotion since there was an impression that the series of rituals of *pediksaan* was doubted when they were performed virtually.

Analysis:

Speech (3) was expressed with a flat intonation and softly so that the speaker gave a polite impression. Different from speeches (3), speeches (4) and 5) were spoken with a rather high tone and strongly so that they gave the impression that the speakers were less polite.

(c). Structure of Politeness

In communication, many ways can be selected to deliver a message, which can be considered polite. One can view language politeness from the structure of the sentences used in addition to the politeness principle. Sentence politeness, according to Chaer (2010), covers (1) the length of speech, (2) the indirectness of speech, and (3) the use of declarative or interrogative sentences in giving an order.

A speech can become polite when it becomes longer. In general, Indonesians want longer speech forms. This is related to the attitude and culture of Indonesians, who prefer to use small talk in speaking. More specifically, the following are data that are related to that problem.

1. Length of Speech

Speech Data
(6) Boleh begitu? (Can be like that?) (same as above)
(7) *Telpon dumun*! (call up first!)
Speech Context:
Speeches (6) and (7) were spoken by a priest to the participants of the *pediksaan* rituals at *Geriya* Amerta Sari Seraya, Mataram.
Analysis:
Speeches (6) and (7) above have an impression of being less polite since they are short; some words can be added, namely the question word *Apakah* to sentence (6), which is a question word of smoothing and the word *Tolong* (help) in a sentence (7). Hence, speeches (6) and (7) above will be more polite if each is changed into *Apakah boleh begitu*? (Can it be like that?); and *Tolong telepon dumun!* (Please call up first!)

2. Speech Indirectness

One of the ways to make an expression or a sentence polite is by changing the sentence structure from a direct sentence structure to an indirect one. It is usually very easy to know the intention of the speaker who uses direct sentences, especially when they are imperative. On the contrary, the intention of the speaker who uses indirect imperative sentence structure is unclear, so the interlocutor does not feel that he or she is actually ordered or asked to do something that the speaker wants him or her to do. Based on the document record, the following sentences were found.
Speech Data
(8) *Siapa lagi yang menghormati kalau bukan kita?* (Who else give respect if not us?)
Speech Context
Speech (8) was spoken by a priest to the participants of the series of *pediksaan* rituals at *Geriya* Amerta Sari Seraya, Mataram.
Analysis:
Speech (8) belongs to indirect speech since it is a question sentence, but its content is a request. In this case, the speaker invites the interlocutor to pay respect to people worthy of respect. By using indirect speech, it is felt that the speaker is more polite than direct speech.

B. Pragmatic Politeness

It is difficult to differentiate between pragmatic politeness and linguistic politeness. The speaker's effort to comply with the prevailing norms in society is part of pragmatic politeness. Pragmatic politeness is more related to norms/ethics that prevail in a society following the sociocultural of the community. This pragmatic politeness will strengthen linguistic politeness. Refined words/dictions as honorific forms will change the interlocutor's perception from positive to negative, such as when pragmatic politeness does not support it, such as by showing a frowning expression.

As far as the data that could be collected are concerned, no data of pragmatic politeness can be found. This seems to be caused by some factors, namely (1) the priest's and the committee members' speeches were dominated by monologues rather than dialogues; (2) the ritual that was covered was only one in a series of *pediksaan* rituals called *Resi Ghana* ritual, the preparation of *pediksaan* ritual.

From the data analysis above, it can be concluded that in the context of linguistic politeness, it seems that speeches can be differentiated into two types: polite and less polite. Linguistically, in line with the theory put forward by Agustini (2017), linguistic politeness covers diction, intonation, and structure. The results of this study are partially supported by the finding in Dahlan (2014) that the structures of polite Indonesian sentences of the students found were long and short sentence structures, direct and indirect speeches, speech series, and expressions that mark the politeness of Indonesian speeches.

Some possible factors might cause impoliteness in the series of *pediksaan* rituals above; *first*, the speakers do not know the politeness rules that must be obeyed when speaking, especially to speak in a directive form. *Secondly,* the

speaker is not aware or is disappointed since there is an event or phenomenon he or she dislikes. Fourth, the habit of using certain dictions that I am actually less polite.

(a). Forms of Politeness of Directive Speech Act

The forms of politeness of directive speech act refer to the form of politeness and the form of directive speech act. The forms of politeness related to the directive speech act are described below. Tact Maxim states that when speaking, the speaker should adhere to the principle of always making others' losses as small as possible and maximizing the profit of others; Generosity Maxim states that the speaker is expected to be able to reduce his or her profit and make his or her profit as small as possible; Approbation Maxim that states that a person can be regarded to be polite when in speaking he or she always tries to give respect to others; Modesty Maxim that states that speech participants are expected to show modesty by minimizing praises for himself or herself; Agreement Maxim that states that speech participants can develop compatibility or agreement in the speech activities; and Sympathy Maxim that states that speech participants can maximize sympathy attitude between one party and another party.

Meanwhile, a directive speech act is a speech act that encourages the hearer to do something. A directive speech act aims to make the interlocutor be at peace and do an action like what was expressed by the speaker. This speech act needs a good form of politeness for the interlocutor to feel at ease, with no impression of being forced or looked down upon. The forms of directive speech act should be compatible with the rule and social position of the interlocutor so that there will be no misunderstanding that can trigger a conflict, for instance, ordering, asking someone to do something, asking a question, begging, ordering, suggesting, recommending and inviting.

The forms of directive speech act politeness can be described as shown in the following data quotations.

1. Maxim of Agreement that Suggests Something

(9) Committee: *Mangku Giri di atas itu, di sana deketin. Mangku Giri di sana, di atas belum."* (Mangku Giri upstairs, there come close to him there, upstairs not yet)
Mangku: "*Sudah-sudah.*" (already)

Analysis:

Data (9) is a conversation between the committee member as the guide of the event and Mangku as the person in charge of the event. The committee member talked to Mangku by his nickname since the speech participant had a close relationship with him and could develop a harmonious relationship in the speech activity. This speech shows an agreement between the speaker and the interlocutor in the form of suggesting "*di sana dekati* (there, come close)" but still maintained politeness. Leech (1993) stated that in the agreement maxim, the speech participants can develop compatibility or an agreement with each other in the speech activity. In addition, there is closeness between the speaker and the interlocutor so that the communication is fluent. This is supported by Yule (2002), who stated that language politeness is influenced by some factors, including social distance and intimacy factor between a person and others, so other factors such as culture, age, and social status also influence one's politeness in speaking. With this intimacy factor, speech participants feel very close and are friendly with each other. Lakoff (1980) stated that the scale of solidarity or equality shows that to be polite, a person has to be friendly and always maintain a friendship with each other. To achieve this intention, speakers have to be able to regard the interlocutors as their friends.

2. Sympathy Maxim of Prescribing

(10) Priest: "*Wusan sanggar dana wau ajengan, raris tegen-tegenan, raris ajengan caru, raris purwa daksina.*" (After *sanggar dana,* the next activity is *"ajengan",* then *"tegen-tegenan".* Then *ajengan caru"* then *"purwa daksina")*
Committee member: *"Sampun"* (All has already been done).

Analysis

The data above was a conversation between a priest as the event's guide and the committee member as the event implementer. The priest asked the committee member in polite language with a flat tone and a polite attitude. These speeches show that the speaker and the interlocutor have sympathetic attitudes in speaking. This conforms to Leech's rule of politeness principle (1990), which states that in the sympathy maxim, the speech participants can maximize the sympathy attitude between one party and another. In addition, the speaker did not use a tone with the impression of forcing in expressing his instruction. This is in line with the requirement to fulfill politeness in speaking as is put forward by Lakoff (1973), that is, the scale of formality, that in order for the speech participants can feel at ease in the speech activity, the speech used should not have a forced tone and should not give an arrogant impression.

3. Sympathy Maxim of Instructing

(11) Priest :" *Ampunang dari belakang, nanti susah, di depan niki manten,langsung ke luar di aruh sebelah kiri* (Not from the back, Later it will be difficult, just from the front, directly go out , put it on the left)
Committee member: *"Sampun sami?* (All is done?)
Priest: "*Melinggih-melinggih!*" (Please sit down)!

Analysis:

The data above was a conversation between a priest as the event's guide and a committee member as the implementer. The priest instructed the committee member in a polite language, flat tone, and polite attitude. These speeches show that the speaker and the interlocutor shared sympathy attitudes in speaking. This conforms with Leach's politeness principle maxim (1990), which states that in the sympathy maxim, the speech participants can maximize the sympathy attitude between one party and another. In addition, the speakers do not use a tone that has a forced impression in expressing the instruction. This conforms to the requirement for politeness in speaking as stated by Lakoff (1973), that is, a formality scale that speech participants can feel at ease and comfortable in the speech activity, the speech used should not have a forced tone, and it should not have an arrogant impression.

C. Directive Speech Act Politeness Principle in Pediksaan Ritual

The politeness principle used as the basis of analysis in this study refers to Leech's (1990) politeness principles. There are three politeness principles found to be applied in this study, namely (1) the politeness principle that applies the tact maxim, (2) the politeness principle that applies the approbation maxim, and (3) the politeness principle that applies the sympathy maxim.

(a). Tact Maxim

Every speech participant has to minimize loss for others or maximize profit for others. In Tact Maxim, there is a tendency for the speaker that holds this maxim strongly is judged to be able to avoid enviousness and other attitudes that are usually considered less polite. In the tact maxim, there is a tendency that the longer someone's speech (usually accompanied by an explanation), the greater the person's desire to behave politely toward his speech partner.

Speech Data

(12) *Di sinilah kita umat Hindu kan masalah rasa ya. Begini kita itu, kalau rasa ndak nyambung, tidak pede sembahyangnya, ya.* (It is here we the Hindus, our problem is feeling, yes. This way we are, if the feeling does not connect, we are not confident in prayer, yes)

Speech Context:

This speech was spoken by Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa (a priest) to all Hindu followers who witnessed the series of *Pediksaan* rituals at Geriya Amerta Sari Seraya, Mataram.

Analysis:

Speech (12) was spoken by Ida Pedanda when explaining the nature of *the pediksaan* ritual. If we examine it from the series of his speech, the data is a directive speech of advising. In that context, Ida Pedanda (Priest) gave a speech to the audience, in this case, all Hindu followers who were witnessing that virtual ritual, to return to the main principle underlying the Hindu belief that it is a problem of feeling. This speech from Ida Pedanda was strengthened by the presence of the sentence *Di sinilah kita umat Hindu kan masalah rasa ya* (It is here we, the Hindus, our problem is feeling, right) followed by a sentence that explains it, that is, *Begini kita itu, kalau rasa ndak nyambung, ndak pede sembahyangnya ya* (if the feeling does not connect, we are not confident in prayer, right). The statement applies the Tact Maxim to eliminate doubt and profit Hindu followers outside Bali Island who could keep performing the *padiksan* rituals through the virtual media.

Speech Data

(13) *Parisadha Lembaga umat kita. Lembaga tertinggi umat Hindu. Siapa lagi yang menghormati kalau bukan kita* (Parisadha is our institution. Hindu highest institution. Who else will respect if we do not)

Speech Context:

This speech was spoken by Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa (a priest) when explaining something related to *Pediksaan* regulation to all Hindu followers who witnessed the series of *Pediksaan* rituals in Geriya Amerta Sari Seraya, Mataram.

Analysis:

Speech (13) was spoken by Ida Pedanda when explaining the requirement set by PHDI institutions when someone wants to become a *sulinggih* or priest. Let's examine it from the series of the speech. The data is a directive speech of advising aimed at respecting *Parisadha* as in the statement, "*Siapa lagi yang menghormati kalau bukan kita*" (who else will respect if we do not). In this context, Ida Pedanda also reminded the audience, in this case, all Hindus who witnessed the virtual ritual, that the highest Hindu institution is Parisadha Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PHDI). Data 13 refers to the application of the Tact Maxim shown to maximize the service and profit for all Hindus since the ritual has followed the highest Hindu institution's regulation.

Speech Data

(14) *Menjadi seorang rohaniawan harus minimal keputusan Parisadha 40 tahun ke atas, Inilah pelajaran bagi umat Hindu, jangan /// menjadi sulinggih* (To become a priest one has to be at least, according to Parisadha decision, 40 years old. This is the lesson for the Hindu followers do not /// become a priest)

Speech Context:

Speech (14) was spoken by Ida Pedanda when explaining the requirement that was set by the PHDI institution. When someone wants to be a priest, one of the requirements is that the person has to be above 40 years old. The speech is a directive speech of advising aimed at learning from some cases of wanting to become a priest before 40 years old through the statement "*Inilah pelajaran bagi umat Hindu*" (This is the lesson for the Hindu followers). Ida Pedanda, in this context, also used directive speech act of prohibiting, that is, prohibiting Hindu followers who have not met the

requirement (not yet 40 years old) to become a priest, as shown in the statement "*Jangan menjadi sulinggih* " (do not become a priest). Data 14 refers to the application of Tact Maxim as shown to maximize the service and profit for all Hindu followers since the ritual has met the highest Hindu institution's regulation.

Speech Data

(15) *Dilaksanakan di sini prosesinya, kenapa? Karena tidak boleh tidak permisi pada leluhur. Kita umat Hindu apapun yang dikerjakan tanpa restu orang tua / leluhur kita tidak akan ketemu apa-apa. (*Performed here the *proce*ssion, why? Since we have to ask permission to our ancestors. We Hindu followers whatever we do without the blessings of our parents/ancestors will not meet anything).

Speech Context:

The speech was spoken by Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa (a priest) when explaining something related to a series of *pediksaan* rituals to all Hindu followers who witnessed the ritual at Geriya Amerta Sari Seraya Mataram.

Analysis:

Speech (15) was spoken by Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa when explaining why the series of processions were performed in Mataram, not in Bandung. This was because the *nabe* (teacher) of the priest candidate lived in Mataram; if this is related to the context of the speech, a student (a priest candidate) has to ask permission and the blessings of his parents (*nabe*). The speech is a directive speech that makes it a must for a person who will become a priest to ask permission first and blessings, which are strengthened by the statement *"karena tidak boleh tidak permisi pada leluhur*" (since it is not allowed without asking permission to the ancestors). Ida Pedanda, in this context, also used directive speech act of reminding, that is, reminding the Hindu followers to always ask for blessings from the ancestors or parents when doing something, as shown in the statement "*Kita umat Hindu apapun yang dikerjakan tanpa restu orang tua/leluhur kita ndak akan ketemu apa-apa*" (We Hindu followers whatever we do without the blessings of our parents/ancestors will not meet anything). Data 15 refers to the application of the Tact Maxim as shown for the profit for the audience, in this case, all the Hindu followers, since there is the wisdom that if blessings from the ancestors and parents have preceded an activity, it will be successful.

(b). Approbation Maxim

The approbation maxim explains that we can regard a person as polite when in speaking, he or she tries to give appreciation to others. In this maxim, a speaker is obliged to minimize respect toward himself or herself and maximize it toward others.

Speech Data:

(16) *Umat meminta untuk nabe saya itu buatkan tirta karena beliau di Lombok, beliau sudah ga bisa, tenaganya sudah tidak mampu. Diwakilkan sama saya, anaknya sekaligus sisianya. (*People request my teacher to make *tirta since he is in Lombok, he cannot, he is weak.* He represents to me, his child and at the same time his student.).

Speech Context:

This speech was spoken by Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa (a priest) when explaining the chronology of the request from the people until he was asked by his teacher (*nabe)* to perform a series of *Pediksaan* rituals.

Analysis:

Data (16), when analyzed comprehensively, was an indirect speech that refers to the directive speech act of asking permission. Ida Pedanda indirectly asked permission from *nabe* (a teacher), who had given him the mandate to lead a series of *pediksaan* rituals. The politeness principle in the form of the approbation maxim is shown by the statement "*anaknya sekaligus sisianya saya*" (his child and, at the same time, his student) as the form of appreciation and respect of a student to a teacher. In addition to giving an appreciation to *the nabe, the statement of Ida Pedanda in speech (16) also* manifests as the maximizing of respect from a priest to his people who need protection and guidance.

(c). Sympathy Maxim

Speech participants' sympathy maxim is expected to maximize sympathy attitudes toward one another. Antipathy attitude toward a speech participant can be taken as an impolite act. To explain the application of the politeness principle to the sympathy maxim, data (11) and (16) are presented once again.

Speech Data:

(11) Priest: "*Ampunang dari belakang, nanti susah, di depan niki manten, langsung ke luar di aruh sebelah kiri* (Not from the back, Later it will i be difficult, just from the front, directly go out, put it on the left)
      Committee member: *"Sampun sami?* (All is done?)
      Priest: "*Melinggih-melinggih!*" (Please sit down!)

(16) *Umat meminta untuk nabe saya itu buatkan tirta karena beliau di Lombok, beliau sudah ga bisa, tenaganya sudah tidak mampu. Diwakilkan sama saya, anaknya sekaligus sisianya.* (People request my teacher to make *tirta since he is in Lombok, he cannot, he is weak.* He represents to me, his child and at the same time his student.).

Data (11) and (16) refer to the directive speech act of prohibiting and asking permission. The politeness Principle in Approbation Maxim in data (11) is shown by the statement "*nanti susah, di depan niki manten"* (Later, it will be difficult, just from the front). The statement functions as the form of the priest's sympathetic attitude toward the

committee who helped him (*pengayah ida*), who prohibited starting the series of rituals from the back since it was considered more difficult. Meanwhile, the application of the politeness principle of sympathy maxim to data (16) is shown by the statement of the priest, "*Beliau sudah ndak bisa, tenaganya sudah ndak mampu*" (*He cannot, he is weak*). This statement is a form of sympathy toward the condition of his teacher, who is old and implicitly asking permission to represent serving people.

Based on the result of the data analysis described above, there were three principles of directive speech act politeness in the *pediksaan* ritual, namely (1) the politeness principle that applies the tact maxim, (2) the politeness principle that applies the approbation maxim and (3) the politeness principle that applies sympathy maxim. From the three politeness principles, data supported mostly the politeness principle that applies tact maxim (4 data), which occurred in the directive speech act of advising, reminding, obliging, and prohibiting. The politeness that applies the sympathy maxim was supported by two data that occurred in the directive speech act of prohibiting and asking permission. The politeness that applies the approbation maxim was only supported by 1 data of directive speech act of asking permission. The main politeness principle that was mostly found in the application of the tact maxim was closely related to the characteristic of data that came from speeches in the series of processions of the *pediksaan* ritual. Speeches in this *Pediksaan* ritual mostly came from the speeches of Ida Pedanda Gede Kerta Arsa, whose position was *nabe* (teacher) of the priest candidate who was going to be ordained. According to the result of Paruman Sulinggih Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia of Bali Province from 1990 to 1998 (2000), the most outstanding requirement to become a *nabe* is that the candidate must be calm and wise. The findings of the politeness principles that are dominated by the application of the tact maxim align with the position of the priest as a *nabe* who is required to prioritize the interest and benefit of the people. This confirms Leech's (1993) opinion that in tact maxim, there is a tendency for the speaker holds firm to the principle of minimizing loss for the interlocutor and maximizing profit for the interlocutor; in this context, the priest's speech act aimed to maximize profit for Hindu followers.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusions of this study are as follows.

1. This study's types of directive speech act politeness were differentiated into linguistic and pragmatic politeness. Regarding linguistic politeness, it seems that speeches can be differentiated into two types: polite and less polite. Linguistically, whether a speech is polite can be seen from diction, intonation, and structure. As far as the data that have been collected, no data on programmatic politeness could be collected.
2. The form of directive speech act politeness in this study refers to the politeness form and the directive speech act form. Based on the references, the forms of politeness found are 1) agreement maxim of suggestion, 2) sympathy maxim of prescribing, and 3) sympathy maxim of instructing.
3. There are three politeness principles found to be applied in this study: (1) the politeness principle that applies the tact maxim, (2) the politeness principle that applies the approbation maxim, and (3) the politeness principle that applies the sympathy maxim.

This type of sociopragmatic study still needs investigation of other aspects, for example, measuring the politeness scale of groups of different people or in different domains and how politeness expressions differ from one culture to another. This kind of study will enrich the domains of sociopragmatics with its new findings.

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I Wayan Rasna is a linguistics professor at the Ganesha University of Education. He has 35 years of experience conducting research and community service focusing on linguistics, especially those related to educational linguistics, anthropological linguistics, and education in cultural contexts.

I Nengah Suandi was born in Klungkung on December 31, 1956. Undergraduate education was completed at the Department of Indonesian Language and Literature Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Udayana University in 1982; Masters degree at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta in 1997; and S3 at Udayana University in 2007. He was appointed professor in 2010 in the field of linguistics. Before becoming a lecturer at the Ganesha University of Education, he was an honorary lecturer at the IKIP PGRI Denpasar in 1983-1985. Currently serving as a permanent lecturer at the Department of Language, Indonesian Literature and Regional Education, Faculty of Languages and Arts, University of Education of Ganesha with tutoring of several courses, such as general courses on Indonesian and Tri Hita Karana; Sociolinguistics; Research methods; Indonesian Error Analysis (all undergraduate programs); Sociopragmatics; Recent Linguistic Developments; Research methods; Indonesian Language Problems (all Undiksha Postgraduate programs). The positions he has held include Secretary for the Diploma Program at the Singaraja State IKIP; Head of the STKIP Singaraja Field Experience Program; Head of Education and Teaching Journal of IKIP Negeri Singaraja; Secretary of the Undiksha Research Institute; Head of the Language Education Study Program (S2 and S3) Undiksha Postgraduate Program; Head of the Undiksha Research and Community Service Institute. The textbooks that have been compiled are Indonesian Language Skills Oriented to National Integration and Social Harmony (2011); and Sociolinguistics (2014).

Ida Bagus Putrayasa is a professor at the Ganesha University of Education in Singaraja, Bali. He completed his doctoral degree at the Indonesian University of Education, Bandung (1998-2001), and earned a professorship on October 1, 2004. Currently he is active in various academic activities, such as teaching in the Undergraduate, Masters and Doctoral Programs at Undiksha Singaraja. Some of his books include: Indonesian: Theory and Application (2010), Morphological Studies: Derivational and Inflectional Forms (2010), Types of Sentences in Indonesian (2012), Learning Foundation (2013), Effective Sentences: Structure, Diction, and Logic (2014), Sentence Analysis: Functions, Categories, and Roles (2014), Pragmatics (2014), Indonesian Sentence Grammar (2016), Syntax: Understanding Single Sentences (2017), Learning Evaluation (2018), Grammar of Language Elementary School Indonesia (2019), Myself: K-13 Thematic Books Filled with Ecoliteracy (2020), Latest Linguistic Developments (2022), Sociopragmatics (2022), Flexible Learning and Character Education (2022), and Sentence Structures Filled with Character Education Values (2022).

I Ketut Paramarta is a lecturer at the Balinese Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Ganesha University of Education. He completed his undergraduate study in Balinese Language and Literature at Udayana University (2005), Masters in Linguistics at Udayana University (2009), and Doctor of Linguistics at Udayana University (2015). His research interests are studying the Balinese language from the perspective of comparative historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, and studying the Balinese writing system from a graphematics perspective. One of his recently published research results is "Types of Balinese Script Block Structure using Symbol Block Analysis" published in LINGUA CULTURA Vol. 17 No. 1 (2023).

Enhancing Pedagogical Strategies for Multilingual Classrooms in Foreign Language Education: Training Lecturers for Linguistic Diversity and Language Variation

Shadi Majed Alshraah[*]
English Department, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, 151 Al-Kharj 11942, Saudi Arabia

Saddm H. M. Issa
College of Medicine and Medical Sciences, Al-Razi University, Yemen

Hamzah Faleh Migdadi
Al-Hussan Group for Education and Training, Saudi Arabia

Arjumen Sultana Nishat
English Department, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, 151 Al-Kharj 11942, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—Lecturers play a huge role in the teaching of foreign languages across universities. As such, their training in language diversity and variation remains a significant tool in enhancing pedagogical strategies for multilingual foreign language classroom. This study focused on the analysis of different ways in which the training of foreign language lecturers can enhance pedagogical practices for multilingual foreign language classrooms. A total of 151 lecturers and 112 university non-academics staff members drawn from departments of foreign languages participated in this quantitative survey. Data was gathered using digitally developed questionnaire. There was a wide diversity of viewpoints from participants on instructional methods, such as peer instruction, outlining objectives explicitly, and continuing one's education. There are major and far-reaching implications of this research. One major takeaway from the research is how vital it is that lecturers of foreign languages get diversity training as part of their ongoing training and certification. Recognizing the need of such training allows schools to proactively provide lecturers with the tools they need to accommodate a student population that is becoming more diverse. In conclusion, this research sheds light on the difficulties and potential of teaching a foreign language to a population with a wide range of linguistic background. The research sheds light on the need of training for language diversity and the difficulty of maintaining order in a multilingual classroom. Lecturers and universities may better prepare students for success in a globalized world by addressing these issues and developing more welcoming, responsive, and successful foreign language classes.

Index Terms—linguistic diversity, language education, language variation, EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

In the landscape of foreign language education, the dynamism of multicultural classrooms has become the norm, prompting an essential shift in pedagogical approaches. This paper encapsulates the crucial pursuit of empowering educators to navigate and capitalize on linguistic diversity within educational settings. As the linguistic tapestry of classrooms continues to evolve, the demand for innovative methodologies and adeptly trained instructors rises, emphasizing the necessity for robust pedagogical frameworks to effectively engage and support learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This exploration delves into the imperative strategies essential for instructors to effectively navigate the rich mosaic of languages and variations, fostering an inclusive and effective learning environment.

In this modern age characterized by increased globalization, the field of foreign language teaching encounters a notable obstacle in the form of multilingual classrooms. The objective of this study is to provide novel educational approaches that may effectively respond to the changing linguistic environment, thereby making a valuable contribution to the improvement of foreign language curriculum. This research aims to enhance the overall quality of foreign language teaching by addressing the challenges posed by multilingual learning landscapes and integrating them with standard teaching techniques.

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[*] Corresponding Author.

The use of pedagogical approaches forms the fundamental basis for the attainment of successful foreign language teaching. Nevertheless, traditional approaches often face challenges when it comes to managing the wide range of linguistic backgrounds that students bring to classes with multiple languages. Multilingual classrooms exhibit a diverse array of languages, dialects, and varied degrees of language competency within the student population. The presence of variation serves as a distinctive characteristic within the realm of modern foreign language teaching (Martinez, 2022; Kim, 2017). Language variation is a fundamental characteristic of multilingualism, wherein students introduce a wide range of language variances into the educational landscape. In order to tackle this issue, it is crucial that lecturers undergo thorough training to proficiently identify, adjust to, and effectively use linguistic variances (Anderson, 2020; Nguyen, 2019).

The motivation for this study stems from the urgent need to address the disparity between existing pedagogical approaches and the requirements of multilingual foreign language teaching landscapes. Although there have been many breakthroughs in the area of foreign language instruction, it still often fails to meet the difficulties offered by diversity and differences. Several topics are covered in an effort to fill a knowledge gap. The goals of this study are to (1) assess the current state of pedagogical approaches used in multilingual foreign language classrooms; (2) analyze the impact of linguistic diversity on foreign language education; (3) assess the significance of linguistic variation and lecturer training in enhancing teaching strategies for multilingual foreign language classrooms.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Multilingualism in Foreign Language Classroom; Review of Language Variation

The classrooms exhibit a notable feature of having a varied range of linguistic backgrounds, including a variation of native languages, dialects, and differing degrees of language competency among the student population. The significance of acknowledging and using linguistic variation as a valuable resource in language learning is highlighted by the notion of multilingual classrooms. Researchers such as Alisaari et al. (2019) have conducted studies examining the perspectives of lecturers towards linguistic variation. Their work has provided valuable insights into the complexities and advantages associated with teaching in multilingual educational environments Furthermore, Allison and Rehm (2007) have highlighted the need of implementing pedagogical approaches that can accommodate the distinct requirements of students in multicultural, multilingual environments.

The current globalized classrooms exhibit a noticeable rise in the occurrence of multiple languages within the context of foreign language teaching. Costa et al. (2005) have emphasized the difficulty of incorporating scholarly knowledge on English language learners into lecturer education courses, which is a response to the increasing population of students with varied linguistic origins. Cummins et al. (2005) argue in support of the need of validating identity within educational landscapes that include several languages.

The phenomena of globalization, the migration of people across borders, and the rising recognition of the need of multilingualism within a globalized society are all possible explanations for the explosion of linguistic diversity. The authors Haan et al. (2017) note the growing presence of students speaking languages other than English in today's classrooms as evidence of globalization's impact on linguistic diversity. In a similar vein, Hamied (2012) investigates the role of English in Indonesia's multicultural and multilingual classrooms. The author persuasively shows how the use of many languages has become a hallmark of contemporary classrooms.

Helot and Young (2002) investigate the usefulness of valuing migrant languages in the setting of French elementary schools. They stress the need of welcoming students of all language backgrounds into the classroom. As a result of this international trend, lecturers everywhere must adapt their practices to meet the needs of students whose first language is not their own (Modupeola, 2013). In addition, Pulinx et al. (2017) call attention to the pervasive prevalence of monolingual beliefs among lecturers, highlighting the need of recognizing and addressing the linguistic diversity existing within educational environments.

Foreign language lecturers recognize the need to use instructional strategies that may effectively address the widening linguistic gap between students. Faltis and Valdés (2016) highlight the need of properly preparing lecturers to successfully traverse linguistically diverse educational settings by providing insightful views and suggestions for teaching lecturers. Also, Lucas and Villegas's (2010) proposed paradigm that gives a holistic strategy for training lecturers to be culturally and linguistically sensitive, recognizing the importance of lecturer preparation in ensuring that all students have access to a quality education. The recognition of the multilingual nature of today's classrooms lays the groundwork for a thorough evaluation of the pedagogical approaches needed to meet the needs of a diverse student body (Alshraah et al. 2023).

The use of effective pedagogical techniques within the context of multilingual classrooms is vital for delving further into these principles, particularly in the field of foreign language instruction. It is pertinent to understand that all lecturers must equip themselves with the tools necessary to effectively manage students' language differences. Mastellotto and Zanin (2022) delve into the issue of multilingual lecturer education, concentrating on the region of South Tyrol. The authors stress the importance of introducing young children to language using proven methods. When taken as a whole, these sources demonstrate how crucial pedagogy is to ensure that students of all linguistic backgrounds thrive in today's increasingly bilingual and multilingual classrooms.

The significance of using effective educational practices in multilingual classrooms is of utmost importance and should not be underestimated. Both lecturers and academics acknowledge the need of modifying teaching approaches to cater to a range of language origins and provide inclusive learning experiences. The acknowledgment of this phenomenon establishes a foundation for a thorough investigation of educational methods that may proficiently tackle the obstacles and advantages posed by the presence of diverse languages in the field of foreign language teaching.

B. A Review of the Dynamics in Multilingual Foreign Language Classroom

Multilingual classrooms within the context of foreign language teaching are characterized by their dynamic nature, which is influenced by the complex interactions between linguistic interactions, linguistic control, and patterns of communication among students who come from varied linguistic backgrounds. The significance of these dynamics in comprehending the intricacies and peculiarities of acquiring a foreign language in certain environments has been noted by researchers (Allison & Rehm, 2007; Barret, 2011). The concept of language domination is a significant factor in assessing students' aptitude levels and their self-assurance in using a second language. In educational landscapes where students possess differing levels of language proficiency, lecturers must adeptly manage this heterogeneity in order to provide equal learning opportunities (Coelho, 2004; Costa et al., 2005).

The significance of language interaction patterns in multilingual classrooms is proportional. According to Cummins et al. (2005), the manner in which students engage with one another in multilingual environments may have an impact on their linguistic growth. According to Modupeola (2013) and Moeller and Catalano (2015), learning in groups, peer interactions, and the incorporation of code-switching are integral aspects of the language acquisition process. Nevertheless, similar patterns may also give rise to some difficulties, such as the possibility of linguistic isolation or the prevalence of a certain language inside social circles. Comprehending and effectively using these patterns of interaction have significant importance for lecturers in the context of multilingual foreign language classes.

Multilingual classrooms inherently provide communication issues that may have a substantial influence on foreign language teaching. According to Illman and Pietilä (2018), the intricacies of multilingualism as a valuable asset are emphasized, underscoring the need of a profound comprehension of students' language repertoires for successful communication in varied linguistic environments. Lecturers may be required to tackle concerns pertaining to the understanding of content, articulation of words, and the proficiency of learners in articulating their thoughts in a non-native language. The aforementioned difficulties need the use of inventive pedagogical methodologies and the adjustment of teaching tactics to promote proficient communication and the development of language skills (Krulatz et al., 2022; Leeman & Serafini, 2016).

The dynamics seen in multilingual classrooms have a significant influence on the processes of teaching and acquisition in the realm of foreign language education. It is essential to meticulously customize pedagogical practices in order to effectively meet the distinct problems and possibilities that arise from linguistic variation. According to Hutchinson (2013), it is crucial to address the disparity between the information possessed by preservice lecturers and the practical challenges they face while instructing English language learners in classes with various linguistic backgrounds. To effectively fulfil their role, lecturers are required to possess not only a comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter, but also a profound comprehension of the language backgrounds of their students.

Additionally, the presence of linguistic diversity in classrooms that consist of many languages requires the use of inclusive educational strategies. Krulatz et al. (2022) underscore the significance of fostering critical cultural and linguistic awareness within language teaching landscapes. It is essential for lecturers to provide an inclusive and hospitable educational landscape that appreciates and honours the language origins and experiences of students. Neglecting to address this issue may result in students experiencing feelings of marginalization or exclusion, which may negatively affect their language learning and overall educational journey.

In the context of a multilingual classroom, it is essential for lecturers to use translanguaging as both a teaching and evaluation approach. Schissel, De Korne, and López-Gopar (2021) examine the difficulties associated with the implementation of translanguaging in environments characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity. Lecturers that possess a comprehensive understanding of translanguaging and are able to effectively use this pedagogical approach have the capacity to establish foreign language learning landscapes that are both inclusive and efficacious (Wang, 2019; Van der Walt & Ruiters, 2011).

In a nutshell the dynamics of a multilingual classroom have a significant influence on the field of foreign language teaching. The teaching and learning experiences of students are influenced by factors such as language dominance, interaction patterns, and communication obstacles.

C. Pedagogical Strategies for Multilingual Classrooms in Foreign Language Education

According to Coelho (2004), there is a significant emphasis on the value of additive bilingualism in education. This approach involves lecturers seeking to enhance students' current language abilities while simultaneously exposing them to the target language. This method acknowledges the significance of students' language heritage and cultivates a positive disposition towards multilingualism. In their recent publication, Mastellotto and Zanin (2022) delve into the topic of imparting efficient language input to young learners within multilingual contexts. They underscore the significance of fostering a supportive and linguistically varied learning environment as a means to achieve this objective.

In addition to the phenomenon of additive bilingualism, there has been a growing focus on the use of translanguaging as a teaching method. According to Wang (2019), translanguaging enables students to use their whole range of linguistic abilities in order to enhance the process of learning. The recognition is made that linguistic borders possess a certain degree of flexibility, and that students often experience advantages while using their mother tongues to grasp and articulate concepts in the desired language. Nevertheless, the successful execution of translanguaging necessitates lecturers to meticulously plan and provide support for activities that foster purposeful language utilisation (Schissel et al., 2021).

The establishment of efficient classroom management in foreign language classes that consist of several languages is of utmost importance in order to foster an optimal learning environment. Krulatz and Iversen (2020) underscore the need of fostering inclusive environments within educational settings by using multilingual writing strategies. These strategies have the potential to foster a feeling of inclusion among recently arrived students who possess a range of language backgrounds. In addition, it is essential for lecturers to be cognizant of the socio-emotional requirements shown by their children. According to Helot and Young (2002), it is crucial for lecturers to recognise the possible vulnerability and anxiety that language learners may face and use techniques to provide a classroom environment that is helpful.

Ongoing study and discussion surround the efficacy of pedagogical practises in meeting the requirements of different learners within multilingual foreign language classes. Although there is evidence of the potential benefits of additive bilingualism and translanguaging in acknowledging and harnessing students' linguistic abilities (Cummins et al., 2005), there are still obstacles to overcome in their practical use. Lecturers are faced with the task of finding a harmonious equilibrium between the promotion of students' home languages and the facilitation of growth in the target language. Furthermore, the evaluation of the influence of translanguaging on the development of language skills and academic achievements necessitates further empirical investigation (Moeller & Catalano, 2015).

D. Gaps in the Literature

Finding the research's gaps is essential to assuring its reliability and validity. Researchers may improve the quality and credibility of their work by recognizing and resolving these issues. However, there are still certain gaps and limitations in the current pedagogical practices for multilingual foreign language classes. The introduction of more extensive lecturer training and professional development courses is urgently required. The goal of these training courses should be to provide lecturers with the skills they'll need to implement the strategies outlined above (De Jong & Harper, 2005). Many lecturers may lack the proper background knowledge to adequately meet the needs of their multilingual students. Research evaluating the long-term impact of different teaching methods on students' language proficiency, academic achievement, and social and emotional development in bilingual and multilingual settings is also crucial (Haan et al., 2017). It is possible that the results of this research may provide light on how to better tailor teaching methods to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

Foreign language lecturers critically require training in the areas of linguistic variation and diversity to fill the gaps and overcome the limitations of the present pedagogical approaches employed in multilingual foreign language classrooms. To ensure that all students have equal access to education, lecturers must be able to effectively bridge language barriers. The comprehensive training program should include not only educational methodologies but also a comprehensive comprehension of sociolinguistic elements and cultural proficiency, as emphasized by Jenkins and Mauranen (2019). In this regard, the review of methods of teaching in multilingual foreign language classes demonstrates encouraging methodologies that acknowledge the significance of linguistic diversity. Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge and tackle the obstacles encountered during the application of these techniques, as well as the need for more study and training. This is crucial in order to guarantee that these approaches adequately cater to the requirements of a wide range of learners in contexts characterized by multiple languages.

III. RESEARCH METHOD AND MATERIALS

A. Research Approach

This research adopts quantitative survey strategy in the analysis of ways to enhance teaching methods for multilingual foreign language classroom through the training of foreign language lecturers on language variation and diversity. The choice of quantitative research approaches is to ensure that the intricate perceptions of the university lecturers and administrators are fully explored. In the context of this research, this opens up the possibility of delving into not just the frequency and distribution of different languages in the classroom, but also the richer, more complex experiences and perspectives of lecturers and administrators.

B. Research Design

Survey study design has been the most appropriate design for studies that adopted quantitative approach. Survey design is used in this study, aimed at collecting numerical data on the importance of training lecturers on language diversity and variation to enhance pedagogical strategies in multilingual foreign language classrooms.

C. Research Questions

The following research questions, developed from the earlier discussed objectives of the study, are posed to guide the direction of the research:

1. How can the training of foreign language lecturers on language diversity and variation enhance teaching strategies for multilingual classrooms in foreign language education?
2. In what ways can lecturers improve the management of multiple language dynamics in foreign language classrooms?

D. Study Participants

Participants in this research include lecturers from different universities. These lecturers teach linguistics and foreign languages at the universities under study. We also polled university administrators. The university administrators who participated in the survey are non-academic employees who work in the faculties and departments of foreign language. To participate in the study, the samples must be either lecturers or non-academic staff in the department of foreign language education across different universities.

E. Study Sample

A simple randomized sampling method was used in the selection of 151 university lecturers and 112 non-academic staff from different universities to participate in the study. The table below summarizes the demographic variables in the study.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Groups	Categories	Repetition	Percentage
Gender	Male	N= 205	77.94%
	Female	N = 58	22.06%
		Total = 263	100%
Academic qualification	Master's Degree	N = 127	48.29%
	PhD Holders	N = 136	51.71%
		Total = 263	100%
Years of experience	1-4 years	N = 74	28.13%
	5 years and above	N = 189	71.87%
		Total = 263	100%

The demographic table gives a general overview of the 263 research participants, including 151 university lecturers and 112 non-academic university personnel. The table illustrates the distribution of participants across significant demographic groups, providing insight into the sample's makeup. The gender distribution in the table is one glaring aspect, with a definite majority of male participation at 77.94%. In comparison, women make up a lesser number of participants (22.06%).

Another interesting feature of the demographic table is academic background. A large proportion of participants (51.71%) have PhDs, while 48.29% of the sample have master's degrees. Given their responsibilities in a university environment, it is not unexpected given this distribution that the research participants had a high degree of educational attainment. However, it prompts the issue of whether academic achievement may have an impact on students' perspectives of and strategies for dealing with linguistic diversity in foreign language courses. Do people with various academic backgrounds handle multilingualism and linguistic diversity in their teaching or relationships with students in different ways, for instance?

The distribution of participants' experience shows that 71.87% have five years or more of experience, while 28.13% have 1-4 years of experience. This distribution shows that the sample as a whole has a high degree of professional experience, especially among individuals with five or more years of tenure. This factor is important because it may have an impact on the participants' experience with various language situations and their management techniques for multilingual classrooms. Understanding how a lecturer's years of experience connect to their beliefs and methods in teaching multiple foreign languages may provide one a good understanding of the dynamics at work in university classrooms. This demographic table provides an overview of the participants' characteristics and possible impacts on their roles and experiences in multilingual classrooms, serving as a fundamental point of reference for evaluating the study's results.

F. Study Tools

A digitally designed questionnaire was used in collecting data. The survey is a structured questionnaire that highlights the two research questions. The survey questionnaire contains a total of ten questions, five questions were developed from each of the two research questions, apart from the questions on demographic variables.

G. Validation of Study Tools

During the course of our study, we engage in an examination of the current body of literature to identify appropriate questions or generate novel ones in response to observed gaps. The questions of the questionnaire were designed based

on comprehensive study. In order to enhance the validity of the study tools, namely the questionnaires, three university professors specializing in foreign language education were contacted. The language professionals conducted a thorough examination of each question, using their experience in the field. During this process, several questions were deemed unsuitable and were removed, while other questions were included to enhance the overall quality of the assessment. These professors are different from those who participated in the main study. Given that this study used expert review as the benchmark for validating its research tools, adequate attention was given to the recommendations suggested by these experts.

H. Method of Analysis

The data was analyzed using relevant statistical measures. The percentile values of the Likert scales of the questionnaire items were presented in two descriptive statistical tables. The mean values and the standard deviations were calculated. The discussions were based on the findings from the results of the responses of the lecturers that participated in the study.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

The results are presented in connection to the study questions; hence, the segmentation of the results into two subsections.

1) *Research Question One: How can the training of foreign language lecturers on language diversity and variation enhance teaching strategies for multilingual classrooms in foreign language education?*

The first research question focuses on unveiling the ways in which extensive training of foreign language lecturers in language diversity and variation can enhance the strategies for teaching in multilingual foreign language classrooms. Five questionnaire items were developed from this study question, and the findings are summarized in the table below.

TABLE 2
RESULTS OF RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

Question Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
Improving teaching methods for multilingual classrooms in foreign language education requires that foreign language lecturers get training on language diversity and variations.	43.75	31.84	14.59	9.82	-	4.86	1.02
Training in linguistic diversity and variation gives foreign language lecturers the skills they need to foster inclusive learning environments in multilingual classrooms.	44.39	27.52	18.64	6.91	2.54	3.47	1.35
Foreign language lecturers are better able to modify their teaching strategies to adequately address the requirements of various learners when they have received training on the diversity and variations of languages.	47.83	35.94	11.51	4.72	-	4.06	0.85
Foreign languages lecturers who are trained about linguistic diversity could assist students develop a more favourable attitude towards linguistic diversity.	38.02	31.55	20.15	7.61	2.67	3.47	1.97
Foreign language lecturers who have received training in linguistic diversity and variation are better able to handle communication difficulties in courses with many languages.	49.72	36.09	8.19	4.06	1.94	4.08	0.73

The data in the table give useful information on how the respondents believed their training had affected their approaches to teach multiple languages in a foreign language classroom. Participants' levels of agreement or disagreement with statements on training's involvement in linguistic diversity are shown by responses on a Likert scale comprising "Strongly Accept (SA)" to "Strongly Disagree (SD)". The mean and standard deviation data provide a numerical assessment of the common ground and variation among the responses, respectively. The results imply that participants understand the need of training on linguistic diversity and variation in developing better methods of instruction for multilingual students in the field of foreign language teaching. Different people see linguistic diversity in schools in different ways, and these differences are especially noticeable when it comes to issues of inclusion and student attitudes. These results add to the growing body of knowledge on the significance of training in meeting the demands of multilingual classrooms' varied student populations.

2) *Research Question One: How can the training of foreign language lecturers on language diversity and variation enhance teaching strategies for multilingual classrooms in foreign language education?*

The second research question is extensively significant to the overall projections of the study. The second question seeks to explore ways in which lecturers improve the management of multiple language dynamics in foreign language classrooms. Five questions were developed from this research question and included in the questionnaire. The results are summarized in the table below.

TABLE 3
RESULTS OF RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

Question Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. Deviation
The management of different language dynamics in the foreign language classroom may be improved by setting clear expectations and norms for language use by students.	23.73	63.2	5.07	6.13	1.87	4.08	1.17
The management of various language dynamics may be improved by creating a learning environment in the classroom that values open communication and mutual respect amongst students from different linguistic origins.	28.53	64.27	2.93	4.27	-	5.06	0.79
To handle different language dynamics in the classroom effectively, chances to engage in collaborative learning and peer assistance should be provided.	30.13	63.74	4.53	1.6	-	5.19	0.65
For better control of the dynamics of several languages, lecturers must get ongoing professional development and training in multilingual classroom management techniques.	18.93	51.47	3.47	16.8	9.33	3.72	1.78
An efficient method of handling the dynamics of several languages is to design an adaptable curriculum that allows for changes depending on the linguistic requirements and preferences of the students.	19.53	55.29	6.14	17.93	1.11	3.94	1.47

The results in table 3 offer deeper insights into the nature of strategies to manage linguistic diversity and the dynamics in multilingual foreign language classroom. These results show the complex nature of managing a classroom where students speak different languages and help us better understand how to accommodate this diversity.

B. Discussion of Findings

The results in the two tables offer insights into the need for the training of lecturers in language diversity and variation for enhancing pedagogical strategies for managing the dynamics of multiple languages in a foreign language classroom. The findings were presented in connection with the two research questions.

Table 2 presented the results of the questionnaire items developed from the first research question. The first element in the table 2 pertains to the imperative nature of providing training to foreign language lecturers regarding linguistic diversity and variation, with the aim of enhancing pedagogical approaches within multilingual educational settings. A significant proportion of the participants (43.75% Strongly agree 31.84% agree) demonstrate a positive predisposition towards the aforementioned assertion. The aforementioned result is consistent with previous scholarly investigations that underscore the significance of such training (Krulatz et al., 2022). The following item delves into the notion that instruction in linguistic diversity and variation provides lecturers with the necessary abilities to provide inclusive educational settings within multilingual classrooms. While a considerable number of participants (44.39% Strongly agree 27.52% Accept) express agreement with this statement, it is worth mentioning that a notable proportion (18.64%) remains Neutral. This observation suggests a broader spectrum of perspectives on the efficacy of such training. According to Haan et al. (2017), the intricate characteristics of inclusion in multilingual classrooms are emphasized, perhaps accounting for the diversity of reactions. The third aspect explores the notion that linguistic diversity training empowers lecturers to modify instructional approaches in order to accommodate the needs of a varied student population. A significant proportion of the participants (47.83% Strongly agree 35.94% Accept) express a strong inclination or inclination towards agreement with this statement. This statement is in accordance with the concept that providing linguistic diversity training to lecturers improves their capacity to adapt to the diverse requirements of learners (Coelho, 2004). The elevated average and reduced standard deviation indicate a comparatively strong agreement among the participants.

The fourth item examines the contention that the implementation of linguistic diversity training may result in the cultivation of more positive attitudes among students towards linguistic diversity. A notable observation is that a significant percentage (38.02% Strongly agree 31.55% Accept) of the participants exhibit agreement, yet it is worth mentioning that a significant portion (20.15%) remains Neutral. The aforementioned result implies that individuals recognize a possible connection between training and enhanced student attitudes, while also acknowledging the intricate nature of attitudinal shifts in circumstances characterized by language diversity (Cummins et al., 2005). The fifth component of the table examines the notion that linguistic diversity training enhances lecturers' ability to effectively address communication challenges in courses where students from multilingual background attend. A significant proportion of the participants (49.72% Strongly agree 36.09% Accept) express strong agreement with the aforementioned statement. This statement is in accordance with the notion that providing linguistic diversity training to lecturers improves their capacity to successfully address communication difficulties (Modupeola, 2013). The relatively large mean and small standard deviation suggest a high level of agreement among the participants.

Table 3 provides results of the questionnaire items connected to the second research question. The first question item in the table 3 pertains to the concept that establishing explicit expectations and standards for language use among students may improve the management of diverse linguistic dynamics within the context of a foreign language classroom. The statement in question one garners agreement from a significant portion of the participants, with 23.73% strongly accepting and 63.2% accepting it. This is consistent with scholarly investigations that underscore the

significance of well-defined language use directives in educational settings including several languages (Krulatz et al., 2022). The findings indicate that individuals acknowledge the need of creating a well-organized linguistic setting in order to efficiently handle a wide range of languages.

The following item delves into the notion that establishing a learning environment that prioritizes open communication and mutual respect among students hailing from multiple linguistic backgrounds might enhance the handling of different language dynamics. A significant percentage of respondents (28.53% Strongly Accept, 64.27% Accept) express strong agreement or agreement with the aforementioned statement. The aforementioned discovery aligns with existing scholarly works that emphasize the significance of a positive classroom environment in facilitating successful communication and engagement among students who speak several languages (De Jong & Harper, 2005). The third aspect explores the notion that including chances for collaborative learning and peer support might enhance the efficient handling of diverse linguistic dynamics within the classroom. The statement in question received a high level of agreement from the majority of participants, with 30.13% strongly accepting and 63.74% accepting it. This is consistent with other research that highlights the advantages of collaborative learning in environments with many languages, since it allows students to assist one another in their language acquisition (Cummins et al., 2005).

The fourth point pertains to the notion that continuous professional growth and training in managing multilingual classrooms are crucial for effectively managing the complexities associated with several languages. While a considerable proportion of respondents (18.93% Strongly Accept, 51.47% Accept) express agreement with this assertion, it is worth highlighting that a notable amount (16.8% Reject, 9.33% Strongly Reject) hold opposing viewpoints or strongly oppose it. This discovery underscores the wide range of perspectives about the imperative need of continuous training. The assertion is consistent with existing research that emphasizes the need of ongoing professional development for lecturers working in multilingual environments. However, it also recognizes that there may be variations in how lecturers see this matter (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008, p. 620). The fifth item delves into the notion that developing a flexible curriculum that addresses the linguistic needs and preferences of students is an effective approach to managing the complexities of many languages. A significant proportion of respondents (19.53% Strongly Accept, 55.29% Accept) indicate their concurrence, yet, it is noteworthy that 17.93% show dissent against this assertion. This implies a more nuanced perspective about the efficacy of flexible courses. The statement aligns with scholarly investigations that emphasize the possible obstacles and advantages associated with the adaptability of curricula in the context of multilingual education (Krulatz et al., 2022).

V. IMPLICATIONS OF ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study, researchers of the current study set out to investigate the intricate interplay between language diversity and the teaching of foreign languages, with a focus on how lecturer preparation and classroom practice affect the success of their students. A deeper understanding of the participants' thoughts and feelings on the topic of linguistic diversity training and efficient classroom management strategies emerged from an examination of the collected data. The finding of the current research is consistent with Alshraah et al. (2023) who stated that "the growing body of evidence demonstrating the crucial role that professional development plays in fostering learner-centric and student-centred foreign language education, ultimately raising the standard of language education and increasing responsiveness to student need" (p. 203).

The results showed that there was widespread agreement among respondents that training in language diversity is crucial. Many respondents agreed that training in linguistic diversity and variation would be helpful in developing more effective methods of instructing students of many languages simultaneously in the field of foreign language learning. This congruence with the current research emphasizes the significance of such training in providing lecturers with the resources they need to foster welcoming and productive classrooms (Krulatz et al., 2022; Coelho, 2004). The data also showed how complex successful classroom management is when dealing with students who speak different languages. There was a wide diversity of viewpoints from participants on instructional methods, such as peer instruction, outlining objectives explicitly, and continuing one's education. Lecturers in multilingual classrooms face a number of challenges, and this diversity of viewpoints is a reflection of that (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008; Krulatz et al., 2022).

There are major and far-reaching implications of this research. One major takeaway from the research is how vital it is that lecturers of foreign languages get diversity training as part of their ongoing training and certification. Recognizing the need of such training allows schools to proactively provide lecturers with the tools they need to accommodate a student population that is becoming more diverse. Second, the findings call for lecturers to take a sophisticated approach to managing classes where students speak more than one language. Different teaching methods should be considered, each tailored to the individual needs of the students. Communication, learning, and the overall classroom environment may all benefit from this kind of flexibility.

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the difficulties and potential of teaching a foreign language to a population with a wide range of linguistic and pragmatic background as claimed by Alshraah et al. (2023) "Future studies could build upon this foundation to explore the specific difficulties faced by L2 learners in the realm of pragmatics, offering insights and solutions to further improve pragmatic competence" (p. 13). The research sheds light on the need of training for language diversity and the difficulty of maintaining order in a multilingual classroom. Lecturers and

universities may better prepare students for success in a globalized world by addressing these issues and developing more welcoming, responsive, and successful foreign language classes.

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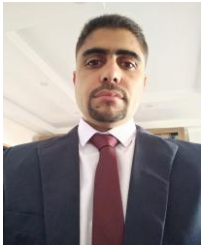
Shadi Majed D. Alshraah, Ph.D. is Jordanian who is currently a lecturer at Prince Sattam bin Abd Alziz University (PSAU), Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He has 12 years of experience as a lecturer in the English department and a two-year experience as an English teacher in the Ministry of Education, Jordan. He holds PhD in linguistics from University of Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM). He obtained his master's and bachelor's degree in applied Linguistics from Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), Irbid, Jordan. His interests revolve around pragmatics, socio-pragmatic, and teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL\EFL).

Alshraah, Shadi is interest in pragmatic, applied linguistic, EFL and ESL research, the following some his publications.

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The current work's second author, **Saddam H.M. Issa**, is an assistant professor of psycholinguistics at Hajjah University and AL-Razi University. He collaborates with other experts in the field of clinical and psycholinguistics. Their shared concerns encompass language cognition and processing. Saddam's publications have been predominantly sent to international journals indexed by Scopus, Web of Science (WOS), and Springer.

Hamzah Faleh Migdadi is an assistant professor of English. He specializes in applied linguistics. His research interests mainly focus on general linguistics, varieties of English, socio-linguistics, Second Language Research, Language Learning Strategies and Corpus Linguistics. He currently works as a supervisor of English at Al-Hussan Group for Education and Training, Saudi Arabia. He works also at the Department of English and Translation at Islamic University of Minnesota, USA (Part-time). He has several publications in Indexed Journals. ORCiD: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4683-0416.

Arjumen Sultana Nishat, Masters from India who is currently a lecturer at Prince Sattam bin Abdul Aziz University (PSAU), Al Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. She has 16 years of expertise as a lecturer in the English department and she also holds two-year experience as an Academic Principal in Umm Al Qura International School, Riyadh. She has Masters in literature and has obtained her TEFL & TESOL Certification (120 credit Hours) & Advance in Business English Teacher training program (60 credit hours) through Asian College of Teachers, India. In addition to this, she is certified in Project-based learning from Europass- under the accreditation of Asian College of Teachers, India. She benefits speakers of other language by teaching English and, TESOL; geared towards students learning English as a second foreign language in different language speaking country. She persuades by enhancing students' skills along with technology and innovations as an English Club Coordinator for Prince Sattam University, Al Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Vowel Epenthesis in the Pronunciation of English Consonant Clusters by Kuwaiti EFL Learners

Seham Al-Abdullah[*]

Language Center, College of Business Studies, The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait

Mohammad A. Almutairi

Language Center, College of Basic Education, The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait

Abstract—This study investigated pronunciation errors made by Kuwaiti Arabic (KA) learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in their production of English consonant clusters. The participants consisted of 25 Kuwaiti EFL learners who were asked to read English words embedded in short sentences. Target words constituted initial, medial, and final-consonant clusters. Data were transcribed by the researchers in addition to three phoneticians for reliability and were further verified through Praat software. Results indicated that pronunciation errors made by these learners of English were restricted to initial and medial consonant clusters that violated the syllable structure requirements of their native dialect. When a conflict occurred between the syllable structure of their first language (L1) and that of the English language, the participants adopted two phonological repair strategies to resolve the conflict: vowel epenthesis and re-syllabification. These phonological repair strategies appeared to be a process of phonological rule transfer from the L1 to the second language (L2) and served to bring the underlying forms of the English words into conformity with restrictions on possible surface syllable structures of the Kuwaiti dialect. These findings highlight the need to develop materials and reading exercises in the classroom to raise students' awareness of the differences between the syllable structure of their L1 and that of English and its role in successful communication.

Index Terms—consonant clusters, phonological repair strategies, pronunciation errors, syllable structure constraints, vowel epenthesis

I. INTRODUCTION

To improve good communication skills, learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) need to learn not only the individual speech sounds, that is, vowels and consonants, but also the rhythmic characteristics of English utterances, including the inventory of permitted syllable patterns (Tajima & Akahane-Yamada, 2004). The syllable is an important rhythmic linguistic unit representing a major component of the English sound system (Goldsmith, 2011). It has a significant role in successful communication in English as it enables EFL learners to produce comprehensible pronunciation (Gilakjani et al., 2020). However, due to the considerable cross-linguistic variation in syllable patterns, EFL learners often encounter difficulties acquiring and mastering the sound system of the English language. According to Shoji (2014), some English words constitute phonological patterns that do not fit the phonological constraints of the learners' native language. Previous studies (e.g., Bouchhioua, 2019; Broselow & Kang, 2013; Chan, 2023; Lam & Thi, 2022; Nguyen, 2020) have demonstrated that many EFL learners produce an epenthetic vowel when pronouncing complex English syllables constituting consonant clusters. Vowel epenthesis is one of the most common phonological strategies followed by EFL learners. While such a phonological process is considered an error in EFL learning, it serves as a repair strategy to make English words conform to the syllable structure restrictions of learners' native language, thereby simplifying their pronunciation of complex consonant clusters.

A. Research Aims and Questions

The main purpose of this study is to explore the production of English consonant clusters by Kuwaiti EFL learners. Specifically, it aims to investigate if Kuwaiti EFL learners make pronunciation errors when pronouncing English words constituting consonant clusters, whether they employ phonological repair strategies when pronouncing English consonant clusters, and the factors that may trigger these repair strategies. In pursuit of the aims of the study, the following research questions are proposed:

1. What pronunciation errors do Kuwaiti EFL learners make when producing English words constituting consonant clusters?

2. What phonological repair strategies do Kuwaiti EFL learners employ when producing English words constituting consonant clusters?

3. What factors trigger the phonological repair strategies involved in producing English consonant clusters by Kuwaiti EFL learners?

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[*] Corresponding Author. Email: bashah66@hotmail.com

Throughout this paper, epenthetic segments are italicised for visual clarity.

B. Significance of the Study

Studies on EFL learners' production of English consonant clusters have significantly contributed to the literature. They have provided insights into EFL learners' pronunciation difficulties and language-specific phonological rules and conditions governing syllable structure acquisition. They have also provided insights into phonological factors that contribute to the production of the epenthesized vowel. However, while a significant number of studies have investigated this phonological issue covering a wide range of EFL learners, including Arabic EFL learners (e.g., Al-Yami & Al-Athwary, 2021; Broselow, 1993; Khalifa, 2020; Mohamed, 2016), the context of Kuwaiti Arabic (KA) learners, to the best of our knowledge, has not been explored. The acquisition of English syllable structure is expected to be difficult for Kuwaiti EFL learners, given KA's relatively simple syllable structure compared to English. The syllable structure of English differs remarkably from that of KA. English syllables constitute a great variation in structure and can be quite complex, containing up to three or four consonant clusters. In contrast, KA phonotactics exhibit less variation and impose greater constraints that govern the structure of the syllables. This can be seen as a potential source of difficulties for Kuwaiti EFL learners who attempt to acquire more intelligible and native-like pronunciation. However, we do not know if they make phonological errors in their pronunciation of English consonant clusters and if they employ the same phonological repair strategy as other EFL learners from other languages and Arabic dialects. There is thus a need for more research to explore this phonological issue in the KA context, a country where English is learned as a foreign language and where learners' native language exhibits different syllable structures than that of English.

Therefore, this study is conducted to explore the production of English consonant clusters by Kuwaiti EFL learners. It investigates if Kuwaiti EFL learners make phonological errors when pronouncing English words constituting consonant clusters (within and across syllable boundaries) and if they resort to vowel epenthesis as a phonological repair strategy when pronouncing such clusters. It also aims at exploring the possible factors that may trigger the epenthesis process, if any. By investigating the production of English consonant clusters in the context of Kuwaiti EFL learners, this study contributes to the field of EFL, thereby filling the gap in the literature and enriching it in this respect. Moreover, the study is considered significant as it provides phonological insights into phonotactic constraints of KA syllable structure and consonant cluster restrictions that could cause pronunciation difficulties for Kuwaiti EFL learners acquiring English as a foreign language. Furthermore, as this study highlights pronunciation difficulties encountered by Kuwaiti EFL learners, it also presents some pedagogical suggestions for EFL teachers to assist their Kuwaiti EFL students in improving their pronunciation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Vowel Epenthesis

English has a complex syllable structure. It allows complex onsets and codas whereby a syllable could consist of up to three consonant clusters in the onset and up to four in the coda (e.g., *strengths* CCCVCCCC) (Cardoso, 2018). Consonant clusters also occur across syllable boundaries within one utterance (e.g., *children* CVC.CCVC) and could involve a longer and a different distribution of segments than that permitted in some other languages (Hashim, 2018). Therefore, acquiring English consonant clusters often poses significant challenges for EFL learners.

EFL learners' production of complex English consonant clusters has received tremendous attention in recent literature. Empirical studies (e.g., Al-Yami & Al-Athwary, 2021; Bouchhioua, 2019; Broselow & Kang, 2013; Castillo, 2022; Chan, 2023; Choi, 2016; Edwards, 2015; Lam & Thi, 2022; Nguyen, 2020; Zhang, 2009) have shown that EFL learners attempt to simplify their pronunciation of complex English words that constitute consonant clusters through vowel epenthesis. In fact, vowel epenthesis has been shown to be a prevalent phonological process among EFL learners[1]. In his investigation of pronunciation difficulties encountered by Chinese learners of English, Zhang (2009) found that Chinese speakers commonly have problems pronouncing English words like *prompt* and *thousandths*, which constitute initial and final-consonant clusters, and accordingly insert a vowel to ease their pronunciation of these words. Similarly, Adomako (2008), in his study of the production of English consonant clusters by Akan speakers, found that Akan speakers have problems producing English words constituting final-consonant clusters. A word like *film* was produced as /fɪl*m*/ whereby a vowel was inserted to break up the syllable-final cluster. Japanese learners, as investigated by Tajima et al. (2002), have also been observed to insert a vowel into initial consonant clusters and after word-final consonants. Words like *sneezed* and *cross* were pronounced as /sɯnɪz*u*do/ and /kɯros*u*/. Likewise, Tunisian speakers have also been reported breaking English consonant clusters that occur word-medially by means of vowel epenthesis to simplify their pronunciation. Bouchhioua (2019) argues that Tunisian students had problems identifying the syllables' boundaries in a word like *excuse*. The students inserted a vowel into the medial cluster, producing the word as /ɪks*ɪ*kju:z/. Such a phonological process of vowel epenthesis often causes English words to undergo re-syllabification.

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[1] Research shows that vowel epenthesis and consonant deletion are the two most common phonological strategies used by EFL learners to simplify their pronunciation of English consonant clusters. However, empirical investigation shows that many languages prefer vowel epenthesis to consonant deletion (Shoji, 2014).

B. L1 Phonological Constraints

Researchers (e.g., Broselow & Kang, 2013; Edwards, 2015; Khalifa, 2018; Nguyen, 2021; Nguyen, 2020) point out that languages differ in the number of segments that are grouped into syllables and in restrictions on these segments that occur in certain positions within a syllable. Differences among languages are also identified in restrictions on sequences of segments that may occur across syllable boundaries. They further argue that native language restrictions often affect learners' production of L2 forms. Therefore, EFL learners, when producing consonant clusters that violate the phonological restrictions of their L1 or do not meet its structural requirements, tend to insert a vowel to 'fix' such impermissible inputs. Broselow and Kang (2013), for example, indicate that while vowel epenthesis is considered a phonological error in the production of L2 forms, it can be attributed to the phonological constraints of learners L1 used as a repair strategy to allow the surfacing of consonant clusters that underlyingly occur in 'illegal' contexts (see also Hansen, 2011). Tajima et al. (2002) also point out that vowel epenthesis stems from language-specific structural differences whereby each language differs in which features are specified in underlying representations and which features are not. EFL learners, therefore, follow such a strategy due to the effect of the phonotactic restrictions of their L1.

Evidence supporting this claim is presented in different empirical studies covering various EFL contexts, for example, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, Brazilian, Spanish, Bengali, and Farsi speakers (Chan, 2023; Karim, 2010; Khanbeiki & Abdolmanafi-Rokni, 2015; Lam & Thi, 2022; Martinez-Garcia & Tremblay, 2013; Shoji, 2014; Silveira, 2002). Evidence is also presented from Arabic EFL learners, for example, Tunisian, Moroccan, Cairene, Iraqi, and Saudi speakers (Al-Yami & Al-Athwary, 2021; Bouchhioua, 2019; Broselow, 1993; Khalifa, 2020; Mohamed, 2016). These studies have clearly illustrated that English learners often carry over the phonological restrictions on consonant clusters of their native languages to the pronunciation of English words. For example, in Zhang's (2009) study of Chinese learners, vowel epenthesis takes place due to Chinese phonological rules whereby consonant clusters are not permitted in the language, and consonants are always followed by a vowel. Likewise, native Bengali words do not allow initial consonant clusters, and the maximum syllable structure is CVC. Speakers of this language, as investigated by Karim (2010), often carry over such constraints to English words, as in, for example, producing the word *gram* (CCVC) as /gɛram/ (CV.CVC) and *school* (CCVC) as /ɪskul/ (VC.CVC). Japanese phonotactics also do not allow consonant clusters and word-final consonants. Therefore, when Japanese learners produce English words that constitute consonant clusters or word-final consonants, vowel epenthesis, as reported by Tajima et al. (2002), occurs to modify the clusters and avoid word-final consonants. Accordingly, English words like *dream* (CCVC) and *breakfast* (CCVC.CVCC) are often pronounced as /doɾɪmɯ/ (CV.CV.CV) and /bɯrekɯfasɯto/ (CV.CV.CV.CV.CV.CV). Tajima et al. (2002) argue that such words are modified to conform to the primarily CV-based structure of Japanese.

Broselow (1993) has presented additional evidence that vowel epenthesis takes place due to EFL learners attempting to transform foreign language forms to fit the phonotactic restrictions of their native language patterns. Broselow's (1993) study investigating pronunciation errors in the production of English words containing medial three-consonant clusters by Egyptian and Iraqi Arabic speakers revealed differences in the treatment of such clusters. Both varieties of Arabic prohibit medial three-consonant clusters. Yet, speakers of each variety modify English medial clusters differently. Iraqi speakers pronounce the English word *children* as /ʧɪlɪdren/ whereas Egyptian speakers pronounce it as /ʧɪldɪren/. While Iraqi speakers inserted a vowel after the first of three consonants, Egyptian speakers, on the other hand, inserted a vowel after the second of three consonants. Broselow (1993) argues that such a different pattern of vowel epenthesis can be attributed to the different rules of permitted syllable structures of the two Arabic dialects. The Iraqi rule of vowel epenthesis inserts a vowel to the left of a non-syllabified, or a 'left-over', consonant creating a closed syllable. The Egyptian rule, on the other hand, inserts a vowel to the right of a non-syllabified consonant forming an open syllable. Speakers of these dialects, according to Broselow (1993), often carry over such rules to the pronunciation of English words that constitute medial three-consonant clusters. In all cases, however, vowel epenthesis in the pronunciation of English consonant clusters by Iraqi and Egyptian English learners serves to produce a phonotactically acceptable output that adheres to the more restrictive syllable structure conditions of the learners' native Arabic dialects.

C. KA Syllable Structure

KA is commonly used to refer to the Arabic dialect spoken in Kuwait. Although Arabic dialects have a common origin in Standard Arabic, they vary linguistically, especially at the phonological level (AlOtaibi et al., 2022). As Humayun et al. (2023) state, each Arabic dialect has its own rules that differ from Standard Arabic and those of other dialects. This applies to the syllable structure, which varies across the Arabic dialects.

In surface structure, KA does not permit word or syllable-initial consonant clusters in accordance with a general rule of Arabic phonology (Hamdi et al., 2005; Hashim, 2018). Thus, in a word such as /warda/ 'a flower', the intervocalic consonants must belong to two different syllables, i.e., CVC.CV.

Different from English which allows several types of syllable structures, i.e., (C)(C)(C)V(C)(C)(C)(C), KA has five syllable patterns that occur in surface structure (Ayyad, 2011), as shown below:

CV	/fɪ/	'in'
CVC	/ʕʌd/	'count'
CVV	/maa/	'not'

CVVC   /baab/   'door'
CVCC   /rɪħt/   'I went'

The first four patterns have free distribution, whereas the fifth pattern, CVCC, rarely occurs initially but mostly occurs medially, finally, or in isolation (Abd al-Sattar, 2015), as in:

/bard.hom/   CVCC.CVC   'their cold weather'
/kɪ.tabt.la/   CV.CVCC.CV   'I wrote to him'
/ʕaz.zamt/   CV.CVCC   'I decided'
/dʒɪld/   CVCC   'skin'

As in Arabic, geminated (or doubled) consonants in KA are considered identical clusters (Mubarak & Jebur, 2018). Where the syllable boundary is concerned, the first member of the geminated cluster occurs as a coda of the first syllable and the second member always occurs as an onset of the second syllable, as in:

/raʃ.ʃaħ/   CVC.CVC   'elected'
/mat.tan/   CVC.CVC   'make fatter'

Long vowels[2], on the other hand, always stay within the syllable frame (Abd al-Sattar, 2015), i.e., the syllable cut does not divide them, as in the following examples:

/dʒɑɑ.hɪl/   CVV.CVC   'ignorant'
/maʃ.rʊ.baat/   CVC.CV.CVVC   'drinks'

Given KA's relatively simple syllable structure compared to English, one can presuppose that Kuwaiti EFL learners could have difficulties producing complex English consonant clusters.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants consisted of 25 Kuwaiti EFL learners (males and females). They were selected to participate in this study because of their similar educational backgrounds: all have received twelve years of EFL education in Kuwaiti government schools. Also, all participants at the time of the current study were studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at the College of Business Studies (CBS) at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) in Kuwait. To control language proficiency, the participants were also selected on the basis that all of them were at the time of recording in their second year at college enrolled in ESP English 154. In addition, all participants have not lived in an English-speaking country.

Upon agreeing to participate in this study and the recording procedure, the participants read the information sheet and signed the consent form. They were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their names and identities, and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage. They were also assured that the data would only be used for research purposes.

B. Data

A list consisting of 20 English words was compiled by the researchers. All test items were common English words the participants usually encountered in their high school and college English textbooks. The words contained initial, medial, and final-consonant clusters, as illustrated in Table 1. The number of consonants in the clusters ranged from two to three. The consonant clusters these words constitute are listed by Duanmu (2008) as the most frequently occurring consonant clusters in English.

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[2] Throughout this paper, long vowels in (Kuwaiti) Arabic are indicated by doubling the symbol, for example, /aa/ for long /a/ (see Mubarak & Jebur, 2018, for the difference between Arabic and English long vowels).

TABLE 1
TEST ITEMS

Test items	Target clusters
brain	/breɪn/
cruel	/kruːl/
drop	/drɒp/
free	/friː/
grip	/grɪp/
proud	/praʊd/
step	/step/
trap	/træp/
spray	/spreɪ/
street	/striːt/
scream	/skriːm/
squeeze	/skwiːz/
splash	/splæʃ/
park	/pɑrk/
jump	/dʒʌmp/
resort	/rɪ.zɔrt/
modern	/mɒ.dərn/
conduct	/kən.dʌkt/
children	/tʃɪl.drən/
moisture	/mɔɪs.tʃər/

C. Data Collection Procedure

Rather than getting the participants to read a simple word list that included these target items, the participants were required to read short English sentences containing the target words such as *I spray my hair*, where the target word is *spray*. This method allows for natural pronunciation and avoids 'demand characteristics' without the participants necessarily knowing what words were under study. According to Leustek (2017), a demand characteristic involves the participants being aware of what the researcher is looking for and can cause 'participant bias'. The participants might change their responses, or their actual linguistic practices, based on what they think the study is about, thereby affecting the outcomes of the study.

All recordings were made using a high-quality recorder in a sound-attenuated room. The participants were instructed to read the sentences at a normal rate and to correct themselves if they thought they made a mistake by repeating the entire sentence without any interference from the side of the researchers. The sentences were presented to the participants one at a time. Each participant was recorded apart from the other participants.

D. Data Analysis

This study is based on analysing recorded and transcribed data. Data transcription aimed to answer research question 1, which is proposed to explore any pronunciation errors made by the participants in their production of the consonant clusters that the English words constitute. Data transcription also aimed to answer research question 2, which looks at any repair strategies, including vowel epenthesis, which the participants may have employed in their production of the English consonant clusters. Data analysis aimed at answering research question 3, which is proposed to investigate the factors that could possibly trigger the phonological repair strategies involved in the participants' production of the English consonant clusters.

The researchers transcribed the target words using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Data transcription consisted of listening carefully to the recordings to identify pronunciation errors and diagnose the insertion of a vowel or any modification to the consonant clusters. All cases of hesitation were excluded as participants were encouraged to repeat and read without hesitation. Transcription of the English words under investigation was re-checked against the recordings and re-transcribed by three phoneticians for reliability. Two were native English speakers, and one was bilingual in English and KA. The inter-transcriber agreement was 98%. In addition, the transcription of target words was further verified through Praat software 6.3.0.9 (Boersma & Weenink, 2001) for verification of data analysis.

Data were then classified into three categories: the first category included initial two-consonant clusters as in *brain* and *step*; the second category included initial three-consonant clusters as in *spray* and *scream*; and the third category included medial and final consonant clusters as in *park* and *children*. The data consisted of 20 words with each word pronounced by the 25 participants with a total of 500 test items. The pronunciation of each word was compared across the 25 participants to identify any similarities and individual differences.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 outlines the participants' pronunciation of the English words constituting consonant clusters. As indicated in the previous section, the consonant clusters in these words are classified into three categories. Category I consists of initial two-consonant clusters, category II consists of initial three-consonant clusters, and category III includes medial and final consonant clusters:

TABLE 2
PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH CONSONANT CLUSTERS

Category	Test Items	Production
I. Initial two-consonant cluster	brain	/ʔɪb.ɹeɪn/
	cruel	/ʔɪk.ɹu:l/
	drop	/ʔɪd.ɹɔb/
	free	/ʔɪf.ɹi:/
	grip	/ʔɪg.ɹɪb/
	proud	/ʔɪb.ɹaʊd/
	step	/ʔɪs.teb/
	trap	/ʔɪt.rab/
II. Initial three-consonant cluster	spray	/sɪb.ɹeɪ/
	street	/sɪt.ɹi:t/
	scream	/sɪk.ɹi:m/
	squeeze	/sɪk.wi:z/
	splash	/sɪb.laʃ/
III. Medial & final consonant cluster	park	/bark/
	jump	/dʒʌmb/
	resort	/rɪ.zɔrt/
	modern	/mɔ.dərn/
	conduct	/kɔn.dʌkt/
	children	/tʃɪld.ren/
	moisture	/mɔɪs.tʃʌr/

As shown in Table 2, the participants inserted an /ɪ/ and a glottal stop before the initial two-consonant clusters in category I. In category II, they also inserted an /ɪ/ after the first consonant of the initial three-consonant clusters. However, vowel epenthesis did not occur in category III, which involves medial and final consonant clusters. Nevertheless, participants' pronunciation of some of the medial consonant clusters in category III, specifically the word *children*, shows a different phonological process, namely, re-syllabification. The following sections deal with data analysis in detail.

It is worth mentioning that KA does not have the phoneme /p/; therefore, this sound was pronounced by the participants as /b/ as in the case of, for example, *trap* in category I and *park* in category III.

A. Initial Two-Consonant Clusters

This section deals with the pronunciation of English words in category I, which includes initial two-consonant clusters, such as *brain*, *drop*, and *step*. Data analysis revealed that the participants inserted an /ɪ/ before the initial two-consonant clusters. A glottal stop was also pronounced before the epenthetic vowel. Such mispronunciation is however expected. As mentioned earlier, consonant clusters in KA are not permitted word or syllable-initially. KA, therefore, has a rule for inserting a vowel before an initial two-consonant cluster. Consider the pronunciation of the following KA words:

(1) /mal.la.ħɪl.la.ħam/   'he salted the meat'
      /mal.laħ.lal.la.ħam/   'he salted the meat for him'
      /mal.laħt.lal.la.ħam/   'I salted the meat for him'
      /ʔɪt.mal.lɪ.ħɪl.la.ħam/   'you salt the meat'
      /ʔɪt.mal.lɪħ.lal.la.ħam/   'you salt the meat for him'

The KA examples in (1) illustrate that when an utterance begins with a two-consonant cluster, it is pronounced by native Kuwaiti speakers with the vowel /ɪ/ inserted before the first consonant. A glottal stop is also pronounced before the epenthesized vowel in accordance with a general rule of Arabic phonology where a glottal stop is inserted before a syllable or word-initial vowel (Broselow, 2018). According to Haddad (2023), if a word starts with a vowel, it is preceded by a glottal stop which is considered a real consonant in Arabic.

The following KA examples further illustrate that word-initial vowels are preceded by a glottal stop:

(2) /ʔɪm.tiin /   'fat'   /ʔɪn.sˤiid /   'we catch'   /ʔɪt.dar.siin/   'you teach'
     /ʔɪz.ɣiir /   'small'   /ʔɪn.fuus /   'souls'   /ʔɪʃ.rʊ.bat/   'she drank'
     /ʔɪt.law.wɪn / 'you color'   /ʔɪd.dɪz /   'you push'   /ʔɪt.gɑɑ.bɑl.na/ 'we met'

Thus, two rules in process in KA apply to initial two-consonant clusters: vowel epenthesis and glottal stop insertions. These rules can be represented as follows:

        Rule # 1 Vowel epenthesis
            ø → ɪ / # _ CC
        Rule # 2 Glottal stop insertion
            ø → ʔ / # _ ɪ

Rule # 1 states that the vowel /ɪ/ is inserted before an initial two-consonant cluster. Rule # 2 states that a glottal stop is inserted before the /ɪ/ when it occurs word-initially. Rule # 2 is triggered by rule # 1. These phonological rules serve to modify initial two-consonant clusters thereby creating syllable structures that are permissible in the dialect. To derive

the surface forms from the underlying forms for the KA words in (2), the two rules are required. The vowel epenthesis rule crucially precedes and feeds the glottal stop insertion rule:

Underlying representation	mtiin	zɣiir	ʃrʊbat	tdarsiin
Vowel Epenthesis Rule # 1	ɪmtiin	ɪzɣiir	ɪʃrʊbat	ɪtdarsiin
Glottal Stop Insertion Rule # 2	ʔɪmtiin	ʔɪzɣiir	ʔɪʃrʊbat	ʔɪtdarsiin
Output	ʔɪm.tiin	ʔɪz.ɣiir	ʔɪʃ.rʊ.bat	ʔɪt.dar.siin
Gloss	'fat'	'small'	'she drank'	'you teach'

These rules explain participants' mispronunciation of the English words in category I. The following presents the derivation process of some of the data in category I:

Underlying representation	breɪn	fri:	drɒp	step
Vowel Epenthesis Rule # 1	ɪbreɪn	ɪfri:	ɪdrɔb	ɪsteb
Glottal Stop Insertion Rule # 2	ʔɪbreɪn	ʔɪfri:	ʔɪdrɔb	ʔɪsteb
Output	ʔɪb.reɪn	ʔɪf.ri:	ʔɪd.rɔb	ʔɪs.teb

Notably, these rules turned the monosyllabic English words with impermissible structures, i.e., CCVVC, CCVV, and CCVC, into permissible disyllabic ones with the structures CVC.CVVC/CVC.CVV/CVC.CVC.

Hence, since their L1 does not permit initial two-consonant clusters, it can be argued that the participants modify these clusters to bring the English words into conformity with their L1 syllable structure constraints that define possible syllables (Broselow, 1993). The initial two-consonant clusters in the English words cannot be analysed by the participants as belonging to acceptable syllable structures and thus are modified through the insertion of a vowel and a glottal stop pronounced before the clusters. While such insertion is considered a phonological error in the pronunciation of English words, it can be seen as a phonological repair strategy triggered by the participants' L1 restrictions on possible syllable structures.

B. Initial Three-Consonant Clusters

This section deals with the pronunciation of English words in category II, which includes initial three-consonant clusters, such as *spray*, *scream*, and *street*. Data analysis revealed that the participants inserted a vowel after the first of the three-consonant clusters in the English words. This is expected since the dialect does not permit initial consonant clusters. As with the rule of inserting a vowel before an initial two-consonant cluster, KA also has a rule for inserting a vowel into an initial three-consonant cluster. The vowel, in this case, is inserted after the first of three consonants, as the pronunciation of the following KA utterances illustrates:

(3)   /ʃe.ɣəl/   'work'   /ðˤarb/   'hit'
       /tɪʃ.te.ɣəl/   'she works'   /tɪðˤ.rəb/   'she hits'
       /jɪʃ.te.ɣəl/   'he works'   /jɪðˤ.rəb/   'he hits'

The examples in (3) illustrate that when an utterance begins with a three-consonant cluster, native Kuwaiti speakers break up the cluster in the KA utterances by inserting the vowel /ɪ/ after the first consonant. The vowel epenthesis rule can be represented as follows:

     Rule # 3 Vowel epenthesis
             ø → ɪ / # C _ CC

The rule states that a vowel is inserted after the first consonant of an initial three-consonant cluster. As is the case with rules # 1 and 2, rule # 3 serves to modify initial three-consonant clusters thus creating syllable structures that are permitted in the dialect. To derive the surface form from the underlying form for the KA examples in (3), the rule applies as follows:

Underlying representation	tʃteɣəl	jðˤrəb
Vowel epenthesis Rule # 3	tɪʃteɣəl	jɪðˤrəb
Output	tɪʃ.te.ɣəl	jɪðˤ.rəb
Gloss	'she works'	'he hits'

This rule accounts for the mispronunciation of the English words in category II whereby the participants pronounced the English words with a vowel inserted after the first of the three consonants. The following presents the derivation process of some of the data in category II:

Underlying representation	spreɪ	skwi:z	stri:t	splaʃ
Vowel epenthesis Rule # 3	sɪbreɪ	sɪkwi:z	sɪtri:t	sɪblaʃ
Output	sɪb.reɪ	sɪk.wi:z	sɪt.ri:t	sɪb.laʃ

As with rules # 1 and 2 which deal with initial two-consonant clusters, rule # 3 turned the monosyllabic English words with impermissible structures, i.e., CCCVV/CCCVVC/CCCVC, into permissible disyllabic ones with the structures CVC.CVV/CVC.CVVC/CVC.CVC.

Accordingly, it can be argued that the errors in producing the English words in category II occur when such consonant clusters are word-initial. The participants do not analyse the syllables containing these clusters as possible KA syllable structures. Therefore, they are modified to bring these foreign forms into conformity with their L1 restrictions defining possible syllables. When a foreign form includes consonant clusters that cannot be grouped into acceptable syllables, the participants insert a vowel to break up the cluster to create permitted syllables. Thus, as with

initial two-consonant clusters, vowel epenthesis in the pronunciation of English words constituting initial three-consonant clusters is triggered by the participants' L1 constraints on possible syllable structures.

C. Medial and Final Consonant Clusters

This section deals with the pronunciation of English words in category III, which includes medial and final consonant clusters such as *park*, *conduct*, and *children*. Contrary to expectations, data analysis revealed that although the English words in this category constitute consonant clusters, the participants did not attempt to insert a vowel to break up the clusters. The participants seemed to have less difficulty in pronouncing English utterances constituting medial and final consonant clusters than with initial clusters. To illustrate, consider the pronunciation of the following KA utterances:

(4)   /tˤabx/   'cooking'   /ʕa.raf/   'he knew'
        /tˤɪ.baxt/   'I cooked'   /ʕa.raft/   'I knew'
        /tˤɪ.baxt.la/   'I cooked for him'   /ʕa.raf.ta/   'I knew him'
        /tˤɪ.baxt.la.ha/   'I cooked for her'   /ʕa.raft.la/   'I knew how to do it'

These KA examples clearly illustrate that consonant clusters are permitted in the dialect in medial and final positions. This explains why the English words in category III were pronounced by the participants without inserting a vowel between the consonant clusters since such clusters occur medially and finally. Moreover, except for *children*, all the English words in category III constitute syllable patterns that do not violate those of KA which is also the case with the KA examples in (4). Therefore, it can be argued that medial and final consonant clusters in English words remain intact if the syllable patterns of the English utterances adhere to the syllable structure requirements of the participants' L1.

However, with regard to *children*, the word was not correctly pronounced. Interestingly, the word was pronounced with some modification to the boundaries of the syllables that the word constitutes. Nevertheless, such mispronunciation is expected. The English word *children* consists of CVC.CCVC in which the second syllable is not permitted in the dialect. KA allows syllable onsets consisting of only one consonant. Yet, the participants did not attempt to insert a vowel to break up the undesirable onset consonant cluster of the second syllable in the English word. They, however, employed a different phonological process to repair the syllable.

To illustrate, if the word *children* is divided into syllable types that are permitted in the dialect, we will end up having a stray consonant:

        ʧɪl.dren
        (ʧɪl) d (ren)
        (CVC) C (CVC)

If we consider the maximal onset principle which states that consonants are assigned to the right-hand syllable, not to the left, in conformity with universal and language-specific constraints (Treiman et al., 2023), *children* would thus be pronounced by the participants as /tʃɪl.dren/. However, given the language-specific conditions of the dialect that govern the syllable onsets and codas, the stray consonant cannot be assigned to the right syllable because of its impossible onset cluster. As mentioned earlier, KA does not permit syllable-initial consonant clusters. Accordingly, /tʃɪl.dren/ must be rejected. In this case, the preferable solution is to assign the stray consonant to the left syllable which seems more satisfying, given that the dialect allows syllable codas consisting of two consonants. Thus, rather than the undesirable CCVC syllable that violates the syllable structure requirements of the dialect, the participants created a CVCC syllable. Apparently, when a word includes medial consonant clusters that cannot be grouped into acceptable syllables, a process of re-syllabification occurs to create permitted syllables. Here, the first 'illegal' consonant of the onset cluster of the second syllable, i.e., the stray consonant, is moved to the preceding syllable where it fits. This re-syllabification process of *children* yields two syllables that are permitted in the dialect:

        tʃɪl.dren
        (tʃɪl) d (ren)
        (tʃɪld) (ren)
        CVCC.CVC

Thus, to account for the mispronunciation of this word without the participants resorting to vowel epenthesis, it can be argued that a process of re-syllabification took place. As in the case of vowel epenthesis, the re-syllabification process of medial consonant clusters takes place to produce an acceptable output. Here, the participants, when pronouncing English words with medial consonant clusters that violate the syllable structures of their dialect, attempted to re-structure the syllables of these words to meet their L1 syllable structural requirements. Thus, it can be argued that re-syllabification is also triggered by constraints on possible syllable structures of the dialect.

To sum up, the findings reveal that Kuwaiti EFL learners make pronunciation errors when pronouncing English consonant clusters. These errors are restricted to initial and medial consonant clusters that violate the syllable structure requirements of the participants' L1. Where a conflict occurs between the syllable structure of their Arabic dialect and the English language, the participants employ two phonological repair strategies to resolve the conflict: vowel epenthesis and re-syllabification. These phonological repair strategies seem to be triggered by their dialect's syllable structure constraints and function to bring the underlying forms of the English words into conformity with restrictions on possible surface syllable structure of the participants' L1. Accordingly, it can be argued that pronunciation errors in the production of English initial and medial-consonant clusters made by Kuwaiti EFL learners in this study are due to the participants transferring the phonological rules and constraints of their L1 to their pronunciation of L2 forms.

V. CONCLUSION

This study has investigated phonological errors Kuwaiti EFL learners make in their pronunciation of English consonant clusters. The results reveal that pronunciation errors are restricted to initial and medial consonant clusters that violate the syllable structure requirements of the learners' L1. The analysis suggests that the phonological repair strategies adopted by Kuwaiti EFL learners appear to be a process of phonological rule transfer from the L1 to the L2.

This study has contributed to the field of EFL by providing phonological insights into phonotactic constraints of KA syllable structure and consonant cluster restrictions that cause pronunciation difficulties for Kuwaiti EFL learners acquiring English as a foreign language. The study may be beneficial for EFL teachers as it demonstrated areas of pronunciation difficulties encountered by Kuwait EFL learners. It may also benefit other studies exploring other Arabic dialects with possible similar phonotactic constraints.

The results of this study have some pedagogical implications. Kuwaiti EFL teachers should give more attention to pronunciation difficulties encountered by Kuwaiti EFL learners. First, teaching materials need to consider comparing the syllable structure of KA with English, highlighting the differences to students, and raising their awareness of the importance of producing English syllables and their role in successful communication. Learning the different types of English syllables will improve students' ability to read and speak accurately. Second, teaching materials should frequently include audio recordings of English material (e.g., texts and conversations) read by native English speakers, so students are exposed to the correct pronunciation of English words that constitute complex syllables. Frequent listening to authentic materials will enhance students' pronunciation skills (Uchihara et al., 2022).

This study has some limitations that need to be indicated. These include the sample size and the level of education of the participants. First, the study was based on a relatively small sample of participants, limiting the generalizability of the results. Second, the study focused on Kuwaiti EFL learners at the college level. However, more Kuwaiti EFL learners from different educational levels, such as high school students, should also be investigated to have a clearer picture of the pronunciation problems of Kuwaiti EFL learners. Nevertheless, such an investigation can be a point of departure for further research.

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Seham Al-Abdullah earned a PhD in Applied Linguistics in 2015 from Lancaster University, UK, an MA in Applied Linguistics in 2004 from Boston College, USA, and a BA in English Language in 1999 from Kuwait University, Kuwait. She is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) in Kuwait. She has been teaching EFL/ESP to college students at PAAET since 2001. Her research interests are English as a Foreign Language, sociolinguistics, phonology, and pragmatics.

Mohammad Awad Almutairi earned a PhD in English Language and TESOL in 2012 from the University of Leeds, UK, an MA in Education (ELT) in 2003 from the University of East Anglia, UK, and a BA in English Language & Linguistics in 1992 from Kuwait University, Kuwait. He is an associate professor and the Director of the Language Center at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait. He has been teaching EFL to college students since 1992 at different colleges: College of Business Studies, College of Technological Studies, and College of Basic Education. His main interests are Language & Culture, TESOL & TEFL.

Intertextualizing Interactive Texts for Teaching Synonyms Using Digital Platforms: An Experimental Study Engaging the First-Year Undergraduate Students

F. Joseph Desouza Kamalesh
School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

Suganthan C[*]
School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

Abstract—With Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) gaining greater attention in English Language Teaching, more emphasis has been given to teaching content-based vocabulary to students. However sufficient attention has not been given to widening the students' knowledge to make them learn synonyms (equivalent words). In this research, we explore the possibilities of teaching synonyms to First Year College students using Interactive Texts. This is done through the use of Mobiles and other classroom gadgets available. Interactive learning methods utilizing Interactive Texts actively engage the learner's intellect and emotions by strengthening the connection to the content. Beyond the use of traditional textbooks and methods, this methodology includes a variety of tasks that promote engagement with printed materials, such as Directed Activities Related to Texts (DARTs), as well as mobile-based activities that improve students' reading and comprehension skills. This activity-based instruction introduces students to a variety of vocabulary. It enhances their word power by not only teaching them synonyms but also the application of the same in their real-life situations in the most appropriate way.

Index Terms—synonyms, interactive texts, activity-based, classroom gadgets

I. INTRODUCTION

The teaching of vocabulary has recently regained prominence in the field of language teaching, after having been largely overlooked for many years. Considerable research has been conducted regarding strategies to optimize the process of vocabulary acquisition (Liu, 2017). While grammar has historically been given more emphasis than vocabulary in language learning, it is undeniable that vocabulary plays a crucial role in achieving proficiency in a language. When it comes to learning or adopting a second language, vocabulary and lexical units quickly become essential components (Norberg et al., 2018). Without a basic comprehension of vocabulary, grammatical knowledge alone will not be sufficient for effective communication. Without much help or assistance from the structural features of the language, communication is nevertheless possible and can be sustained effectively with vocabulary and lexical expressions alone (Jana, 2001). In addition, for any student to pursue further education in any subject through the medium of a foreign language, he or she is expected to have an adequate command of vocabulary, both academic and technical. In this context, technical vocabulary refers to the vocabulary that is confined to a given field of study, whereas academic vocabulary places an emphasis on research, analysis, and assessment - that is, tasks and exercises that are associated with academic work (Martin, 1976). The importance of vocabulary in the process of language acquisition has been emphasized, with the assertion that it plays a central and crucial role in facilitating students' comprehension of concepts and acquisition of content (Fisher & Frey, 2015). Studies on the vocabulary of native speakers show over and over again that people learning a second language need to know a very large number of words (Nation, 2022). Therefore, the critical necessity to master vocabulary for successful second language acquisition is a well-established fact that no one can deny. Consequently, vocabulary continues to be an important sub-skill in learning an additional language.

The objective of this brief study is to explore the viability of assisting students in expanding their vocabulary through the use of various strategies. It is more than just compiling a list of terms that need to be learned; rather, it goes beyond that. Every word has a few or many words that are equivalent to it (synonyms), and knowing these equivalent words will assist the learner in selecting the most suitable and most appropriate term (from among the many equivalent words/synonyms) to use in a given situation. Accordingly, a short study was conducted regarding this idea and it has been statistically proven and explained in this paper. When discussing the amount of a Second Language Learner's

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[*] Corresponding Author

'vocabulary knowledge,' there are two aspects that need to be taken into consideration, and those factors are breadth and depth. Breadth is the wide range of terms that the learner is familiar with, whereas depth relates to the learner's familiarity with those words, or how well the learner knows the application of those words (Dewle, 2015). A concerted effort has been made through this short research to enhance the breadth of vocabulary knowledge held by the students and to initiate certain activities through which they can deepen the depth of vocabulary knowledge, enabling them to apply those words in everyday usage and conversation.

II. RESEARCH MOTIVATION AND QUESTIONS

Needs Analysis / Research Problem

The target audience of this experimental paper is the students who pursue their B.A. English in Tamil Nadu, India. The students are from both rural and urban backgrounds and have had their school-level education in Tamil and English medium respectively. Communication skills and fluency in the English language are very important for these students as most of them will be teachers and English language trainers in the future.

A. Why Synonyms for These Students?

According to Liu, earlier research has focused on the breadth of vocabulary, namely vocabulary size. However, there is a notable scarcity of study on the depth of vocabulary, encompassing aspects such as synonyms, collocations, word class, affixes, and meaning. Engaging in research focused on the depth of vocabulary is crucial for fostering a comprehensive approach to acquiring and effectively applying vocabulary in many real-life situations (Liu, 2018). Synonyms will enhance students' vocabulary by providing alternative words with similar meanings, enabling them to express themselves more precisely and effectively. Instead of using the same word repeatedly, they can choose from a range of synonyms to convey different shades of meaning thus making their communication more engaging and expressive. The ability to choose the right synonym contributes to clear and effective communication. It helps students to articulate their thoughts precisely, convey their intended message accurately, and adapt their language to various audiences and situations.

B. Objective

(1) To create a list of synonyms that are most frequently used and teach them through various activities.
(2) To ensure that the students learn the correct spelling, pronunciation, and meaning of those synonyms.
(3) To help the students use those synonyms during their daily conversation in various situations.

C. Hypothesis

➢ H01: Students will not learn the synonyms effectively through various activities.
➢ H02: There is no significant difference in the performance between the English and Tamil medium students.
➢ H03: The quality of English language usage will not improve after learning the synonyms and using them.

D. Research Questions

(1) Will learning synonyms help students improve their quality of conversing in the English language?
(2) Do students who learn synonyms through various activities outperform those who learn through conventional methods?
(3) Do the students from English medium backgrounds perform better than those students from Tamil medium backgrounds?

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the domain of English Language Teaching, a great deal of research and many inquiries have been conducted to gain more insights into the significance of developing one's vocabulary and the most productive approaches to doing so. It is essential to note that vocabulary has regained its central function and importance in language teaching approaches in the recent past (Jana, 2001). The lack of use of appropriate language in written responses, assignments, and projects by students may impede their academic progress, hence potentially affecting their overall life outcomes outside the confines of the educational setting (Kitila et al., 2023). To achieve this objective, the proficient acquisition of vocabulary and grammar, as well as their accurate application, will significantly improve the overall quality of written work. Regarding the methods of vocabulary acquisition, based on the findings of a current investigation, the practice of memorizing words is noted as a widely employed technique among learners to enhance their retention of vocabulary items (Pan, 2017). Rote memorization takes place when a pupil learns something by continually repeating it until it is remembered and mastery is achieved (Nation, 2013). The utilization of memory as an educational strategy is considered superficial and does not yield deep or meaningful learning outcomes (Wu, 2018).

Numerous researchers have conducted extensive research to identify the most effective techniques and methods for teaching vocabulary.

A. An Overview of Vocabulary in Language Teaching Methodologies

Second language learning began in the second century B.C. when Romans learned Greek. Latin made grammar more important in the Middle Ages. In 1611, William of Bath presented 1200 Latin proverbs to teach language in context. John Amos Comenius' contextualized vocabulary book offered an inductive method in which pupils needed to know a limited vocabulary of 8000 common terms, and this trend continued until the 20th century. Later in history, various methods came into existence. The Grammar Translation Method, which was widely used until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Direct Method, which taught vocabulary by associating ideas, and the Reading Method, which focused on reading and vocabulary control, followed. These approaches prioritized vocabulary, but as the focus of the study changed, vocabulary lost part of its importance gradually. Later, pronunciation, oral drilling, and memory were emphasized, and Noam Chomsky's 1957 book Syntactic Structures revolutionized how languages are acquired. After that, linguistic skill was emphasized, and Dell Hymes' concept of "communicative competence" made vocabulary a supplement to functional language use. In the 1980s, vocabulary education returned to the top of instructional methods (Jana, 2001).

B. Techniques of Teaching Vocabulary

Numerous studies and extensive research have been conducted in the field of English Language Teaching to better understand the importance of vocabulary expansion and the most effective methods for doing so. It is very important to notice that vocabulary has recovered its central function and importance in language teaching approaches in the recent past.

(a). Extensive Reading

This practice considers reading to be the most advantageous means of acquiring intelligible input for enhancing one's vocabulary. All the activities under this method draw attention to the importance of communication which simultaneously facilitates the process of acquiring vocabulary (Jana, 2001).

(b). Techniques Classified by Oxford and Crookall

To examine the ways used for teaching vocabulary, Oxford and Crookall have divided these techniques into four distinct groups, namely Decontextualizing, Semi-contextualizing, Fully contextualizing, and Adaptable or Structured Reviewing (Oxford & Crookall, 1990).

- Decontextualizing Techniques: The three techniques that belong to this classification are word lists, flashcards, and traditional dictionary use.
- Semi-Contextualizing Techniques: This includes the following techniques namely Word Grouping, Word or Concept Association, Visual Imagery, and Semantic Mapping.
- Fully Contextualizing Techniques: This includes practising the four language skills, namely Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing, which provide full context to the learner.
- Structured Reviewing: This technique is the practice of going back over to the vocabulary again and again at different intervals.

(c). Glossing Method

This way of teaching new vocabulary is beneficial to students. This method helps learners begin learning by providing them with a brief contextual description of the new term in the text. The research found that "glossing" words is much more effective than learning them without it. This technique is good for introductions, but students will need to refer to the book's vocabulary pages as they study. They should also make an effort to remember the contextual definition offered (Azim et al., 2020).

(d). Recycling of Vocabulary

After reading vocabulary terms, it entails practising and repeating them immediately. Repetition and proper elaboration improve word comprehension and memory retention, according to numerous studies. Students must recycle for a longer time to study and practice regularly until they are satisfied they have mastered the terms (Azim et al., 2020).

(e). Planned and Unplanned Activities

Unplanned activities, as the name suggests, refer to situations in which words are accidentally taught in the classroom as a result of student requests for precise meanings of particular words or the teacher desires to draw the students' attention to specific terms. However, since the teacher might have often arranged the instructional materials ahead of time using a variety of sources, planned activities would require less time to prepare (Shen, 2003).

(f). Utilizing Mobile Apps

While vocabulary development is crucial, many English learners presume that the process of memorizing words takes a lot of time and is uninteresting. English instructors regularly give vocabulary homework, which requires students to solve vocabulary problems on their own. Due to inadequate methods and direction, learners may get tired of

vocabulary learning. However, mobile phone apps with visual assistance, audio recordings, and video information may help English learners acquire and retain vocabulary (Wang, 2020).

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Context and Participants

70 students pursuing their B.A. in English Literature at a Private Women's College in Vellore were selected as participants. The group was divided into two, each consisting of 35 students, who were later assigned to the Control Group and Experimental Group, respectively.

Profile of the Participants

TABLE 1
PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

S.No	Control Group	Percentage %	Experimental Group	Percentage %
Tamil Medium	16	45.71%	13	37.14%
English Medium	19	54.29%	22	62.86%
Total	35	100%	35	100%

Table 1 provides the details of the participants regarding the medium of instruction that they have had during school education.

B. Materials

As mentioned earlier, this paper aims to prove that learning synonyms will help students improve their proficiency in the English language. To enable the students participating in this research to learn synonyms, two lists were created, namely:

- • 40 Synonyms
- • 40 Formal and Informal Words

Those Synonyms and Formal and Informal words were shared with them through WhatsApp for their reference. The first set of Synonyms was chosen at random as a starter to assess the vocabulary level of the students. Following the initial set of activities, the next set of synonyms was chosen from the CEFR B1 level.

C. Instructional Procedures

(a). Pre-Test and Post-Test

A pre-test was administered for both groups to test their knowledge in the following areas:
- • Synonyms
- • Formal and Informal words.

Post-test was conducted for both groups after 10 days of intervention classes where the Experimental Group was taught through various activities and games using their mobiles while the Control Group was taught using conventional methods.

(b). Activity-Based Interactive Teaching / Learning for the Experimental Group

The Control Group was taught using conventional teaching methods, and the materials were shared with them through their WhatsApp group. The Experimental Group was engaged by giving various activities both in the class and outside the class. Some of the activities were conducted through Google Forms where the links were shared with them after which they completed them either using mobiles or laptops.

(c). Activities

A pre-test was conducted for both groups to test their knowledge in the following areas:

Several activities were conducted for the Experimental Group to help them get familiar with the list of words given to them.

A variety of activities were conducted to assist the students in learning the Synonyms and Formal and Informal words. Some of the games that were shared with them through WhatsApp are listed below:

- Crossword puzzle
- Word scramble with clues
- Jumbled Words
- Zigzag Puzzle
- Word fit
- Google Forms: Choose the right word, Use the most appropriate word (Formal).

The above-mentioned activities helped the students to learn new vocabulary and retain them in their memory.

The following activities were conducted to help students use the words that they had learned in various contexts.

- The students were instructed to find and record equivalent words for the words provided in the list, which were used in sentences and paragraphs that they use in their everyday lives.
- They were asked to frame simple sentences and dialogues using the words in an appropriate manner.

A sample of the exercise provided to students during their instruction to enhance their proficiency in utilizing the most appropriate vocabulary is given below in Table 2:

TABLE 2
A SAMPLE OF THE EXERCISE

1. She could not _____ the irresponsible behaviour of her husband (accept, tolerate, allow).
2. The sudden _____ of the Prime Minister shook the entire nation (death, demise).
3. The villagers use many techniques to _____ meat for a longer period (preserve, protect, keep).
4. He waited the _____ evening for her at the Park (full, whole, entire).
5. The Chemistry Lab was _____ at the University very recently (built, made, established)
6. The Principal met the students to _____them about the upcoming conference (speak, tell, inform).
7. The flat has been lying _____ for many months (empty, vacant, free)
8. The dog was _____ at the sight of its owner (happy, amused, joyful).
9. The people gathered at the help desk to _____ about the next train (ask, enquire)
10. Napoleon was a _____ soldier (bold, brave).
11. The protesters were _____ at the behaviour of the police (angry, enraged).
12. The teachers were encouraged to use _____ gadgets while teaching (new, modern).
13. John was a _____ businessman in the town (rich, wealthy).
14. The Fire Police _____ the people on the safety measures to be followed at home (told, instructed).
15. The President praised the hockey team on their _____ performance at the World Cup (good, outstanding).

(d). What Are Interactive Texts?

The students are provided with a large quantity of printed materials for education. When conventional methods of education are used, students typically begin to develop an aversion toward the assigned reading material. As a result of this process, students end up viewing such materials passively. The method known as "Interactive Texts" was developed to make the texts, which are already available, more interactive and interesting. To achieve this goal, the instructor may make use of any technology at their disposal to transform those texts into various formats that the students may begin to alter and explore, and in the process, they begin to learn from what is presented to them. In case of non-availability of any digital tools or gadgets, then they may have to resort to activities that will make it possible for the pupils to participate actively in the learning process. Directed Activities Related to Texts (DARTs) are tasks designed to encourage interaction with the various printed materials that are made available. Beyond the use of conventional textbooks and procedures, this practice will enhance their reading and comprehension abilities (Verster., n.d.).

In this paper, a short study has been conducted on the effectiveness of intertextualizing interactive texts i.e., using texts that the students are very familiar with and using them to teach the vocabulary and in this case, synonyms (equivalent words). Accordingly, an interesting activity was the Intertextualizing Interactive Texts that enabled them to identify new vocabulary and find out the other equivalent words (synonyms). For this activity, a text that was very familiar to them from their school days was chosen, namely the 'Pledge of India,' which the students recite after hoisting the National flag during the school assembly. The pledge is given below:

> *India is my country.*
> *All Indians are my brothers and sisters.*
> *I love my country and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage.*
> *I shall always strive to be worthy of it.*
> *I shall give respect to my parents, teachers, and all elders, and treat everyone with courtesy.*
> *To my country and my people, I pledge my devotion.*
> *In their well-being and prosperity alone, lies my happiness.*

The students were asked to identify the new words from the pledge and then instructed to find their equivalent words (synonyms). The above-given text which has been recited so many times during the school assembly ironically remained passive in as much as they had learned nothing apart from the patriotic feeling they had claimed to have had on some special occasions. Through this activity, this text that had been passive had suddenly risen to life and so much learning had taken place.

V. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

As an intervention study, the investigator analyzed the data using descriptive statistics. The grades of the Control Group (CG) and the Experimental Group (EG) comprising of Pre-test and Post-test, under two modules namely, Synonyms (10 marks) and Formal and Informal Words (10 marks), were tabulated for further analysis. To analyze the results, a statistical tool SPSS was utilized. The data was fed into the tool and the following results were generated.

A. Tabulation of Scores

TABLE 3
SCORES OF THE PRE-TESTS AND POST-TESTS

Marks	Experimental Group				Control Group			
	Synonyms		Formal & Informal Words		Synonyms		Formal & Informal Words	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
0-5	3	0	3	0	7	0	1	0
6-10	27	1	25	0	22	9	26	3
11-15	5	16	7	15	6	20	8	23
16-20	0	18	0	20	0	6	0	8
Mean Score	8.14	15.03	8.54	15.77	8.06	12.80	8.91	13.54
Highest Score	12	20	12	20	12	17	12	17
Lowest Score	4	12	4	11	4	8	5	9

The results of the Pre-test and Post-test (Table 3) revealed the following:
• The Experimental Group outperformed the Control Group in terms of improvement. Table 3 shows the pupils' final grades.
• The researcher discovered the following pattern after analyzing the pre-test and post-test scores: students with an English medium background scored the highest on all pre-tests and post-tests. Students from the Tamil medium background received the lowest scores in all pre-tests and post-tests. This observation is statistically analyzed as well, with the data tabulated and explained further.

Furthermore, parametric statistics such as Paired Samples tests, Independent Samples T-tests, and ANOVA were used to examine the impact of modes of learning/teaching the synonyms and, Formal and Informal Words.

B. ANOVA

The results of the tests presented in Table 4 and Table 5 indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups representing the independent variable and the dependent variable.

(a). Synonyms

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference in the pre-test scores of the control group (M = 8.06, SD = 2.413) and the experimental group (M = 8.14, SD = 2.088); this indicates that the students were performing at the same level in terms of their knowledge in Synonyms before the implementation of the intervention. In contrast to the findings of the pre-test, the two groups' post-test values (M = 12.8, SD = 2.688) and (M = 15.03, SD = 2.216) indicate an increase in performance. In contrast to the group that served as the control group, the results of the experimental group produced higher scores.

TABLE 4
SYNONYMS – GROUP DESCRIPTIVES / ONE-WAY ANOVA (WELCH'S)

Tests - Values		N	Mean	SD	F	p
PreTest Synonyms	Control Group	35	8.06	2.413	0.025	0.874
	Experimental Group	35	8.14	2.088		
PostTest Synonyms	Control Group	35	12.8	2.688	14.325	0.00
	Experimental Group	35	15.03	2.216		

Table 4 demonstrates a noteworthy distinction between the groups. The significance level of the pre-test, p= > 0.874, indicates that there is no association with the dependent variable. Following the intervention, the post-test p-value of less than 0.00 indicated that there was a significant difference between the control group and the experimental group in terms of the dependent variable.

(b). Formal and Informal Words

Table 5 indicates no significant difference in the pre-test scores of the control group (M = 8.91, SD = 1.788) and the experimental group (M = 8.54, SD = 2.147); this indicates that the students were performing at the same level in terms of their knowledge in Formal and Informal Words before the implementation of the intervention. In comparison to the

findings of the pre-test, the two groups' post-test values (M = 13.54, SD = 2.214) and (M = 15.77, SD = 2.911) indicate an increase in performance. In contrast to the group that served as the control group, the results of the experimental group produced higher scores.

TABLE 5
SYNONYMS – GROUP DESCRIPTIVES / ONE-WAY ANOVA (WELCH'S)

Tests - Values		N	Mean	SD	F	p
PreTest Formal & Informal Words	Control Group	35	8.91	1.788	0.025	0.434
	Experimental Group	35	8.54	2.147		
PostTest Formal & Informal Words	Control Group	35	13.54	2.6214	14.325	0.001
	Experimental Group	35	15.77	2.911		

There is a clear distinction between the groups, as seen in Table 5. A value of p= > 0.434 in the pre-test indicates that no correlation exists between the independent and dependent variables. Post-intervention testing displayed a highly significant difference between the two groups on the dependent measure, with a p-value of 0.001.

We can infer from the observations above that students who use Directed Activities Related to Texts (DARTs) learn more effectively. As a result, the Alternative Hypothesis is supported and the Null Hypothesis (H_01) is rejected, demonstrating the positive effects of the intervention study on the samples.

C. Comparison Based on the Medium of Instruction

The following was discovered by doing a comparison between the test scores of students Tamil or English was used as the medium of instruction for them during their school-level education.

As was said before, the students whose medium of Instruction was English had the highest scores on both the pre-tests and the post-tests. These students also had the highest aggregate score. On all pre-and post-tests, the pupils whose medium of instruction was Tamil received the lowest grades.

(a). Synonyms

TABLE 6
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST COMPARING TAMIL & ENGLISH MEDIUM - SYNONYMS

Medium – Values		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-Test Synonyms	Tamil	29	11.34	1.798
	English	41	15.73	1.432

The independent samples test compared the Synonyms post-test scores of participants whose primary language of instruction was Tamil and English. According to Table 6, the results obtained by students whose medium of instruction was Tamil were significantly lower (M = 11.34, SD = 1.798) than those obtained by students whose medium of instruction was English (M = 15.73, SD = 1.432). Consistently, the performance of English-medium students was significantly higher than that of the Tamil-medium students.

(b). Formal and Informal Words

TABLE 7
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST COMPARING TAMIL & ENGLISH MEDIUM – FORMAL AND INFORMAL WORDS

Medium – Values		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-Test Formal & Informal Words	Tamil	29	11.97	1.180
	English	41	16.56	1.898

The results of the Formal & Informal Words post-test for participants whose primary language of instruction was Tamil and English were compared using independent sample testing. Table 7 shows that students who had Tamil as their primary language of instruction fared considerably worse than those who had English as their primary language of teaching (M = 11.97, SD = 1.180 vs. M = 16.56, SD = 1.898). English-medium students consistently performed much better than Tamil-medium students.

Hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the Null hypothesis (H_02) is rejected. Thus, we conclude that the performance of English- and Tamil-medium students has varied.

D. Feedback From the Participants

After the intervention classes and post-tests, brief feedback was obtained from the participants comprising the Experimental group. The purpose of this feedback was to analyze the perspectives and attitudes of the students about the context of learning synonyms as well as formal and informal words and their application in real-life situations. The feedback was collected from 35 students who felt that they had improved as a result of having participated in this short study. The feedback was provided in the form of 10 questions, each of which was designed using the Likert scale. Some

of the pertinent questions have been discussed below with statistical details for a better understanding of the students' attitudes and perspectives. It was very interesting to note that for the following pertinent questions, the students had chosen only either 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' as their feedback option.

TABLE 8
THE LESSONS ON SYNONYMS / FORMAL AND INFORMAL WORDS HELPED ME IMPROVE MY VOCABULARY

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	22	62.86	62.86	62.86
	Strongly Agree	13	37.14	37.14	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

The results of this study may be seen to have a beneficial effect on the students who took part in the study, as seen in Table 8. They have unequivocally confirmed that by participating in this brief study, they have been given a great deal of assistance in significantly raising the quality of their vocabulary. Improving one's vocabulary can significantly enhance one's communication skills, allowing one to convey themselves more precisely and effectively in a variety of contexts.

TABLE 9
LEARNING SYNONYMS HAS ENHANCED MY ABILITY TO CHOOSE PRECISE AND VARIED WORDS

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	19	54.28	54.28	54.28
	Strongly Agree	16	45.72	45.72	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

As shown in Table 9, the results of this short research indicate that it has yielded a positive influence on the students who participated in it. They have assertively indicated that participation in this brief study has greatly aided them not only in enhancing their vocabulary knowledge but also in broadening their approach to selecting the most appropriate word for each context by taking into account the wide variety of available synonyms. By understanding multiple words with similar meanings, one can gain the flexibility to tailor one's language to suit different contexts, styles, and tones. With a range of synonyms available the possibility to convey the ideas with greater clarity and nuance is increased.

TABLE 10
I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT IN EXPRESSING MYSELF AFTER LEARNING SYNONYMS AND FORMAL AND INFORMAL WORDS

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	20	57.14	57.14	57.14
	Strongly Agree	15	42.86	42.86	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

The outcomes are presented in Table 10, and they indicate that the students have gained a significant amount of knowledge as a result of this brief study. They clearly indicated that participation in this short study has opened the road to significantly boosting their level of confidence while conversing in the English language. One of the major advantages of increasing one's vocabulary knowledge is increased confidence in expressing oneself. Confidence in communication can undoubtedly have various positive impacts on an individual, including the ability to express oneself with profound clarity and create engaging conversations.

TABLE 11
TO BE COMPETENT TEACHERS IN THE DOMAIN OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO ENHANCE ONE'S VOCABULARY RICHNESS

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Agree	09	25.72	25.72	25.72
	Strongly Agree	26	74.28	74.28	100.0
	Total	35	100.0	100.0	

As indicated in Table 11, the participants felt the necessity and the crucial importance of enriching their vocabulary knowledge and the practical application of the same in their profession as teachers. As most of them would be choosing a career as teachers of English Language and Literature, it is very important to be first of all fluent in the English language. By enriching their vocabulary, the teachers can simplify explanations or challenge advanced learners and thus ensure inclusive and effective learning. Ultimately, the students would look up to the teachers as their role models who inspire them to expand their vocabulary knowledge and gain more proficiency in the English language.

The above feedback indicates a positive learning impact on the students hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the Null hypothesis ($H_0 3$) is rejected. Their vocabulary knowledge has been enhanced and eventually, their confidence level has been increased while using the English Language in real-life situations.

VI. CONCLUSION

Students' vocabulary is enhanced by synonyms, which provide alternative words with similar meanings. By acquiring synonyms, students can communicate more precisely and effectively, avoiding the use of redundant language. Students will gain a deeper understanding of how words relate to one another in specific contexts by learning more synonyms. It enables them to recognize subtle differences in meaning, tone, and connotation, allowing for more precise interpretation and comprehension of texts. Students who participated in this brief study are pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in English and are likely to pursue careers as Teachers or English language trainers. This requires a command of the language and an in-depth knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary. Consequently, special emphasis on acquiring and expanding their vocabulary knowledge is essential and inevitable as well.

The most important aspect of vocabulary instruction may not be figuring out which single method or technique will work best for each student, but rather letting the students know about the different strategies and methods that are available (Shen, 2003). The teacher should be prudent and creative to incorporate various methods and techniques that would be most beneficial to the students. The researcher is aware of some of the limitations of the study conducted. Not many activities using interactive texts could be conducted since the Language Lab could not be used due to the shortage of time permitted for this short study.

VII. FUTURE SCOPE

In our modern surroundings, when students have so much exposure to the numerous technologies available, interactive texts in particular appeal to digitally adept students. Future researchers will have numerous prospects to explore the significance of abundant intertextuality in interactive texts, thereby making the whole learning process more creative, engaging, effective, and joyful as well (Chandrasoma & Ananda, 2018). Following this brief investigation, it is suggested that within these particular contexts, the notion of 'interactive intertextuality' may be recognized as a pedagogical concept for the instruction of the English Language to Second Language Learners using more digital platforms available at present and further improving in the future as well. This paper has only thrown some light on the area of using interactive texts in teaching a variety of synonyms to students. Further study and research in this area would result in new findings that will make the instruction and learning procedure further effective as well as engaging, with a focus on fostering active student participation.

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F. Joseph Desouza Kamalesh completed his Bachelor of Arts degree in 2009 and Master of Arts degree in 2019 from Loyola College, Chennai, India. He was awarded the esteemed Gold Medal for his outstanding academic achievements in both programs. Currently, he is pursuing his PhD in English Language Teaching at Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Vellore, India. He has served as Dean of Students' Welfare at Don Bosco College, Yelagiri Hills, India. He has conducted English Language Teaching Workshops for School Teachers, as well as Seminars and Training Programmes for Faculty and Students in Schools and Colleges. He is a permanent member of the Salesian Society, a global organization dedicated to empowering young people through education. He has also contributed chapters in two books published with ISSN and ISBN respectively

C. Suganthan, Assistant Professor of English at Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) has been in the field of teaching English since 2011. He completed his undergraduate degree in English Language and Literature in the year 2007 from Bishop Heber College (Autonomous) Trichy. Achieved class topper award and university 6th rank in Under Graduation. He completed his Masters degree from The American College Madurai in 2009. He completed his PhD at Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore in 2020. He is currently teaching English to undergraduate students at Vellore Institute of Technology and also being the research supervisor for six PhD scholars at VIT Vellore. He has published 6 articles in reputed Scopus-indexed journals and 5 publications in peer-reviewed journals. He has also contributed chapters in two books published with ISBN.

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