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# The Impact of Rotation Model on Minimizing Inflectional Morphemes Errors in English Writing: A Comparative Study of Error Analysis<sup>\*</sup>

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**Abstract**—The study aims to analyze 12th-grade students' writing errors related to inflectional morphemes. In addition, the research measures efficacy of the Rotation Model (RM) and the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) in minimizing writing errors among learners of English. Comparative studies are rare to find the effectiveness of two teaching models in the context of error analysis. Eighty-two samples were taken into consideration for randomize sampling. The present research is divided into two groups; the experimental group, consisting of 41 participants, provided with instruction via RM, and the control group, also comprising 41 individuals, being taught through GTM. Pre and post-test treatment data were collected and analyzed with the help of SPSS 22. The results revealed common errors with inflectional morphemes among both groups. Additionally, the mean values for each type of error were significantly minimized due to the post-instruction of RM compared to the GTM. The study's findings largely devoted to pedagogical improvement among ESL learners' writing. The findings are reviewed concerning future research directions and instructional strategies.

**Index Terms**—rotation model, blended learning, inflectional morphemes errors, English writing errors

## I. INTRODUCTION

English as a second language (ESL) writing is often considered a challenging skill to master, mainly due to the complex nature of English grammar (Cumming, 2013; Grabe & Kaplan, 2014; Usama, 2023). The study aims to examine the common errors related to inflectional morphemes made by a group exposed to the Rotation Model (RM) compared to a control group with grammar translation method (GTM) treatment in order to measure the efficacy of RM in enhancing ESL learners' writing and minimizing errors. Inflectional morphemes in English, as defined by Crystal and Alan (2023) are affixes that provide grammatical information to root words without altering their meaning or lexical category, such as '-s' for plurals, '-s' for possession, '-ing' for progressive, '-s' for third person singular present, '-ed' for past tense, '-en' for past participles, '-er' for comparative adjectives, and '-est' for superlatives, and these morphemes have a crucial role in English language learning and teaching due to their importance in achieving grammatical accuracy (Selinker, 1972; Aronoff, 1976).

Kim et al. (2014) have drawn attention to the positive impact of Rotation Model (RM) practices on the writing performance of ESL learners. Furthermore, the studies (Morris, 2018; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Nagy, 2018; Xiangze & Abdullah, 2023; Muhayyang et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021) have shown the benefits of RM in improving various aspects of writing. However, none of these studies have focused explicitly on ESL learners' writing errors and the effectiveness of RM in reducing errors. Notably, a significant research gap exists regarding analyzing ESL learners' writing errors following the implementation of RM within the theoretical framework of Error Analysis. To bridge this gap, we propose a study that involves an experimental group receiving RM intervention and a control group with GTM. The research aims to identify common errors in ESL learners' writing and determine whether the experimental group exhibits significantly different error frequencies than the control group. The present research explores understanding of

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ESL learners' writing errors and explores the pedagogical implications of RM in ESL education, with a particular emphasis on language development areas. The findings of this study hold practical significance for teaching second languages by shedding light on what needs to be taught and effective learning techniques. The study also foregrounds the challenges and issues of today's classroom pedagogy as well as to grasp the nuances of English language as lingua franca (Alam, 2023; Alam & Hameed, 2023).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Rotation Model: Blended Learning Approach*

According to Garrison and Kanuka (2004) and Horn and Staker (2017), the Rotation Model is a special kind of blended learning that integrates traditional classroom with virtual mode and digital media. This approach enables students to move between several stations that offer a variety of tasks, including online components (Jeffrey et al., 2014; Staker & Horn, 2012). It is an excellent example of combining digital resources and in-person interactions. According to Tucker (2012) and Sawchuk (2019), in its conventional version, students follow a set schedule and alternate between stations where they usually participate in teacher-led teaching, group projects, and individualized online learning. According to Gardner (2011) and Fleming (2001), this methodical approach provides a comprehensive combination of instructional techniques that accommodate the various learning styles of students. The studies (Means et al., 2009; Picciano et al., 2012) indicated that RM enhances academic performance and boosts student engagement. Students become active, self-directed learners who set their own learning pace instead of being passive consumers of information (Zimmerman, 2002; Schunk, 2012).

Moreover, this particular model provides support for effective management of the classroom by making pairs and smaller groups of students. This division allows teachers to focus on individual needs and implement strategies for differentiation (Tomlinson, 2014; Subban, 2006). In addition, it promotes an environment that is focused and devoted to outcome based learning procedures (Fredricks et al., 2004) while simultaneously allowing for data-driven instruction through the use of analytics provided by online learning platforms (Sclater, 2017). Nevertheless, criticisms have been raised, including concerns regarding reliance on technology, the presence of a digital divide, and issues related to equity (Selwyn, 2016; Cuban, 2001). Furthermore, the model requires significant initial investments in both technology and teacher training (Bernard et al., 2014). The Rotation Model presents an intriguing aspect of blended learning as it combines the advantages of digital technology with the irreplaceable value of face-to-face instruction. Its structured and adaptable approach caters to various learning styles, encourages active learning, and facilitates personalized instruction driven by data. However, ongoing research and refinement are necessary to address equity and access concerns.

### B. *Impact of Rotation Model to Improve ESL Learners' Writing*

The Station Master Model has emerged as an impressive educational framework that enhances English writing skills. Since its beginning, many studies have been undertaken to examine the efficiency of this model across different dimensions, from grammatical correctness to creative expression. Morris (2018) and Belazi and Ganapathy (2021) were among the pioneers who empirically assessed the Rotation Model. Smith and colleagues concentrated on middle school students and reported significant improvements in sentence structure. Various studies have delved into specific grammatical aspects. For instance, Nagy (2018) and Xiangze and Abdullah (2023) investigated how the model positively impacts grammatical accuracy. While Nagy (2018) focused on the correct usage of tenses, Xiangze and Abdullah (2023) found a noticeable improvement in subject-verb agreement among learners. In contrast, Muhayyang et al. (2021) and Wang et al. (2021) focused on qualitative aspects, such as coherence and logical structuring of arguments. Their findings indicate that university students who utilized the model in their writing courses exhibited a discernible improvement in creating logically coherent arguments. However, the Station Master Model has not been exempt from criticism. Studies carried out by Smalls (2019) and Alamri et al. (2021) propose alternative perspectives indicating that the model could inhibit the creative aspects of writing. According to their research, the model's rigid structure could limit students' ability to develop their unique writing styles. Nevertheless, a subsequent study by Zhao and Liao (2021) challenged this criticism, stating that personal writing styles could thrive with less rigidity if the model is implemented. Additional research has further explored the applicability of the Station Master Model among different demographic groups. Moreover, as educational systems increasingly adopt online platforms, scholars like Anthony et al. (2022), Raza et al. (2021) have examined the model's effectiveness in virtual learning environments. Both studies offer empirical evidence that the model's effectiveness is not restricted by the medium of instruction, providing a hopeful direction for future investigation. In addition, specific analyses have been initiated to investigate the adaptability of the design. A recent study by Larsari et al. (2023) demonstrates that the Station Master Model can be successfully integrated with other pedagogical frameworks, leading to compounded improvements in writing skills. Similarly, Zamri and Narasuman (2023) indicate that the model may enhance writing skills in professional settings, expanding its applicability beyond educational institutions.

### C. *Background of Error Analysis*

The differentiation between errors and mistakes in the acquisition of language holds significant importance in the realm of pedagogical strategies. Mistakes, which learners themselves frequently correct, pertain to performance,

whereas errors, which indicate systemic deficiencies in competence, are typically beyond the ability of learners to self-correct unless they are at an advanced level (Corder, 1982; Çetereisi & Bostancı, 2018; Keshavarz, 2015). These mistakes may be broadly classified as interlingual errors, being influenced by the first language (L1), and intralingual errors, which arise from incomplete knowledge of the second language (L2) (Brown, 2007; Keshavarz, 2015). In written work, mistakes are further divided into global and local categories, with the former rendering the text incomprehensible and the latter allowing for interpretation based on the surrounding context (Keshavarz, 2012). Error Analysis (EA) emerged as a response to the limitations of Contrastive Analysis (CA), with a focus on errors as integral components of the language learning process (Barkhuizen & Ellis, 2005; Keshavarz, 2015). EA offers educators a systematic methodology for comprehending students' errors, thereby facilitating the customization of teaching materials and methods (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

#### *D. Inflection Morphemes Errors in ESL Learners' Writing*

Recent research has examined the inaccuracies present in the writing skills of learners in ESL context from diverse linguistic backgrounds, specifically focusing on inflectional morphology. Al-Saidat (2012) discovered that individuals whose first language is Arabic primarily made developmental and interlingual errors regarding inflection morphemes. Similarly, the studies conducted by Made Pramestia Dewi et al. (2021) and Sunandar (2022) revealed that Indonesian native speakers also encountered difficulties with inflection morphemes due to both intralingual and interlingual influences. Florianus and Syamsi (2021) emphasized that first-year university students struggled with subject-verb agreement and past participles due to the interference of both intralingual and interlingual factors. Terzioğlu and Bensen (2020) conducted a study encompassing a broader student demographic and determined that morphological errors were prevalent, with 44.2% attributed to interlingual causes and 55.8% attributed to intralingual causes. Manihuruk (2022) and Gardner et al. (2021) further corroborated that inaccuracies in inflectional morphemes were widespread, particularly concerning using present and past tense inflections across various native language backgrounds.

### III. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The primary objectives of this research are to (i) analyze the committed error related to inflectional morpheme by both groups (experimental and control group) and (ii) investigate the comparative efficacy of the Rotation Model and the Grammar-Translation Method in enhancing English writing in terms of minimizing errors related to inflectional morpheme among 12th-grade students. The participants, who are native Hindi speakers and have acquired English as a second language, are students enrolled in a 12th-grade program. Considering the imperative to employ the most efficient instructional approaches in educational settings, this study aims to discern which method the Rotation Model or Grammar Translation Method is more effective in general English writing development.

### IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This investigation is critical as its findings may inform curriculum decisions in secondary education, thereby affecting students' future academic and professional prospects. Specifically, the research questions posed are:

- Do the ESL learners commit common errors related to inflectional morphemes in their writing skills?
- Which instructional methodologies, the Rotation Model or Grammar-Translation Method, results in superior English writing for 12th-grade students when administered for an identical instructional time?

### V. METHODOLOGY

#### *A. Participants and Sampling*

In this research study, a random sampling method was employed, resulting in the participation of 72 individuals. These participants were divided into two groups: an experimental group of 41 individuals and a control group comprising 41 participants. Their ages ranged from 16 to 19 years, with a gender distribution of 41 males and 41 females. The selection criteria focused on senior secondary students who had completed advanced English language courses and had substantial English experience. All participants were native speakers of Hindi and residents of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.

#### *B. Treatment*

In an experimental study, the researcher was devoted to target inflectional morphemes to experimental group participants. The intervention lasted eight weeks and was conducted five days a week, each lasting 90 minutes. The rationale for choosing this duration and frequency was based on previous research suggesting that consistent, focused instruction is necessary to improve language learning significantly (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Figure 1 shows the process for teaching ESL writing using a multiple-stage.

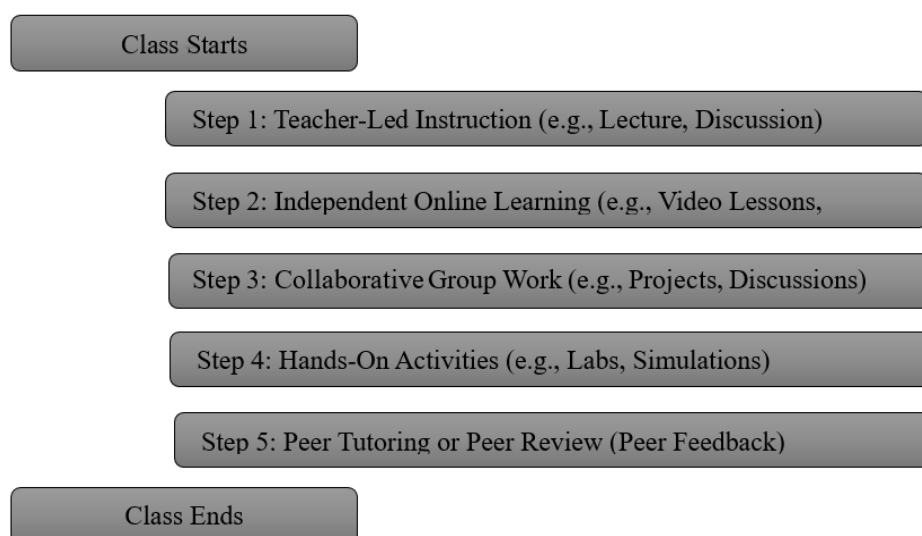


Figure 1. Study Procedure

In an experimental classroom setting, the Rotation Model is employed to facilitate a rich, multidimensional learning experience that caters to an array of learning styles and preferences. The session kicks off with step-1, a teacher-led instructional phase where foundational knowledge is imparted. Here, the teacher had used various deductive methods and guided discussions, to ensure that students fully grasp the lesson's core concepts. Following this, student's transition to step-2, a zone dedicated to independent online learning. Equipped with computers and other digital devices, students delve into self-paced activities ranging from watching instructional videos to completing interactive quizzes, reinforcing and augmenting the direct instruction they received earlier.

Next, students move to Step 3, which fosters collaborative learning through small group activities. In this step, peers engage in discussions, solve problems, and work on projects directly related to the lesson's content. This promotes subject matter understanding and soft skills like teamwork and communication. Step 4 shifts the focus to active, hands-on learning experiences. Students can internalize knowledge through experiential learning activities by conducting experiments, working on practical applications of what they have learned, or exploring creative projects.

In some variations of this model, there is a Step-5 designed for peer tutoring or peer review. Here, students have the opportunity to teach or review each other's work. This station serves as an effective reinforcement tool, helping to solidify learning by encouraging students to articulate their understanding of the lesson's content. The session is concluded at the end of the regular class period, leaving students with a holistic educational experience that has engaged them through multiple educational methods and learning styles.

The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) was used in the control group, a traditional approach rooted in the study of classical languages (Cook, 2008). GTM emphasizes explicit grammar rules and translation exercises, focusing primarily on written language skills rather than oral competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Larsen & Freeman, 2014). Activities typically involve translating sentences between the native and target languages, often based on a set curriculum lacking real-world context (Celce & Murcia, 2001). This teacher-centric, lecture-based method limits student interaction and is criticized for neglecting essential speaking and listening skills (Nation & Macalister, 2010; Hinkel, 2015). The GTM thus serves as a conventional baseline for comparing modern, interactive methods like those that the Rotation Model used in the experimental group (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

### C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

In the present study, data were collected over forty days (eight weeks) from respondent group pre and post treatment. The medium of data collection was essays composed (word limit 100-150) on two distinct topics, which were used before and after the treatment, generated using Microsoft Word on individual computing systems. Using ancillary reference instruments, such as dictionaries, was strictly prohibited to maintain uniformity and minimize external influences. Also, Microsoft Word's automated spelling and grammatical corrections features were deliberately disabled. The Error Analysis (EA) methodology, initially proposed by Corder (1981), was employed to identify and categorize language errors within the essays. The collected data underwent preliminary analysis using the Grammarly software to focus on errors related to inflectional morphemes. This tool has been empirically supported to be particularly efficacious in assessing the writing skills learners (Almusharraf & Alotaibi, 2021, 2022). Subsequently, the identified errors were classified and tagged according to Dulay et al. (1982) Surface Structure Taxonomy. Criteria for inclusion, exclusion, and the designation of false information were rigorously followed. The SPSS software, version 22, was used

for statistical analysis. Repeated measures test was used which served as the main statistical procedure for both experimental and control groups across different test instances

## VI. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Employing a three-way ANOVA on the frequency of errors with 8 inflectional morphemes ('-s' for plurals, '-s' for possession, '-ing' for progressive, '-s' for third person singular present, '-ed' for past tense, '-en' for past participles, '-er' for comparative adjectives, and '-est' for superlatives) 2 groups (experimental, control)  $\times$  2 groups (experimental, control) 2 tests (pre, post), the results of the study presented a significant effect of inflectional morphemes,  $F(1, 40) = 109.181$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .961$ . The value for errors related to inflectional morphemes of '-ed' for past tense, '-s' for plurals, '-s' for third person singular present, '-ing' for progressive than '-s' for possession, '-en' for past participles, '-er' for comparative adjectives, and '-est' for superlatives (Fig. 2). In addition, the analysis opened a significant main effect on 2 groups, (experimental, control),  $F(1, 40) = 145.210$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .797$ , shown the results that experimental group was found with a lesser mean value of errors rather than control group (Fig. 3). Furthermore, the statistical analysis revealed significant main effect on 2 tests (pre, post),  $F(1, 40) = 83.900$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .694$ , entailed the results that learners have minimized the errors across tests (pre-post-tests) (Fig. 4).

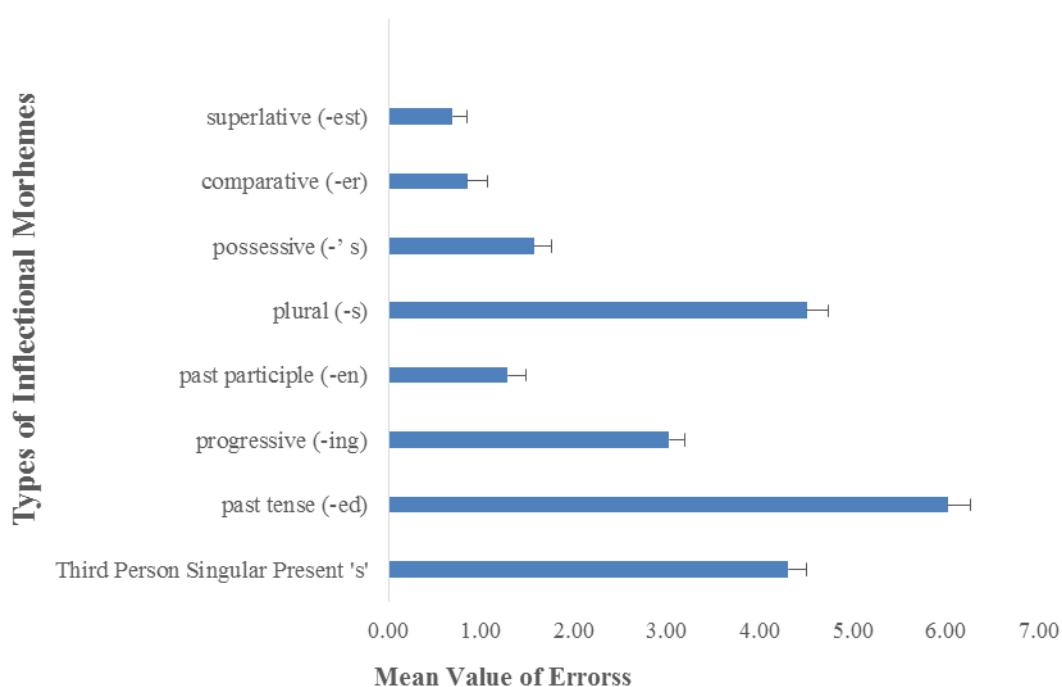


Figure 2. Mean Value of Errors

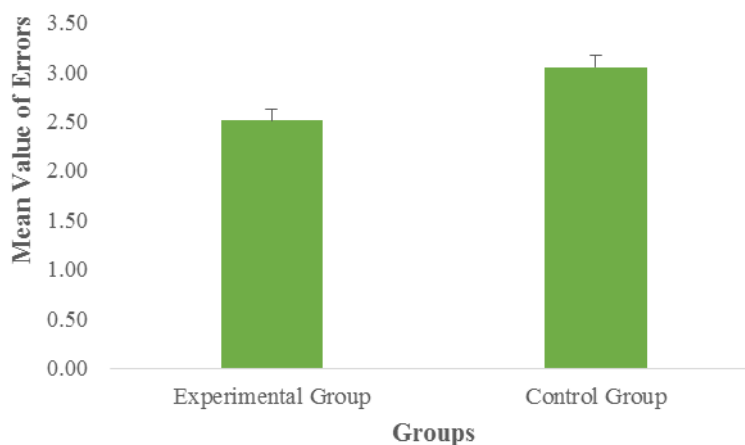


Figure 3. Group Variations

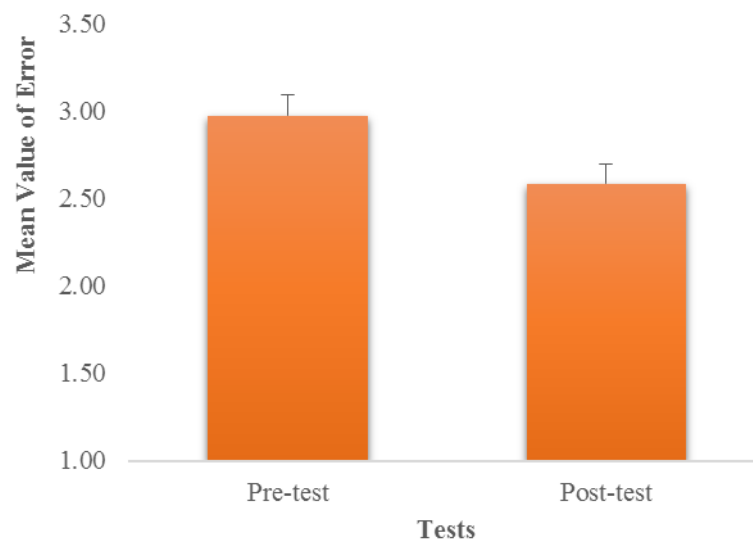


Figure 4. Tests and Their Mean Value

There was also a two-way significant interaction between 8 inflectional morphemes ('-s' for plurals, '-s' for possession, '-ing' for progressive, '-s' for third person singular present, '-ed' for past tense, '-en' for past participles, '-er' for comparative adjectives, and '-est' for superlatives)  $\times$  2 groups (experimental, control),  $F(1, 40) = 8.450$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .656$ , revealed the results that mean value of errors was less than control group for each type of inflectional morphemes (Fig. 5). Additionally, there was a two-way significant interaction between 8 inflectional morphemes ('-s' for plurals, '-s' for possession, '-ing' for progressive aspect, '-ed' for past tense, '-en' for past participles, '-er' for comparative adjectives, and '-est' for superlatives)  $\times$  2 tests (pre, post),  $F(1, 40) = 4.287$ ,  $P = .002$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .492$ , resulted that mean value of error for each type of inflectional morphemes was minimized after the intervention (Fig. 6). In addition, there was a two-way significant interaction between 2 groups (experimental, control)  $\times$  2 tests (pre, post),  $F(1, 40) = 148.628$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .801$ , revealed the results that the rotation model reduced the mean value of errors for each type of inflectional morpheme rather than grammar translation for control group (Fig. 7).

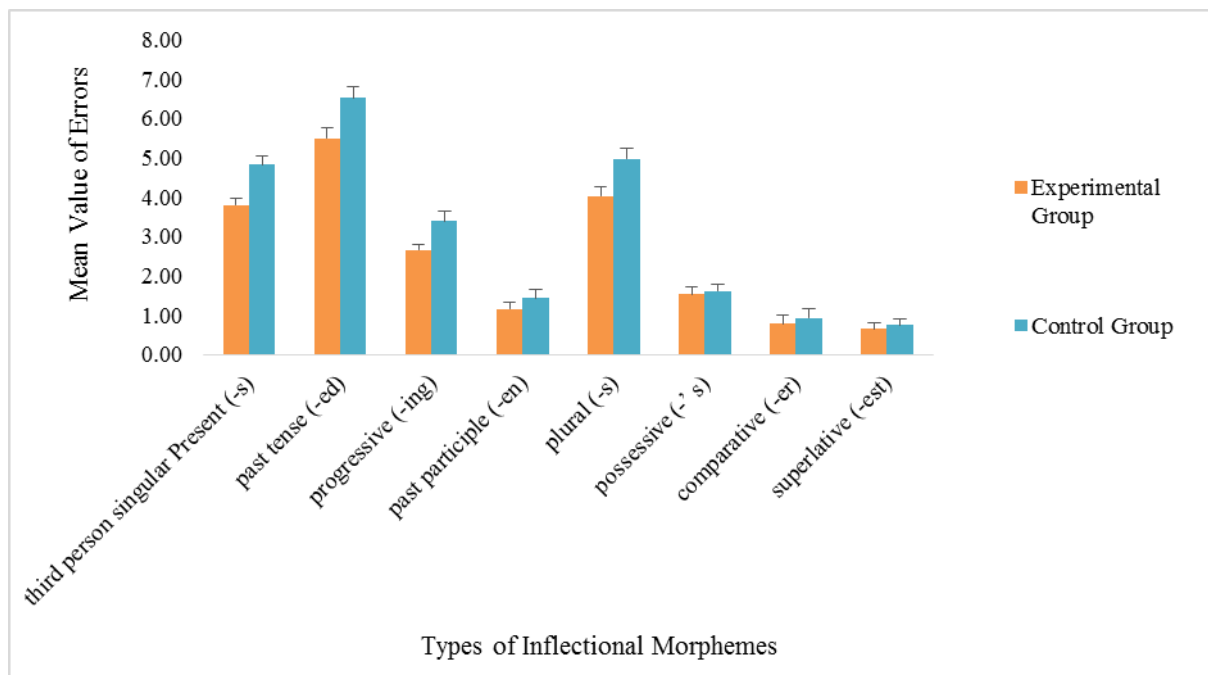


Figure 5. Types of Inflectional Morphemes



Figure 6. Comparisons Between Pre-Test and Post-Test

Lastly, three-way interaction between 8 types of inflectional morphemes  $\times$  2 groups (experimental, control)  $\times$  2 tests (pre, post) was significant,  $F(1, 40) = 7.795$ ,  $P = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 p = .643$ , revealing the results that both of groups made common errors in writing (Table 1). Additionally, it infers that each type of error was decreased highly after the intervention of the rotation model for the experimental group compared to grammar-translation for the control group (Table 1, below).

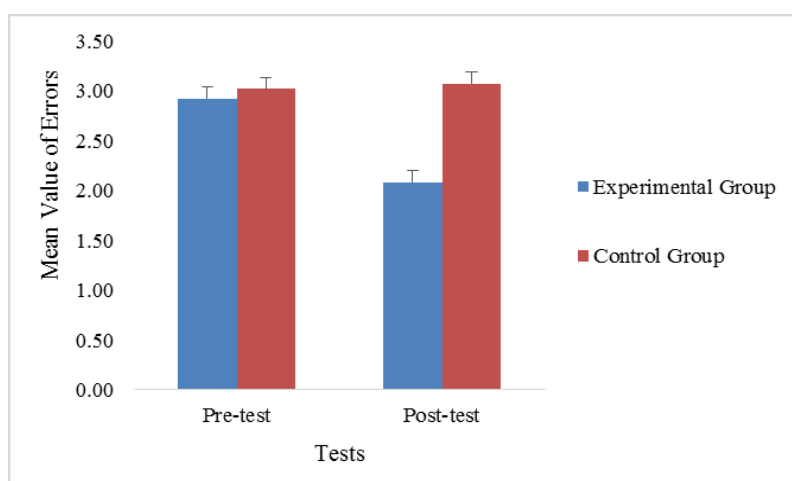


Figure 7. Mean Values of Errors

The table under scrutiny serves as an empirical lens through which one can evaluate the efficacy of instructional interventions, gauging their impact on the accuracy of using inflectional morphemes in English. This assessment is based on mean values and standard deviations of eight types of inflectional morpheme, comparing control and experiment, pre and post intervention.

TABLE 1  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ERRORS RELATED TO INFLECTIONAL MORPHEME BETWEEN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS: INSIGHTS FROM PRETEST AND POST-TEST METRICS

S. No.	Types of Inflectional Morpheme Errors	Experimental Group				Control Group			
		Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
1.	third person singular present (-s)	4.37	0.23	3.21	0.17	4.82	0.24	4.82	0.24
2.	past tense (-ed)	6.11	0.30	4.89	0.28	6.45	0.27	6.61	0.29
3.	progressive (-ing)	3.13	0.21	2.16	0.18	3.39	0.23	3.39	0.23
4.	past participle (-en)	1.34	0.21	0.95	0.15	1.42	0.22	1.42	0.22
5.	plural (-s)	5.11	0.29	2.95	0.28	4.84	0.28	5.11	0.27
6.	possessive ('s)	1.68	0.19	1.37	0.22	1.61	0.19	1.61	0.19
7.	comparative (-er)	0.92	0.23	0.63	0.21	0.92	0.23	0.92	0.23
8.	superlative (-est)	0.74	0.16	0.55	0.15	0.74	0.16	0.74	0.16

### Types of Common Inflectional Morpheme Errors between Two Groups

**1. Third-Person Singular Present (-s):** At the outset, the experimental group has a mean score of 4.37. Remarkably, this reduces to 3.21 post-intervention, representing a decline in the frequency of errors. In contrast, the control group, starting at 4.82, shows no improvement, as evidenced by an identical mean score in the post-test. The decrease in mean for the experimental group suggests that the instructional intervention effectively reduced errors in third-person singular present morphemes.

**2. Past Tense (-ed):** The experimental group commences with a mean score of 6.11. Following the instructional intervention, the group's mean score drops to 4.89. Conversely, it was found that the control group's mean increases slightly from 6.45 to 6.61. This widening performance gap underscores the intervention's efficacy for the experimental group in diminishing errors associated with past tense morphemes.

**3. Progressive (-ing):** Initially, the experimental group showed a mean score of 3.13. This figure drops to 2.16 following the intervention. On the other hand, the control group's mean remains static at 3.39. The reduction in the experimental group's mean score indicates a positive instructional impact, specifically in lessening errors related to the progressive morpheme.

**4. Past Participle (-en):** Starting with a mean score of 1.34, the experimental group demonstrates notable improvement, decreasing its mean to 0.95. The control group maintains a consistent mean score of 1.42, signaling no change. The decline in the experimental group's mean suggests that the intervention successfully addressed errors related to the past participle.

**5. Plural (-s):** The experimental group's mean score experiences a substantial drop, from an initial 5.11 to 2.95 post-intervention. This is in stark contrast to the control group, which sees a minor improvement in mean scores from 4.84 to 5.11. The experimental group's significant reduction in errors confirms the effectiveness of the intervention in this morpheme type.

**6. Possessive ('s):** The experimental group begins with a mean score of 1.68, reducing it to 1.37 post-intervention. Meanwhile, the control group's mean remains stable at 1.61. The reduction in the experimental group's mean score again points to the efficacy of the instructional intervention for this specific type of inflectional morpheme error.

**7. Comparative (-er):** Both groups initially share a mean score of 0.92. Post-intervention, the experimental group reduces its mean to 0.63, whereas the control group retains its mean score. This data indicates the intervention's effectiveness in reducing errors related to comparative morphemes for the experimental group.

**8. Superlative (-est):** With identical starting mean scores of 0.74, the experimental group improves to 0.55 post-intervention. The control group exhibits no change, maintaining its initial mean. Once again, this supports the argument that the intervention effectively reduced superlative morpheme errors for the experimental group.

## VII. DISCUSSION

In a recent investigation involving both experimental and control groups of ESL learners, it was found that they frequently made errors with inflectional morphemes, namely third-person singular present (-s), past tense (-ed), progressive (-ing), past participle (-en), plural (-s), possessive (-'s), comparative (-er), and superlative (-est). However, third-person singular present (-s) errors often originate from the lack of a similar structure in Hindi, resulting in L1 interference, as highlighted by Kachru (2006). This concurs with previous studies (Kazazoglu, 2020; Eng & Lim, 2020; Gayo & Widodo, 2018), which identified L1 interference as a predominant error source among ESL learners. The use of the past tense (-ed) marker was also problematic, echoing findings by Ahmad (1996), Jinny (2019), Alam et al. (2023), and Alam and Usama (2023), mainly because Hindi lacks a direct past tense suffix. Additionally, plural (-s) errors occurred due to the Hindi practice of following numbers with singular nouns (Kachru, 2006). The control group made fewer possessive (-'s) errors than the experimental group, indicating intralingual influences. Moreover, the experimental group showcased more progressive (-ing) errors due to intralingual factors. Errors with comparative (-er) and superlative (-est) markers arose when students applied Hindi postpositions unfamiliar with English, leading to interlingual errors, as explained by Kachru (2006). These observations underscore the role of the learner's first language in inflectional morpheme error patterns in ESL contexts. Moreover, numerous research supports the idea of using different sorts of practical eclectic praxis can be used to curtail errors of students in real life contexts (Alam et al., 2022; Alam et al., 2020; Alam, 2022; Alam et al., 2023; Alam, 2023; Mahant et al., 2023). Productive skills of language like writing needs real life practice which can only be provided through communicative strategies or activities that can provides platforms to students to practice language skills (Alam et al., 2023).

The research also found that RM significantly enhanced students' ESL writing skills by minimizing inflectional morpheme errors, evidenced by the post-test results for the experimental group. This finding aligns with numerous studies (Morris, 2018; Belazi & Ganapathy, 2021; Nagy, 2018; Xiangze & Abdullah, 2023; Muhayyang et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2021; Raza et al., 2021) highlighting RM's positive influence positively by improving ESL writing. Additionally, RM notably enhanced students' grammatical accuracy, which (Larsari et al., 2023; Zimmerman, 2002) attributed to heightened metalinguistic awareness. This approach augments writing skills and language learning (Zamri & Narasuman, 2023; Means et al., 2009), emphasizing error correction, as proposed by (Picciano et al., 2012; Subban, 2006), facilitates better grammar and communication in ESL writing. RM can also promote autonomy in students and



encourage self-directed learning in ESL classrooms (Smalls, 2019; Alamri et al., 2021; Zhao & Liao, 2021; Anthony, 2022).

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The study meticulously evaluates the effect of instructional interventions on the accuracy of using inflectional morphemes in English. The findings are consistently illuminating by examining the pretest and post-test scores of an experimental and control group across eight types of inflectional morpheme errors. The experimental group displayed a marked reduction in errors across all eight categories post-intervention. This consistent decline in mean scores is particularly striking when juxtaposed against the control group, which either retained its original error rates or exhibited a minor increase. Specifically, the most pronounced improvements in the experimental group were observed in the use of plural (-s) morphemes, followed by substantial reductions in errors associated with past tense (-ed), third person singular present (-s), progressive (-ing), and past participle (-en) morphemes. Additionally, the errors pertaining to possessive (-'s), comparative (-er), and superlative (-est) morphemes were also significantly reduced in the experimental group, albeit to a slightly lesser degree. The control group's unaltered or slightly augmented error rates underscore the efficacy of the instructional intervention implemented in the experimental group. In essence, the empirical evidence gleaned from this study decisively attests to the positive impact of instructional interventions on enhancing morphological accuracy, suggesting its potential utility in pedagogical settings aimed at improving English language proficiency.

This study holds relevance as it has the potential to alter pedagogical paradigms, directing educators, policymakers, and curriculum designers toward the most efficient methods for English language instruction at the high or senior secondary school level who are at a crucial juncture in their educational journey, the findings of this research can serve as a robust basis for optimizing language instruction to meet both academic and real-world communication needs. The study's extent is somewhat limited due to the small number of participants selected from only one senior secondary school in an urban region of India. For future studies, it would be beneficial to consider a larger, more varied group of participants to strengthen the validity of the results. Additionally, this study focuses solely on inflectional morphemes. Future research should include other aspects of linguistics to broaden our understanding of linguistic patterns.

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# The Impact of English Lexical Categories on Modern Colloquial Sinhala Language With Special Reference to Neologism and Borrowing

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**Abstract**—This study was carried out with the main objective of investigating the impact of the English language lexeme on modern colloquial Sinhala and exploring the specific mechanisms of neologism and borrowing. Among the major findings, the impact of English on colloquial Sinhala has been identified in the processes of the acronym, coinage, alphabetic abbreviation, clipping, blending, generification, and borrowing as the dominant processes that come under the umbrella term of neologism. As borrowing mechanisms, loan words, loan shifts and loan blends followed by other subsequent mechanisms like loan translations, loan renditions and loan creations have been established with colloquial Sinhala. Participatory observation, chunk recordings and secondary data sources are methodological instruments of this research. The English-influenced lexical items in modern colloquial Sinhala have been critically analysed and categorized logically with the final concluding remark that the English language's influence on modern colloquial Sinhala is inordinate with special reference to lexical categories.

**Index Terms**—neologism, borrowing, colloquial Sinhala, English influence, Sri Lanka

## I. INTRODUCTION

All languages are subject to change with time at each definite moment of their lives (Vogt, 1954). The direct or indirect contact of one language with neighbouring or culturally dominant languages influences each language with a change of any range (Sapir, 1949; Crystal, 2005). Language contact and contact-induced change are commonplace throughout the world (Dutton & Tryon, 1994). Sinhalese, belonging to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family is the dominant language of Sri Lanka which was a British colony for more than a century. With this contact initially and now for many other reasons Sinhalese has unavoidably been influenced by English.

Thus, the main aim of the study is to investigate the impact of English lexical items on the modern colloquial Sinhala language. The nature of the influence of the English language on colloquial Sinhala can be investigated under several aspects; however, this research has confined its discussion to neologism and borrowing mechanisms which are more productive in terms of lexeme compared to the influences on other forms like phonology, pronunciation, structure, morphology, etc.

The lexical items that came from English are commonly being used by the entire language community in Sri Lanka, not as a big bundle, but separately as a community and geographical area-wise. Particularly, words related to food and beverage, dresses, vehicles, machinery, weapons, medical items, administrative bodies and positions have been introduced by English people and directly related to day-to-day life. On the other hand, when Westernized people speak Sinhala, a huge collection of English words is used. Similarly, those who live in metropolitan areas and those who have learnt English as a second or a foreign language also use many English words in their daily life (Jayasekara, 2008). Also, science, technology and the academic field have adopted a lot of English words into Sinhala. Some of them are frequently used and well-established as Sinhala words by now.

Neologism and borrowing mechanisms with appropriate examples from colloquial Sinhala are presented in this work.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme. Philosophically this work falls into the naturalistic research paradigm. As we believe, access to reality can only be possible through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments. The second is nature of the data we have used is almost qualitative. We have tried to observe reality subjectively in contrast to positivism. Based on the same philosophical stance, qualitative data gathering was done by using observations, chunk recording and accessing secondary data sources. The data from both secondary and primary sources were collected using qualitative data collection tools. Secondary data sources such as previous research work, journal

articles, published and unpublished books, paper articles, research papers, web references, corpora, etc. are used while the main method of primary data collection was participatory observation applying the convenient sampling method. The participatory observation was conducted in a state university by having a pre-planned schedule. The other method used to gather raw data was chunk recordings of television programmes of the state and private television channels that were telecast in the Sinhala language. This data was collected from entertainment programmes, but not from formal news reading which uses high standard Sinhala consciously avoiding code-mixing, switching or borrowing to a greater extent. The minimum time duration of chunks was 10 minutes and the maximum was 30 minutes. All the recorded chunks were transcribed into texts manually. The reason for using electronic media programmes to gather raw data apart from participatory observation is the belief that media use the standard dialect for their communication in a country (Dissanayaka, 2002).

The type of this research is deductive as we used some already developed theoretical constructs to analyse gathered data and did not have any intention to develop any new theories by using our empirical data. Thus, the current work is confirmatory in approach. The study utilises the qualitative method by aligning with the research philosophy. The strategy of this research is partly ethnographic as the data was collected from a natural/uncontrolled environment through observations and partly experimental as the chunk recordings are not from an uncontrolled environment. The time horizon of the research is cross-sectional as the data gathering was done at one point in time. The sampling strategy is random. In terms of primary data collection, two methods are employed as has already been mentioned. They are participatory observation and chunk recordings. In addition, the study used secondary data as well. The data analysis was also done qualitatively through content analysis on two levels; descriptive and interpretative. A facility available in Microsoft Word was used to identify English lexical items in Sinhala colloquial chunks recorded from television programmes.

### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section discusses existing literature in English focusing on the concepts and theories related to the topic under discussion. The present study deals with several mechanisms of language contact phenomenon in detailing the lexical influences of the English language on modern colloquial Sinhala. The contact linguistic theories were formulated in the 1970s; Poplack (1980), Gumperz (1982), Grosjean (1982), Kachru (1983), Auer (1984), Ralph (1984), Myers-Scotton (1993), Monika (1995), Muysken (2000), and Thomason (2001) contain a considerable value in the field. These contributors have discussed bilingualism, code-switching, code-mixing and language borrowing in different capacities and different depths but still, the depth of explanations for bilingualism, multilingualism, language borrowing, etc., are prominently owned by Weinreich (1962) and Haugen (1953) even after more than 60-70 years of their interventions.

The major variable of our research topic is 'language influence' which deals with language mixing due to contact-induced situations. This as a study area falls into specifically sociolinguistics, but earlier into historical linguistics or the main discipline of philology. The new subject area that arose during the last five decades is called 'contact linguistics'.

The second variable of our study is 'colloquial Sinhala' which needs a theoretical base to strengthen the study. Several studies helped to formulate the required theoretical backing in this regard. Gair's (1970, 1971) research works such as *Colloquial Sinhalese Clause Structures* and *Action Involvement Categories in Colloquial Sinhalese* help to understand what colloquial Sinhala is. Gunasekara's (2008) *A Comprehensive Grammar of Sinhala Language* also remains in the same capacity whereas this study gives some sort of classification and definition for colloquial Sinhala even though the masterpiece of this book has a diminutive relevance to the present study as it provides a small data corpus to understand English words used in Sinhala. Two studies quite recently published by Wheeler (2006) *Complementation in Colloquial Sinhala* and Zubair's (2008), *Doxastic Modality as a Means of Stance Taking in Colloquial Sinhala* contain data with some relevance.

To differentiate the colloquial language and formal language used in Sinhala, language diglossia played an important role as a theoretical concern. *Diglossia* by Ferguson (1959) was a masterpiece in this subject area and this theoretical layout educated the researcher about two language registers in Sinhala viz; colloquial and formal Sinhala. *Purifying the Sinhala Language: The Hela Movement of Munidasa Cumaratunga* (Coperahewa, 1999) discusses the socio-political matters regarding the Sinhala language and, particularly the role of the *Hela Movement* of Munidasa Cumaratunga enabled the present research to understand how patriotic movements behave against the influence of other languages such as the situation with the English language in Sri Lanka under the colonial and post-colonial contexts.

The studies related to Sri Lankan English conducted by some university academics such as *The English Language in Ceylon* by Passe (1943) and recent studies like *The Post-Colonial Identity of Sri Lankan English* by Gunasekera (2005), *The Vocabulary of Sri Lankan English: Words and Phrases that Transform a Foreign Language into Their own* by Fernando (2003) and *English and Sinhala Bilingualism in Sri Lanka* by Fernando (1976) are also quite important for the current study. Also, the works by the British expatriate, Michael Meyler in connection with the variety of Sri Lankan English, *A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English* (2007) and *Sri Lankan English: a Distinct South Asian Variety* (2009) also show the same importance to the current study. All these previous works have been done with different objectives and motivations in comparison to the current study but certain parts of their findings could purposely be linked with the current work. Another important outlying contribution that empowered the current study is *An Introduction to Language and Communication* (Akmajian et al., 2008). This study presents the concept of 'neologism' concerning

language. According to them, a neologism is an outcome of language contact which has become an inevitable fact nowadays. In terms of that aspect, the study is well-meaningful and motivated us to include an analysis under a separate topic.

Studies that have been conducted directly regarding the present study are not many. Even though there are some studies on the English language's influence on Sinhala, studies that are particularly confined to modern colloquial Sinhala with special reference to lexicon are very few. *Impact of English loan words on modern Sinhala* by Premawardhena (2003) is a research paper published in this respect with a broad spectrum objective but the contribution has not been sufficiently comprehensive to achieve it. The study, analysing data from both literary and spoken Sinhala, attempts to discuss structural changes in modern Sinhala that occurred through English loanwords. This also differs from the scope and the aim of our study. The aim is elaborated further by giving its subcomponents as the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic implications of the English loan words (Premawardhena, 2003). Also, it looks at how both monolingual and bilingual speakers adopt these loanwords into Sinhala. This piece of research has arrived at some important conclusions by referring to Anderson (1973) and Aitchison (1998). As the research concludes, the main reason for linguistic borrowing is to fill a void in the borrowing language to describe new concepts and elements, which may not have existed earlier and entering suddenly a language demands a term to identify it (Premawardhena, 2003). As the study further concludes, "since the introduction of policies of an open economy in the late seventies, the influence of English loan words on Sinhala has been on the increase" (Premawardhena, 2003, p. 6) also the electronic media has taken the hitherto foreign language of English to the doorsteps of the rural communities. Especially in the field of advertising, the use of English loan words with Sinhala texts is very common today (Premawardhena, 2003). Out of these conclusions, the policy of open economy which made a paradigm shift in the economic policy in 1977 in Sri Lanka has subsequently accelerated the influence of English loanwords on Sinhala. This evidence is more than a language influence as it touches upon the socio-political interventions of the country which then affected the language change, particularly to change the official language's heart of the expressions that is lexicon. Although there are some oversights in the sample and mismatches between set objectives and conclusions, this study captures ample space in this specific research focus.

*Sinhala-English code-mixing in Sri Lanka: A sociolinguistic study* by Senaratne (2009) is a comprehensive research that has considerable relevance to the present study, but it too deviates from its scope and objectives with the present study. It elucidates code-mixing between Sinhala and English and presents a structural analysis of the mixed language that has evolved as a result of the code-mixing. Apart from identifying the main syntactic, phonological, morphological and semantic features of the mixed language, this study describes the sociolinguistic aspects of bilingual language usage in post-colonial Sri Lanka. In this attempt, this treatise strives to reveal not only the complexities but also the creativity and productivity that have evolved as a result of more than two hundred years of contact between an international language and an Indo-Aryan local language (Senaratne, 2009). The concluding remarks of each chapter of this work have brought out important facts in terms of the English language's influence on Sinhala. Some of the conclusions indicate the impact of English very positively and in other places more descriptively. The mixed code has effectively equipped the Sinhala speaker to meet the challenges of the presence (Senaratne, 2009, p. 60). The research sample has been highlighted to indicate the nature of their language usage and as it declares 'the use of both Sinhala and English in discourse is becoming widespread with urban bilinguals between the age 19 to 40' (Senaratne, 2009, p. 72). The study further concludes that English is positioned as a high language and Sinhala as a low language in urban Sri Lankan society. Also, it shows that the contact between Sinhala and English has resulted in code-mixing, lexical borrowing, Sinhalization, and hybridization. Language mixing has successfully brought together two typologically and culturally distant languages. In a socio-cultural context, Sinhala-English code-mixing reveals the acculturation of English by the native Sinhala speakers in Sri Lanka.

*Sinhala Vag Malava Kerehi Ingrisi Balapema* (Influence of English on Sinhalese Lexeme) by Jayaseka (2008) is another important research in the same line of study. All these studies also lie in a different space when comparing them with the objectives, scope and research variables of the present study.

#### IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The research questions that unpack the major research puzzle into manageable pieces are:

1. What is the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme in general?
2. How neologism and borrowing mechanisms have impacted modern colloquial Sinhala due to the English language influence?

These research questions are followed by two major objectives:

1. To investigate the influence of the English language on the modern colloquial Sinhala lexeme.
2. To scrutinise and explore the neologism and borrowing mechanisms of modern colloquial Sinhala language that occurred due to English language influence.

#### V. DISCUSSION

### A. Neologism

Neologism is a newly coined word or phrase or a new meaning for an existing word, or a word borrowed from another language (Arnold, 1986, p. 217). Algeo (1991) says that a new word is a form or the use of a form not recorded in general dictionaries. 'Neologism' takes place due to language contact. 'Neologism' is an adding process. Formation of new words, expressions and adding new meanings to existing words have become a natural and critical experience in the Sinhala language due to the impact of the English language, particularly, in its colloquial form. The Sinhalese speakers influenced by the English language create new words continually using several processes and this section discusses those processes with special attention to nouns. The acronym, coinage, alphabetic abbreviation, clipping, blending, generification, proper noun, and borrowing are the dominant word-formation processes under neologism. Even though lexical borrowing has been discussed much in the contact linguistic literature, the other processes have not been scrutinised in that depth in the Sinhala language.

'Acronym formation' is a process of abbreviation of the first letters of each word and pronounced as a word that is treated as a noun in its use. As a word-formation process, this does not take place in the Sinhala language with the impact of English, but already-formed English acronyms are commonly used to the extent that they have become almost Sinhalese words in both literary and colloquial Sinhala. Some acronyms like DOS (Disk Operating System), WAN (Wide Area Network), and LAN (Local Area Network) are newly added to the Sinhala language with the arrival of computer technology. The colloquial Sinhala language has become a mixed discourse with many English acronyms added recently.

Example utterances:

/dæŋ DOS ɔgəŋŋəne nə/ (DOS is not taught nowadays).

/meθəna θijəŋne WAN ekak/ (This is a wide area network).

Names of international organizations are also used in Sinhala in the same manner as UNESCO, UNO, IMF, WHO etc.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/UNESCO eken θamai help kəŋne/ (UNESCO is the helping body).

/UNO ekə mekəta sambəŋ āii/ (UNO get involved with this).

'Coinage' is another process of neologism through which entirely new, previously non-existent words keep entering into a language. Speakers coin new words by inventing a new sound sequence and pairing it with a new meaning. This can be observed in the Sinhala language in several forms as a result of English language influence.

'Alphabetic Abbreviation' is another process of forming new words. Most probably they are one-time abbreviations. The alphabetic abbreviations are individually pronounced, not like acronyms.

Examples:

RDA (Road Development Authority)

CD (Compact Disk)

IT (Information Technology)

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/RDA ekə melə: wədak kəŋne nə/ (Road Development Authority does nothing).

/me CD ekə wədə kəŋne nə/ (This CD does not work).

'Computer-inspired alphabetic abbreviations' are a very common experience now in Sinhala language usage. HTML, HDL, OOP, and EDP are a few examples and this also can be observed in some professions. For example, ASP (Assistant Superintendent Police), SP (Superintendent Police)

These are related to police service and are now used as Sinhalese nouns or adjectives among the general public.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/hambəŋθətə ASP ma:ru kəŋla/ (ASP has been transferred to Hambantota).

/eja: SP θəŋθəŋə promote kəŋla:/ (He has been promoted to the post of superintendent police).

'Clipping' is another process of neologism. In this process, clipped abbreviations such as *prof* for the professor, *fax* for facsimile, *math/maths* for mathematics and *exam* for the examination are some popular nouns in modern colloquial Sinhala. There are also orthographic abbreviations like Dr. (doctor), Mr. (Mister), Ms. (miss), and Ven. (venerable) where the spellings of a word have been shortened without altering its pronunciation.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/prof me wela:ve kaθa: kəŋnə pələvan ā?/ (Professor, can I talk to you now?)

/me fax ekə wədə kəŋne nə/ (This facsimile does not work).

Clipping is of course not common in colloquial Sinhala, but more frequent in literary Sinhala. The actual word of the clipping is used when they are pronounced in colloquial Sinhala language.

'Blend' is another common word-formation process in the Sinhala language due to the English language influence. New words can be formed from the existing ones by various blending processes. /bus ekə /, /car ekə/, /bag ekə/, /van ekə/ are some examples and this will further be discussed in-depth under borrowing.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/me bus ekə kədila/ (This bus is broken).

/mamə aluθ car ekak gaθθa:/ (I bought a new car).

'Generified words' have become a unique process of neologism in the Sinhala language nowadays. Also, this is



common even in other living languages in the world. Using specific brand names of products as names for the products themselves, in general, is introduced as 'generified words'.

E.g. *Sunlight*, a brand name for washing soaps

*Bata* is the company name that produces well-known slippers in Sri Lanka.

Except for well-educated English speakers, almost all the others alter *Bata* for slippers in general and *Sunlight* for washing soaps. How these generified words have imprinted in the public mind has been understood by the business world as well, therefore, the new companies that produce washing soaps at least try to amalgamate the latter part of the generified words to brand their new products such as *wonder light*, *daylight*, etc.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/oja: enəkɔtə sunlight kətəjak arəgenə ennə/ (Bring a sunlight soap when you come).

/maɣe bata ðekə kədila:, aluθ dekək gannə ɔ:nə/ (My pair of slippers is broken, I need to buy a new one).

/wonder light kijanne sunlight vələtə kopijak/ (Wonder light is a duplicate version of sunlight).

'Proper nouns' are also another part of neologism but the English language has not significantly influenced the Sinhala language in this case. A trait, quality, act, or some behaviour, associated with a person is identified with that person's name, most probably with his/ her last name. For example, the *guillotine* derives from the last name of Dr Joseph Guillotine. Thousands of such words are being added to English daily. The same example of *the guillotine* is used in Sinhala as /giləti:nəjə/.

Examples from Sinhala utterances:

/minihaθ giləti:nəjətə jaj vage/ (He also may go to the guillotine).

/maɣe baba: dən Montessori janəva/ (My baby attends pre-school now).

'Borrowing' is also a process of neologism that has made the latest and the biggest contribution to colloquial Sinhala and it is broadly discussed in the section below.

## B. Borrowing

Language borrowing is an area that has been broadly discussed in the field of language contact. This is a process where lexical borrowing can be investigated. Some linguistic researchers have concluded that contact-induced lexical borrowing changes languages, whereas some have included even code-switching and bilingual mixing as a part of borrowing. Simply, the findings of some researchers have presented this language phenomenon as an occurrence out of three processes of language contact; convergence, relexification, and borrowing. Sankoff (2001) following Van (1988) defines borrowing as involving speakers' importing features from other languages into their native language. The borrowing occurs widely from the language of the majority to the minority which is termed substratum influence. But, for the present study, the conclusion is quite far as the Sri Lankan language community does not consist of the English language majority and Sinhalese minority. Even though there are miscomprehensions related to lexical borrowing and code-mixing, this has been clarified while separating the appearance of foreign lexical elements in a language as borrowing and going beyond the single lexical elements into other areas such as code-mixing.

Long existed doubts about language borrowing have now been cleared and basically "major class content words such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives are the most likely to be borrowed" (Poplack & Meechan, 1998, p. 127). By identifying what borrowed is in contact situations, some have drawn the grammatical border saying that 'the transfer of features from one language to another does not involve syntax, but lexicon and pragmatics' (Silva, 2008, pp. 214-215). When borrowing from one language to another, the grammatical impact is minimal, but there is a discussion called grammatical borrowing. So-called 'grammatical borrowings' are indeed lexical: conjunctions, subordinators, and prepositions that do not affect the syntax of the recipient language when they are transferred (Silva, 2008). This conveys that grammatical borrowing means the borrowing of lexical items from popular lexical categories. As Silva (2008) has further discussed, it consists of lexicon and pragmatics. Different scholars have used terms like 'interference' and 'transfer' to refer to any type of cross-linguistic influence, including borrowing (Winford, 2007, p. 25).

Borrowing is treated as a vehicle of contact-induced change. In both cases, there is a source language and a recipient language. These terms serve as alternatives to various other terms that have been used in literature, such as 'donor language', 'substrate', 'replica language' and the like (Winford, 2007, p. 26). The source language of the present study is English whereas the recipient is Sinhala language. If there is a question like 'Why are only lexical items borrowed?' 'Stability gradient' is the answering term used by Van (1988, p. 25). This refers to the fact that certain components of a language, such as phonology, morphology, and syntax, tend to be more stable and hence resistant to change, while others such as vocabulary are less stable and subject to change (Winford, 2007, p. 26).

### (a). Language Borrowing Mechanisms

There are several mechanisms of language borrowing observed by the researcher and they are comprehensively presented with examples from colloquial Sinhala.

Nominal roots and verbal roots are divided into three kinds each in the Sinhala language as per *Sidath Sangara*, a Sinhalese grammar book available since the ancient days. They have been explained as:

/nipan ða: pijəwi/ (native)

/θasəmə ða: pijəwi/ (loaned)

/θabəvə ða: pijəwi/ (derived) (Pagngnasara, 2011, p. 5).

The nominal and verbal roots born in Sri Lanka itself without associating with other languages are called *nipāṇ* (native) in language analysis according to *Sidath Sangara*. The roots similar to Pali and Sanskrit are called *θaθsāmā* (loaned), whereas roots derived from those languages (Pali and Sanskrit) are called *θaθbawā* (derived). Out of these three kinds, two can be considered as general mechanisms of language borrowing in the analysis of the modern colloquial Sinhala language. They are 'loaned' and 'derived' words. Many examples can be presented for both 'loaned' and 'derived' words from English to Sinhala. In modern language analysis, there are more advanced and comprehensive mechanisms introduced by linguists. Even though the *Sidath Sangara* provides examples only for nominal and verbal roots, the other word categories are also available in modern colloquial Sinhala as 'loaned' and 'derived' words now with the influence of other European languages. Some examples are given below.

(b). *Loan Words and Colloquial Sinhala Applications*

blouse - /maɣe blouse ekə kəː?/ (Where is my blouse?)

print - /mekə print kəɾəpə saːrijak/ (This is a printed saree).

point - /eθənə checkpoint ekək θijənəvaː/ (There is a checkpoint there).

The words included in English itself in the above utterances have retained the original characteristics of English when they are used in Sinhala to a greater extent. Even though there are slight differences when they are pronounced by Sinhalese, they still can be treated as loan words since the author of *Sidath Sangara* has not specified those suprasegmental features when defining this language-transferring mechanism.

The other word category is 'derived' words. Most of the English borrowings in Sinhala are derived words that have been adapted following Sinhalese methods. Some of them have changed due to euphony and some have followed Sinhalese sound characteristics.

Examples:

**Derived words in Colloquial Sinhala**

English	Sinhala
---------	---------

Mile	/mailəjə/
------	-----------

Rhythm	/ri θnəjə/
--------	------------

Theme	/θemaːvə/
-------	-----------

/hərijətəmə ðorə mailə ðekai/ (The exact distance is two miles.)

/e siŋ ðowe ri θnəjətə maŋ kəməθij/ (I like the rhythm of that song.)

/nijəmə θemaːvak/ (Very good theme)

As it has been noted by Daller (2007), Leonard Bloomfield is one of the first figures in which an attempt is made at classifying lexical borrowing. He distinguishes between "dialect borrowing, where the borrowed features come from within the same speech area (as, father, rather with [a] in an [ɛ] -dialect), and cultural borrowing, where the borrowed features come from a different language" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 444). When speakers of different languages come into more intensive contact, borrowing "extends to speech forms that are not connected with cultural novelties" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 461). This is called intimate borrowing and it is generally one-sided: borrowing goes predominantly from an upper language to a lower language that is from the speakers of a culturally, politically or economically dominant language to the speakers of a less prestigious language. During colonization and even today, culturally, politically and economically dominant language speakers are English speakers and so the prestigious language is English and Sinhala has become the lower language in terms of language borrowing.

Haugen (1950) and Weinreich (1963) have developed the typology of lexical borrowing. Haugen's approach is quite new. He discusses the structural constraints on borrowing and the structural effects on the borrowing language as a whole. As Weinreich's and Haugen's classifications are almost similar, the following discussion is limited mainly to Haugen's.

Haugen (1950) distinguishes different types of borrowing. There are only three types of borrowing according to Haugen; Loanwords, Loan blends, and Loan Shifts (Daller, 2007, pp. 7-8). Bates L. Hoffer by referring to the classic work of *A Course in Modern Linguistics* by Hockett (1958) has introduced four types of language borrowing mechanisms; 1) Loanword 2) Loan-shift 3) Loan-translation 4) Loan-blend. This is a simple typology in comparison to Weinreich and Haugen. It is also not descriptive and comprehensive like Weinreich's work. Some researchers have used completely different explanations to denote the same processes. Among various classifications, loanwords, loan-shifts, loan-blends, and loan translations have become quite common in all classifications and therefore the examples from the colloquial Sinhala language due to English influence are presented here onwards based on this typology.

*1. Loanwords*

By the definition of loanwords, it does not expect a substitution after arriving at the recipient language from the source language, but pure loanwords are impossible to be seen in Sinhala. Nonetheless, without taking the prosodic features into account, many lexical items can be treated as loanwords by and large in colloquial Sinhala. A few examples are Ice, Butter, Cheese, Gas, Lorry, Telegram, Telephone, Bill, etc.

Out of these given examples, *telegram*, *telephone*, and *bill* are originally not from English and their origin may be from Greek (Jayasekara, 2008, p. 16). Even though these can be considered as loanwords, their pronunciation in colloquial Sinhala may not be exactly similar to native speakers' pronunciation. The British pronunciation of butter is

/batə/ but most of the colloquial Sinhala speakers pronounce this word as /batər/ with the final /r/. The British pronunciation of telephone is /telifəʊn/ but this word realizes in colloquial Sinhala as /telifə:n/ or /telipə:n/. Even though there are such trivial differences, still these can be included in loanwords as they do not affect the semantics of these lexical items. Most English loanwords can be declined/conjugated in many forms of traditional Sinhala declension/conjugation rules, but certain cases cannot be applied under traditional rules of the Sinhala language when declining/conjugating. However, when considering the lexical items as loanwords in the present study, those minor facts were not taken into account.

## 2. Loan-Shifts

A process of adapting native words to new meanings (Hoffer, 2005, p. 5) or, in other words, an indigenous form of acquiring a new meaning to translate a foreign concept is a loan shift. As scholars have scrutinized, cultural innovation (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 47) is the reason to occur loan-shifts in languages in contact. /pi:təjə/ is the Sinhala word for a group of departments that specializes in a particular subject or a group of subjects in a university and this word is used as a similar term for the English word *faculty*. From the inception of the Sri Lankan university system, this word has come into practice in this sense, but it is not a new word for the Sinhala lexicon as it has been used to denote a different meaning by then. When the university system was established in Sri Lanka during the colonial period, they needed to use appropriate terms in Sinhala for some entities, subjects, and designations, so that some of the words were absorbed from the traditional Sinhala vocabulary to name the aforesaid. /pi:təjə/ is one such word that had earlier been used for a 'chair or cripples' or a 'walking stick' (Wijethunga, 2008, p. 1129).

The Sinhala word /nala:və/ is used in modern Sinhala to denote the meaning of the English word *stethoscope*. This is an instance of semantic broadening in a loan shift influenced by Western medical terminology. The word /nala:və/ had earlier been used to refer to the *horn* and this meaning is a new semantic addition to the same word.

## 3. Loan-Blends

This is some sort of a morphemic importation with a substitution. In other words, one element is a loanword, whereas the other element is a native word in the form of loan-blends. This has been understood by Weinreich as a *hybrid compound* (1963, p. 52). He has given such examples from the language of *Penna* in his study. As Weinreich further explains, the reproduced element of a hybrid compound, like a simple word or the element of a loan translation semantically extended can be affected by homophony. This borrowing mechanism has also been designated as 'interlingual portmanteaus' by him. There is a huge collection of lexical items of loan blends in colloquial Sinhala. English influenced loan-blends in the Sinhala language can mainly be placed under two categories:

01. Compounds with the loanword at the initial position and native word at the final/second position
02. Compounds with the loanword at the final position and native word at the initial position

The first category has many realizations in colloquial Sinhala. Some of them are re-duplications and the others are different combinations of compounds. In analysing the gathered data, we found seven types of loan blends in the Sinhala language due to the influence of English.

### (1). Reduplicated Loan-Blends

*These hybrid compounds have been formed* by Sinhalese speakers to explain the English meaning of the first word by using the Sinhala word as the second element of the compound. English-educated Sinhalese do not use these loan blends but this is very common among other colloquial Sinhalese speakers. The most common examples are:

- /bæg-mallə/ (bag)
- /bætən-pəllə/ (baton)
- /bɔ:d-lellə/ (board)

All the words used in the final positions of these hybrid compounds are similar to Sinhala words for the initial English words. Some of them are loan translations and some are similar Sinhala words. These hybrids have perfectly settled in colloquial Sinhala to the extent that some are unaware of their combination in the English language. The loan blends like /lait-elijə/ (light) and /bled θaləjə/ (blade) are sometimes used even by the English-educated people in their colloquial usage showing their firm settlement in colloquial Sinhala. This reduplication is used even with verbs in colloquial Sinhala. But it is a further question whether they can be considered as loan-blends as they are used separately too in Sinhala. Some of them are: /pəssətə rīvəs kəɾənəwə/ (reverse), /a:pəhu ritɜ:n kəɾənəwə/ (return), /kætf əllənəwə/ (catch). Some of these contain three elements; the initial element is the Sinhala translation of the second element which is in English and the last element is a Sinhala helping verb. The middle part of the compound; in other words, the English loanword of the compound is a verb, but sometimes it acts as a noun too. Also, a usage like /həri-raɪt/ (right) can be considered as reduplicated loan-blends though it is neither a verb nor a noun. /həri/ is similar to *right* in English. Therefore, despite its lexical category, it is a loan-blend as well as a reduplication in modern colloquial Sinhala. Some adjectives are also used as reduplications in colloquial Sinhala.

### 1. English Noun + Sinhala Noun Loan-Blends

In these loan-blends, the English noun acts as an adjective always in colloquial Sinhala.

- /gæs lipə/ (gas stove)
- /ti: bənis/ (tea buns)

/bætəri kəllə/ (battery)

are some typical examples in colloquial Sinhala. As has been mentioned above, the words like *ice*, *tea*, *telephone*, and *battery*, are nouns, but their function in these loan-blends or hybrid compounds have become adjectives. These given examples are adjectives in English as well.

## 2. English Adjective + Sinhala Noun Loan-Blends

In these loan-blends, the initial element is original English adjectives, and the second element is a Sinhala noun. Sometimes, the euphony is the reason to realize these types of loan blends in colloquial Sinhala.

/ku:l waturə/ (cool water)

/æsbæstɔ:s- θəhəduvə/ (asbestos sheet)

/kɔrəl-pərə/ (coral reefs) are some examples from colloquial Sinhala.

## 3. English Single Words → Sinhala Loan-Blend Compounds

These loan blends have been created by the Sinhalese speakers for both formal and colloquial usages. The original words are not very familiar to Sinhala speakers as most of them are technical terms, and this unfamiliarity may be the reason for the emergence of a new loan-blend as a compound from English single-word usages.

### English Single Word

Acidity

Communism

Marxism

### Sinhala Loan-Blend

/æsid-gəθijə/

/kəmijunis-va: ðəjə/

/ma:ks- va: ðəjə/

Even though these lexical items can be considered as loan-blends, some of these are not compounds in Sinhala. Lexical items like /ma:ks- va: ðəjə/ (Marxism) and /libərəl-va: ðəjə/ (liberalism) are single words in Sinhala, still a part of them in English and the other part is in Sinhala, therefore, they are loan-blends in the Sinhala language.

## 4. Loan-blends with Sinhala Inanimate Material Noun+ka:rəja:

This is a traditional way of forming personal nouns in Sinhala too. In this process; an inanimate material noun is included in the Sinhala word /ka:rəja:/, and then it becomes a personal noun. The same has been analogized to English-influenced words as well and ultimately they have become loan-blends in Sinhala. This is merely limited to colloquial Sinhala, but not in literary Sinhala.

/kɔ:t ka:rəja:/ (A person wears a coat)

/bɪsnəs ka:rəja:/ (businessman)

/θri: wi:l ka:rəja:/ (tri-show driver/owner)

What is interesting in this usage is /ka:rəja:/ contains a gender value as well. Almost all these loan-blends are masculine in colloquial Sinhala. Also, the English-Sinhala hybrid lexical items are formed by adding /ka:rəja:/ into country names to introduce the citizens who belong to that particular country.

/in ðjən ka:rəja:/ (an Indian)

/æmərikən ka:rəja:/ (an American)

## 5. Loan-Blends with English Noun+Sinhala ekə (means one in the Sinhala language)

This is also a traditional way of declining nouns in the Sinhala language. The same has been analogized to English words too in colloquial Sinhala. This is a very popular declension of forming loan blends among all the Sinhala speakers. It is mostly used with inanimate material nouns in Sinhala.

/faɪl ekə/ (file)

/hɔ:n ekə/ (horn)

Some loan blends contain more than two elements in colloquial Sinhala with /ekə/ meaning one in English. They are original compounds in English. After coming into Sinhala, /ekə/ has been included in them.

/vaɪn bɒtl ekə/ (wine bottle)

/maʊs pæd ekə/ (mouse pad)

/laɪt bɪl ekə/ (electricity bill)

/bɑ:θru:m tawəl ekə/ (bathroom towel) are some popular examples. These kinds of loan blends are very frequent in colloquial Sinhala.

## 6. English Profession+Sinhala Explanation Loan-Blends

In these loan blends, the initial lexical item is a profession and the second lexical element contains some sort of an explanation about the profession. This is not a broadly spread lexical category like other loan blends.

/ɒfɪsərə mahaθəjə/ (the officer)

/kla:k nɔ:nə/ (the female clerk)

/pɒlɪs ra:ləha:mi/ (the policeman)

## 7. Loan-Blends with Sinhala Adjective + English Noun

Loan blends are also available in colloquial Sinhala. The first element functions as an adjective and the second element is an English noun of these blends.

/wiðli bʌlb/ (electric bulb)

/sɪnhələ nəvəls/ (Sinhala novels)

/ma:rə gem/ (strategic works) are some examples.

## (2). Loan-Translations

Technological advancements interfere a lot with this borrowing category. For instance, when the word *telephone* is imported other relevant words such as 'call', and 'exchange' are also taken. Sometimes, we may introduce our own words for these external lexical arrivals. These are called loan translations (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 45). Linguistically, a foreign composite form is translated directly, element by element into the native language in loan translation. Loan translations are also known as calques in contact linguistics. Weinreich (1963, p.51) has subcategorized this loan translation again into another three subcategories viz; Loan translation proper, Loan renditions and Loan creations. Reproducing elements in the compound or phrase, element by element is the loan-translation-proper whereas, loan-rendition is a model compound that furnishes only a general hint for the reproduction. Loan creation is applied to new coinages which are stimulated not by cultural innovations, but by the need to match designations available in a language in contact as we explained at the outset of this discussion by referring to Uriel Weinreich. Weinreich's classification takes compounds into account, but all the examples in Sinhala are not only compounds. There are single words too. The result of this borrowing mechanism is not just mixing English words with modern Sinhala but increasing the vocabulary of Sinhala. Out of those sub-categories given by Weinreich, many examples can be given for loan-translation proper. The new English-Sinhala dictionaries and glossaries contain a lot of loan-translation proper usages. This borrowing mechanism enriches the recipient language by adding new lexical items.

Examples:

<b>Loan-Translation (proper)</b>	<b>English Usage</b>
/səθi anθəjə/	weekend
/əθ borusowə/	tooth-brush
/dʒəŋɡəmə ðrəkəθənjə/	mobile phone

It is interesting to observe here that most of these loan translations are not frequently used in colloquial Sinhala but their original English words are used frequently. A word like /ʊlpəθ pæ nə/ is rarely used in colloquial usage but is sometimes used in informal literary Sinhala writings. Loan translation is not a natural consequence of language evolution and is an effect of language planning efforts done by scholars well conversant in Sinhala language and etymology.

Loan renditions do not associate with word-to-word translations of the source language but they are sort of general hints for the original usages. The examples given for semantic interference by Darmadasa (1996) can be considered as some kind of loan-renditions in Sinhala due to the influence of English. He provides two lexical items; *alligator pears* and *deputy fiscal* as examples of semantic interference. English alligator pear is a fruit and after hearing this word in Sinhalese, they thought that this is kind of a /perə/ (guava) according to available Sinhala usage. "The unfamiliar *alligator* without having a proper meaning changed into /*aligətə*/ following the available words and ultimately it has become /*aligətə perə*/ in modern Sinhala" (Darmadasa, 1996, p. 37) which is now used for avocado in English. Even though this can be considered as a loan rendition, it is obvious that there is a semantic change as well. As Darmadasa further points out, such semantic changes happen in the words which are taken from other languages under *folk etymology*.

Loan-creation is the other loan-translation category given by Weinreich in his study and the same has been discussed by some other linguists as well. These are new composite forms based on indigenous elements to translate a foreign concept. /ðrəkəθənjə/ is the loan translation for the English word *telephone* but the same has been given a loan creation as well by Sinhalese.

/θeləbənɔwə/ is the loan-creation for the English word *telephone*. Another similar kind of loan creation is /pinna pahina pɔlə/ for the post office. The common usage among the colloquial Sinhala speakers is not this loan-creation but the loan-translation as /θəpəl kəθɔ:ruvə/. However, the original English words are also more frequently used as loanwords in colloquial Sinhala than loan creations. The Sinhalese term /jəθorɔ lijənjə/ for English *type-writer* and /ðəmrijə/ for English *train* are also loan-creations in the Sinhala language.

Expert scholars in the Sinhala language have taken the factors of language history into account in giving loan creations for English lexical items. /ʊθowə:dəmə/ in Sinhala also can be considered as a loan creation. This term has been given to the English word, a *pad* which is used by women as a sanitary towel. In giving this loan-rendition, the evolution of the Sinhala language parallel with other languages has been considered. For example, the word /ʊθu/ has been derived from Sanskrit /irθu/. Now it is apparent that giving loan-creations and translations for foreign-influenced words are the results of language planning efforts.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The discussion makes it clear that the influence of English on the colloquial Sinhala could be mainly identified through the mechanisms of neologism and borrowing and they have spread into several areas of the language by making complicated structural changes. As our study confines merely lexical influences, the other structural changes are not discussed in this work. The impact of the English language on modern colloquial Sinhala in terms of lexical borrowing and neologism is not just a matter of fact that is negligible as a result of language contact. An immense number of borrowing mechanisms have been identified with examples while showing up how complicated they are, and in a way, these have helped to enrich the recipient language of Sinhala. Ultimately, it can be concluded that there is an inordinate impact of English lexical items on modern colloquial Sinhala language with special reference to above mentioned

lexical areas.

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# Imagination Development as a Construct for Professional Identity of Early Career English Teachers Working at Public Schools: Contributions of Interactions With Learners

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**Abstract**—This paper reports on a study that explored the professional identity development of two early career English-language teachers in Vietnam. The data collected for the study included the observation notes from classroom teaching and recordings from semi-structured interviews in which the participating teachers reflected on their work and their interactions with students. Findings suggested that they demonstrated a certain degree of devotion and vulnerability, adopted an orientation towards openness, and considered themselves as learners in the process of learning how to teach. Implications regarding the necessity of teacher agency are then discussed in the context of teacher education programmes.

**Index Terms**—teacher identity, imagination development, early career teachers, teacher training

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the burgeoning emergence of identity in educational research in general, identity of teachers has received significant attention from scholars in the field of language teaching (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004; Varghese et al., 2005). Central to research on language teacher identity is the discussion of continuous process of constructing and reconstructing meaningful values which helps raise social awareness of what it means to be a language teacher (Varghese et al., 2005). The significance of teacher identity to language teaching has been emphasized with the argument that “in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are” (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 22). Moreover, since the language teachers who are non-native speakers of the language taught have been found to face stress and burnouts (Holliday & Aboshiha, 2009; Miller, 2009), an analysis of their identity development can help figure out factors contributing to language teachers’ decisions of staying or leaving the profession (Howard & Johnson, 2004). At the core of this developmental process is imagination which refers to teachers’ interpretations of their experiences to construct an image of themselves, of the teaching community to reflect on their experiences, to orient towards future, and to explore different choices and actions (Wenger, 1998).

For the group of early career teachers, developing identity is normally connected with teachers’ learning route to become a teacher, witnessing a transition from being a student at one university to a teacher at a school. That is basically a critical period of situated learning through social experiences within a community as teachers interact with different agents inside and outside their classrooms (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). It is noticeable that among the factors affecting teachers’ professional identity development, student-related issues have been identified as a significant source, though both positive and negative (Beijaard, 1995; Jones, 2006; Hong, 2012; Jo, 2014; Anspal et al., 2012). The experiences in interacting with students in both didactical and pedagogical events exert a great influence on teachers’ job commitment, self-efficacy, motivation, and willingness to learn (Beijaard, 1995). Take the issue of managing students’ misbehaviour as an example. If a teacher has certain success, he or she then develops a stronger sense of self-efficacy while if a teacher experiences constant failure, he or she may suffer from tensions and doubt about their pedagogical capabilities (Hong, 2012).

Additionally, teachers with ability to maintain positive relationships with learners are more likely to have a strong sense of suitability and enjoyment (Jo, 2014) whereas those with persistent disappointment in problematic situations

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with students may not fully develop necessary skills to regulate students' learning via classroom interactions or get low perceived level of teacher agency. Anspal et al. (2012) assured that tensions caused by efforts to manage students' behaviour and simultaneously establish a connection with them can challenge teachers' sense of role and identity. Thus, it is possible that teachers who consider leaving the profession might have some negative experiences in teacher-student interactions. Therefore, conducting a study on how early career teachers develop professional identity in relation to their interactions with the learners as the current research is of the essence in contributing to their career development sustainability.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Professional Identity of Early Career Teachers

Despite the agreement in educational studies that novice teachers' awareness of their own identity affects their teaching practice, their pedagogical decisions, their commitment to work and their adaptability, the concept of teachers' professional identity has been defined differently (Korthagen, 2004; Beijaard et al., 2004; Korthagen, 2004; Hong, 2010). Conceptualizing teachers' professional identity development as a process of learning to become a certain teacher, the current study defined this concept as the teachers' continuous process of interpretation and re-interpretation of professional experiences with their students. The personal side is not within the scope of this study as it involves teachers' daily life and their interaction with other people, rather than with their students.

Moreover, the professional identity of early career teachers might be different from that of more experienced teachers. This argument implies that teachers at different stages of their career might hold different beliefs about teaching responsibilities and students. More importantly, recent studies have showed that the group of novice teachers generally face challenges of negotiating identity as metaphorically described in a statement of Fantilli and McDougall (2009) that "new teachers spend a disproportionate amount of time and effort simply [keeping] their heads above water" (p. 814). This conclusion is in line with Howard and Johnson's (2004) that early career teachers indubitably suffer from significant levels of individual stress and a high rate of burnout. In other words, if these challenges are not successfully managed, these teachers can be at risk of leaving the profession.

However, such experiences can also have positive consequences, including inspiration to learn and motivation for change (Galman, 2009). Accordingly, teachers' professional identity development, to some extent, relates how they respond to difficulties and conflicts in the transition period from student teachers to in-service teachers with certain roles, tasks to fulfil in a new community of practice. Due to the vulnerable nature of this stage, more attention should be given to the early career teachers, instead of the experienced ones as they are at a more stable status in teaching profession.

### B. Development of Imagination as a Construct for Professional Identity

Driven by Wenger's (1998) theory, teacher's professional identity development is conceptualized as an experience in terms of modes of belonging in social learning, including engagement, imagination, and alignment. Despite their essential roles in shaping a teacher's identity, engagement and alignment are not within the scope of this study. As the focus of engagement is on teachers doing things together, it can help create a shared reality, but participants do not necessarily understand the community or others' experiences. Furthermore, the focus of alignment is on the interaction between teachers and school culture because alignment requires teachers to make sure that their local activities are sufficiently aligned with other processes. Meanwhile, imagination refers to teachers' interpretations of their experiences which helps differentiate one teacher from the others. Specifically, with imagination, teachers construct an image of themselves, of the community to reflect on their experiences, to orient towards future as well as to explore different choices and actions. Wenger (1998) emphasized that "at the level of engagement, they may be doing exactly the same thing. But it does suggest that their experiences of what they are doing and their sense of self in doing it are rather different. This difference is a function of imagination" (p. 176).

The notion "imagination", as an act of belonging to a teacher community, "refers to a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves" (Wenger, 1998, p. 176). At the risk of oversimplification, imagination is a teacher's capacity to see teaching from different perspectives. Imagination can make a great difference in teachers' experiences of constructing identity and potentials for learning inherent in their activities. Take two cases in Dang's (2013) study as an example, while Hien targeted her teaching practicum at student learning with a certain level of flexibility in addressing students' learning needs, Chinh expressed her faithfulness to lesson plans. Both stances are correct and meaningful, but they reflect different interpretations of the same event. Additionally, the dissimilarities in these answers do not reveal that one is a better teacher than the other, but what are of these teachers' concerns, instead. Obviously, with the same activity, different teachers may get different learning points, resulting from their imagination process. Imagination then comprises the competence in moving "beyond the immediate world of experience" (Clarke, 2008, p. 98). According to Wenger (1998), imagination consists of four components: images of the world, images of ourselves, images of possibilities as well as images of the past and the future. The concept *image* in this statement is similar to Elbaz's (1983) definition. Specifically, *image* refers to a teacher's feelings, beliefs, values and needs regarding what teaching should be. In this study, the phrase "images of the world" is changed into *images of the community* as teachers' world means their teaching community in this context.



To have multiple perspectives on an issue, imagination requires teachers to disengage, to look at their engagement through the eyes of an outsider which could help them reconstruct the images of themselves and envision new presentations of their internal and external images of the community. Wenger (1998) also stressed that imagination is a collective process involving products of overgeneralizations, namely fantasies and stereotypes, which can project a teacher's experience beyond the board of mutual engagement.

### C. Teacher - Student Interactions

Originally derived from the *Didaktik* tradition in Germany, the teaching – studying – learning process is viewed as a set of relations established by three elements, namely teacher, content, and student (Herbart, 1835; as cited in Harjunen, 2009). Notably, Klafki (1970; as cited in Kansanen, 1999) asserted that the relation is the interaction by nature, which allows other researchers to use the two terms *relation* and *interaction* interchangeably. Stenberg (2011) emphasized the crucial role of interactions between the mentioned aspects in teaching practice, and consequently in teachers' professional identity development. Several researchers (Harjunen, 2009; Stenberg et al., 2014) agree on the use of a didactic triangle developed by Kansanen and Meri (1999) to describe these interactions in detail.

Kansanen and Meri (1999) stressed that although the didactic triangle should be viewed as a whole, it is almost impossible in teaching. It is common to explore the triangle in pairs, including the interactions between teacher-student, teacher-content and student-content. As this study focused on teachers' interactions with students, the relation between teacher and content is ignored. Kansanen (1999) asserted that the teacher - student interaction is perceived as an immediate pedagogical interaction and an indirect didactic interaction.

#### (a). Pedagogical Interactions

Van Manen (1991a) defined the term *pedagogical* as a "relationship of practical action between an adult and a young person who is on the way to adulthood" (p. 31; as cited in Harjunen, 2009). In other words, the pedagogical interaction is a personal relation based on trust between two human beings (Bollnow, 1989; Kansanen & Meri, 1999). As a result, from the perspective of a teacher, authority and love are the two powerful forces responsible for the quality of pedagogical interaction. In educational settings, pedagogical interaction refers to the personal interaction between a teacher and students. Teachers' strategies to establish and maintain relations as well as handle moral and ethical dilemmas in the classroom are the centre of the pedagogical interaction.

This pedagogical interaction is asymmetrical in nature (Kansanen, 1999) does not indicate an undemocratic relationship between teachers and students as it works on a voluntary basis. More importantly, this interaction manifests its own historical context as instability may arise at time of change. It is implied that teachers and students may not keep the same pattern of interaction throughout the courses. In addition, as the pedagogical relation helps a child grow towards independence and autonomy, it is future-oriented. Although what the teachers are doing with students is in present time, they are pursuing the aims of a specific future version of their students. This work requires trust building, treating students as human beings and ethics of justice (Harjunen, 1999). If Kansanen (1999) emphasized the importance of teachers' trust on students, Harjunen (2009) focused on teachers' trust in themselves and students' trust in teachers.

However, Harjunen (2009) found that initially, early career teachers could not arouse the feeling of connectedness, just teachers performing their tasks. Their values and classroom practices are affected by prior perceptions of roles of a perfect teacher. Later, these teachers are more open to students, using more humour in their lessons. Ethics of justice refers to teachers' willingness to cope with issues about right and wrong as well as teachers' personal ability to transmit ethical meanings and moral lessons to students. It includes teachers' love, gentleness and emotions expressed through their classroom behaviours. Although a teacher and a student are equal as human beings, teachers are in charge of transferring norms and values to their students.

#### (b). Didactical Interactions

Another pivotal determinant is didactical relation or interaction which refers to a teachers' relation to students' studying processes. Kansanen and Meri (1999) used the term *studying* as he argued that "teaching in itself does not necessarily imply learning" and "while learning takes place in students' minds", "it is this studying we can see and observe in the instructional process" (p. 8). In other words, it is possible for teachers to control students' studying, and evoke their learning. Kansanen (2003b) asserted that there is a relation between student and content, aimed at attaining the outcomes in a curriculum; thus, didactic relation is a teacher's relation to the existing relation between students and content (Kansanen & Meri, 1999). This interaction type is the heart of a teachers' professional identity development.

Harjunen (2009) suggested three characteristics contributing to didactical interaction. First, teaching is conceptualized as listening to students and interaction. Specifically, teachers should show their patience and helpfulness to the learners by walking around, smiling, or talking to them. In their interaction with the learners, teachers should respond verbally or non-verbally to avoid the position of power. Second, didactical interaction includes the need to maintain students' motivation to study. Strategies to achieve this aim vary, ranging from building a good class climate, giving praise and encouragement or arranging group dynamics. The final feature is the development of students' basic skills, namely problem-solving, thinking, social interaction and autonomous learning. The argument is that students can

learn from their peers in collaborative activities with different sitting arrangements and teaching techniques adopted by the teachers.

Furthermore, teachers want to keep the relationship to be friendly and approachable, but most emphasize that they also desire to keep the relationship professional, clearly defining the boundaries between professional and personal relationships.

### III. METHODOLOGY

To obtain an in-depth understanding of how early career teachers develop their imagination in relation to their interactions with students, this study adopted a qualitative approach with a case study design. Yin (2014) argued that case studies enable researchers to capture sufficient details with multiple data resources, permitting thick descriptions and explanations of complex phenomena.

#### A. Context and Participants

The present study focuses on two early career teachers working at public primary and secondary schools in Southern Vietnam. These two teachers of English have worked for two years at different institutions. Their stage of professional career is consistent with the so-called early career in the literature. For example, Cameron (2017) uses this term to refer to “those who are within a three-year window including the initial (pre-qualification) period of training and education as a teacher (typically lasting one year) and the first two years as a qualified teacher”. Other researchers such as Weldon (2018) and Joseph (2011) also adopted the term “early career teachers” to indicate those within their first five years in role.

Two different working contexts from the participants were deliberately chosen to better reflect the diversity of teacher identity development in social interactions with the students. According to Hargreaves (2000), secondary and primary teachers perceive interactions between teachers and students differently, but they both consider these relations to be the most meaningful source of changes in their teaching philosophy. Although the experience in interacting with students may differ, the influence it has on early career teachers’ instructional practice stands regardless of the group taught.

The participants graduated from a TESOL program and spent some courses with the first researcher, so the relationship was close enough for them to share their teaching stories. They were all in their early twenties with full energy and passion. For ethical concerns, the participants’ names were pseudonymized and presented in alphabetical order for reading ease.

**Chi** was a traditional type of teacher with a simple style of dressing and demure manner of speech. However, she did not intend to pursue teaching career at the time of graduation. The job opportunity came to her by chance, and she wanted to give it a try. Regarding Chi’s background, she was born and raised in an urban area, giving her early exposure to English. She desired to help pupils improve their English language competence. Chi has been teaching kids for 2 years. During the research period, she was teaching part-time at a public secondary school and an English centre in a big city. This was the first time she had worked with the group of adolescents.

**Duy** adopted the style of a traditional and passionate teacher with strong leadership. He considered himself to be extremely passionate about education activities and human development. However, he had never experienced working as a teacher during his college time. In fact, he spent more time on campaigns or projects developing a range of skills than those promoting the development of language skills or teaching methods only. He was born and raised in an urban area, giving him early exposure to English. At the time of joining this current research, he was working for a not-for-profit organisation. His specific responsibility was to teach English for students at the level of grade 3 at two public primary schools in a rural area. The course content strictly followed the national curriculum set by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam. There were around thirty students in the classes.

#### B. Data Collection and Analysis

Data used for this paper were collected from semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. One initial interview was conducted one week prior to the semester, and three post-teaching interviews for each participant were conducted within 48 hours to enhance data reliability (Nunan, 1992; Silverman, 2005). The interview was semi-structured with guiding questions whose design was open enough to inspire participants “to elaborate on the issues raised in an exploratory manner” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 136). In the interviews, the participants were required to recall events or experiences related to their teaching or their interactions with students and how these interactions impacted their identity development. Additionally, three classroom observations were conducted for each participant to examine how the early career teachers performed their didactical and pedagogical interactions in an authentic classroom context.

The process for data analysis in this study was inductive as researchers start with specific sets of data and end with categories or patterns (Creswell, 2013; Lichtman, 2013; Punch, 2009). The analysing procedure for this multiple-case study combines within-case and cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014). At within-case stage, the entire collected data were first coded for each participant separately. As suggested by Kwan and Lopez-Real (2010), the full transcript of each early career teacher was read three times and data which related to the four constructs of imagination were extracted as key themes. At cross-case analysis, the early career teachers’ experiences were compared, and

individual themes were grouped into larger clusters. The two researchers independently checked the classification of data and then had discussions with each other.

#### IV. RESULTS

##### A. Case Study 1: Chi

###### (a). Orientation Towards Openness

Throughout the observed period, Chi's performance marked a significant shift to become more open in her interaction with students. In the first interview, Chi considered herself as a teacher who adopted an authoritative manner. She often exercised power over her students and expected them to be obedient. It is important to notice that Chi had never experienced any teaching for the group of teenagers, she was familiar with teaching kids instead. In the past, being a strict teacher helped her manage classrooms effectively and direct kids' attention to the lesson. Her typical techniques included an immediate warning to the students who did not collaborate or did private things in a bid to force them to respect and listen to her words.

Classroom observation at the beginning of the semester disclosed that Chi sometimes smiled with the pupils but whenever there was a misbehaviour, she showed her response immediately. For example, when students were doing a grammar exercise, while everyone was doing well, one girl started whispering something to her peer. Both then laughed and kept sharing personal stories. Chi said aloud "Hey, Hang" (name of that student) with firm eye contact and a strident tone of voice.

Toward the middle of the semester, Chi appeared to be less strict and more open instead. She saw herself exercising less power on the pupils, making strenuous efforts to be friendlier to get a better understanding of students. She admitted that with the teenage students, she was trying to be their friends, rather than a teacher, to solve problems together. Obviously, there was a change in Chi's perception of her relationship with the children. She decided to get rid of the image of a powerful and distant teacher and simultaneously oriented herself towards openness. The second post-teaching interview revealed the underlying force leading to her decision to make a change.

In the beginning, they were well-disciplined but then, when they felt the friendliness of the teacher, they got into the situation of indiscipline again. At this time, students were no longer afraid of my strictness, and no better changes happened.

Chi's existing beliefs about the appropriateness of being strict were challenged by her didactical interaction regarding classroom management. The authoritative manner no longer helped her control students' activities. Chi had experienced this failure for some weeks before she decided to better her interaction with the pupils by listening to them. She tried to chat with students during the break time or support them in doing exercises to grasp their minds, interests, and aspirations. However, toward the end of the semester, Chi has not successfully appropriated the selected meaning of being open. She was on the way to adopt that image. Accordingly, she saw herself seeking help and being open for learning through professional activities with her community members.

I think that as a teacher, I must learn a lot, so I wish to have more opportunities to observe and learn from my colleagues, to be consulted when having troubles, as well as to understand the psychological characteristics of the teenage group to improve the quality of teaching.

Chi's experiences with the pupils within the semester contributed to her perception of characteristics of effective teachers at secondary school. She believed that teachers at secondary schools should be friendly to students and adopt effective techniques to keep learners' mind in the lectures, with a wholehearted and caring manner.

###### (b). Internal Tensions

By using the metaphor *a torch in the rain*, Chi saw herself stranded in a continuous struggle with internal conflicts. Despite her strong desire to be more open and generate more learning motivation for students, Chi could not manage to fulfil these tasks successfully. Regarding the student cohort, Chi's pessimism about their development and learning motivation was growing week by week. She admitted that students' learning ability was quite high, but they did not pay much attention to their language skills. Instead, they focused on vocabulary and grammatical items to prepare for tests. They were also frustrated. Additionally, Chi perceived her students as those with a high level of passivity because there was not much students' engagement in classroom activities.

Meanwhile, Chi's reflection at the first post-teaching interview indicated a slight thought and personal feeling of dissatisfaction with the experiences. No explanations or justifications were provided. Regarding reflection on the effectiveness of her authoritative manner, Chi believed that she should be strict and show off power to increase students' level of attention to her lessons. However, when realising that this technique did not work, she felt hesitant to make decisions for what to do. Chi's state of being in conflict may result from her inability to figure out the underlying reasons for students' passivity or her loose connection with the pupils. In detail, she saw herself perform enough strictness in class while students said that Chi was too gentle. Consequently, her students did not concentrate on the lesson but sent greetings to her in break time. All these circumstances triggered Chi to think although she did not figure out the reasons and this led Chi to the state of being stressed.

Chi's internal conflicts occurred continuously from the middle to the end of the semester. Her concern was about learning activities. For example, she sometimes felt that due to time constraints, she could not organise many engaging activities for students; however, if they study with traditional methods, they might be boring. When she actually conducted an interesting task, her students were extremely excited, which made noise and affected other classes. Therefore, Chi was still in the process of finding ways to balance her desire and reality.

The results disclosed that Chi did make her effort to explore some alternatives when the existing interactions did not work throughout the semester. However, she would easily stop thinking about other choices and actions if her first try was not successful. Therefore, at the end of the semester, Chi still felt stuck in finding appropriate delivery methods to fulfil an effective lesson that helped her students develop English language skills.

(c). *Outbound Trajectory and Sense of Isolation*

Another significant feature of Chi's self-image was her negative development of learning trajectories in the local community. In detail, at the beginning of the semester, Chi expressed a sense of enjoyment and a high level of self-esteem. Especially, she used the metaphor *a flaming torch* to talk about herself as a teacher at this period. Chi saw herself getting more and more passionate about teaching career as the kids were obedient and treated her with proper respect. This all gave her the feeling of having power.

Some weeks later, she experienced several lows in generating teenage students' motivation to learn which led to the status of vulnerability. She started questioning her pedagogical competence.

The class was too noisy, I lost my voice when trying to manage the class, so I was feeling incredibly stressed, confused whether to continue or not, or I should then be an office worker when this program finished. I see that teaching teenagers is quite different from teaching kids.

Chi's outbound trajectory resulted from her failure to build up a close connection with the pupils. Her students did not feel free to share with her their thoughts and difficulties "when I tried to ask and to help, they even did not know what the problems were".

As this was her first time teaching English to the group of teenagers at a public secondary school, Chi commenced the development of images of the school community with little background knowledge. After some weeks, she felt a sense of isolation as the teacher cohort's beliefs about teaching and their practice were different from hers even though her colleagues were very helpful. When asking other teachers in the team for advice, she realised that each teacher had different management methods, some were extremely strict to students while other teachers were gentler. However, this was not what Chi wanted to do with her students.

B. *Case Study 2: Duy*

(a). *Enhancing Perceived Role of a Whole-Person Educator*

Duy started his first teaching experience at two primary schools in a rural area with a vague image of whom he was as an EFL teacher but with a clear development path.

From the beginning, Duy perceived himself as an educator, rather than an EFL teacher. He determined to take up the role of an agent helping the pupils to develop a wide range of values and skills needed for everyday life and lifelong learning. He considered these children as "the next generation of this country" and wanted to help them develop three aspects, namely proficiency, awareness, and deposition. His belief was that only wisdom or knowledge could not be sufficient if a child gave up early or showed poor behaviour to others.

Duy's consistent self-image resulted from his thinking about significant characteristics of students at the age of nine and ten. Duy believed that this age group was able to absorb most of the values delivered by the teacher to adjust their behaviour properly and develop some basic skills necessary for their future learning. For him, teaching English was to equip the children with a tool. He put the emphasis of his teaching on building learning spirit, showing them how to study on their own. Duy believed that with these strategies, his pupils could better their learning in other subjects or at the next grades.

The image of an educator who promoted whole-person development of the students was expressed through Duy's practice, as in the following piece of field note.

Teacher is going to read some vocabularies for students to copy into their notebooks. So, he asks them to put the materials on the table so that they can conduct the act of writing. After repeating the instruction three times, he goes around to check and there is one student who has not prepared anything.

Teacher: Where is your notebook, Quoc Anh?

Student: I don't have any notebook.

Teacher: What did I say? If you don't have a notebook, what should you take?

Student: A draft paper. But I don't have any draft paper too.

Teacher: So, what should you do?

Student: I should ask my friend to give me a piece of black paper.

Teacher: I gave you a lot of choices; you should get something to write in.

In the post-teaching interview, Duy explained that he wanted to help his students to be more active in their learning. Thus, he tried to elicit as many possibilities for the students to think as possible. This experience was also an example to demonstrate his care and respect to the pupils.

Towards the middle of the semester, Duy admitted that his interaction with students encouraged him to expand the image of an educator. Week by week, his students showed progress in developing the predetermined values. They started paying attention to the ethics of justice, being able to differentiate the right and the wrong and adjust their behaviour. Fewer students threw their sandals to the board or punched on their friends.

Towards the end of the semester, this positive progress from the pupils encouraged him to conduct more activities to reinforce the values. His assessment system often included a range of criteria. In addition to students' improvement of knowledge and skills, their willingness to join learning activities, kindness to others, and efforts in conducting tasks were included. In light of a desire to reinforce these values, Duy repeatedly spoke out what criteria to be awarded when he gave praise. Overall, Duy's interaction with students and students' learning facilitated the development of his image as an educator and agent of change.

Moreover, Duy's perceived role as a facilitator for students' autonomy positively developed throughout the semester. He considered himself as a piece of the puzzle and students should be responsible for their own learning, especially with the aid of information technology. This development in Duy's self-image was influenced by his observation of students' progress. He was pleased to see his students making progress in using information technology for the sake of self-study. That these students could catch the fish by themselves, instead of frequently calling his name, was deemed to be a success in Duy's opinion.

*(b). Being a Reflexive Teacher*

The case of Duy is an example of reflexive teachers who devote their critical thinking to classroom activities. At the beginning of the semester, he was advised to exercise teachers' power over the students to keep classes disciplined and quiet. He then did give it a try but immediately felt inappropriate. Duy tried to think about the reasons why this technique failed, instead of just giving a slight thought of the overall feeling. After applying the technique, he realised that it was only effective in that moment and did not help to change the students' thinking. Students followed obediently because they were afraid to be scolded. Sadly, they were unaware of the fact that making noise would affect people around or learning activities. In reality, when he applied this technique, after the silent time, most of students started making noise without realizing that they should not do that in class time.

Another source of information was Duy's habit of observing students during class time and break time, especially for those in exceptional cases. What he could do was simply looking at them when they were in the playground. He gradually realised that they were good neither in lessons nor in the stereotype of a good student; instead, they were good in their way: catching birds, trapping and other kinds of stuff. Some of them were not good at English but particularly good at coloring. Duy admitted that observing taught him how to attract students' attention based on their learning styles and strengths.

Especially, Duy observed his teaching practice via the act of videotaping several lessons. Throughout the semester, he had the habit of shooting video clips to look back, as a practice only. These clips helped him figure that sometimes he taught in a quite abnormal and weird fashion, due to personal feelings. After watching them, he promised himself not to repeat that and do something different.

Towards the end of the semester, his act of reflection was expanded to the act of challenging the established beliefs or existing procedures. For example, Duy started questioning the appropriateness of the paper test. He had believed that he should make paper tests that were close to the level of students and could assess their ability accurately. Then, Duy realised that paper tests might be more appropriate for those who took the university entrance exams than for kids at elementary schools. He found a mismatch between testing methods and their backwash effects. In details, Duy believed that the current testing system was mainly for grading purposes, rather than for improving students' learning process. However, the things his pupils were good at mainly resulted from their failures.

Obviously, Duy's act of conducting this transformation reflection came from his didactical interaction with students. He claimed that in his practice, students did not learn much from doing paper tests because they were provided with the scores after the tests. Thus, he raised the question "Are scores really important to this grade? Or teachers should focus more on the learning points that students get?". At the end of the semester, he decided to make use of information technology to convert the paper tests into online tests which allowed students to do several times and get the explanations for incorrect answers.

*(c). Inbound Trajectory With Teaching Career but Sense of Isolation With Local Community*

Instructional experiences provided him chances to develop clearer images of the community at a primary school in rural areas but generated a sense of isolation. Duy perceived the teacher cohort at the two primary schools as those who focused too much on students' scores, rather than their students' language skill development. He felt a bit weird to talk about the fact that his colleagues were extremely familiar with the grading system and knew how to achieve the goal with special methods of forcing students to cram as a preparation for exams. Therefore, in the process of positioning, he felt a sense of isolation. However, his optimistic viewpoint towards the student cohort was enhanced throughout the semester.

## V. DISCUSSION

Early career teachers' interactions with students in the teaching-studying-learning process significantly contribute to how these teachers interpret the meanings of their experiences in educational settings. As the results of this study suggest, a great part of teachers' self-image, their reflection on or orientation to teaching practice related to pedagogical and didactical interactions. Although the teachers got involved in different activities with different student cohorts, there were some shared features in their imagination development. First, a certain degree of devotion is reported in the two participants. The teachers showed their care, love, and respect to the pupils, meaning a rejection to an authoritative manner. The development of this image is facilitated by teachers' treatment to students as human beings and students' emotional response to the teachers.

Generally, it is the mutual interaction between early career teachers and their students that offers the teachers a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction. This argument lends support to Nguyen's (2016) findings that social interactions in a community particularly influence teachers' emotions, which can in turn "alter a teacher's identity in relation to the profession". Second, although there were some difficulties in the development path, all of the early career teachers orientate to the image of an open teacher. In detail, openness refers to teachers' willingness to answer students' questions and welcoming attitude towards their intellectual curiosity. It is in line with Harjunen's (2009) argument that initially, early career teachers may not arouse the feeling of connectedness, just teachers performing the tasks. Their values and classroom practices are affected by prior perceptions of the roles of a perfect teacher. Later, these teachers are more open to students, using more humour in their lessons. This finding is consistent with the conclusion of several studies (e.g., Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018), suggesting that teacher identity changes with time and context.

Last, from the perspective of professional development, all the teachers identify themselves as a learner in the process of learning how to teach. It was reported in the metaphors that the teachers used to describe themselves, including "a torch in the rain" or "learners learning how to swim". This argument corresponds with Writh's (1966; as cited in Su, 2008) idea that interacting with students would allow teachers to obtain the "attitude and skills" to continue learning about teaching.

Notably, the two teachers, at certain periods of the semester, experienced a state of vulnerability. Specifically, while Chi sometimes intended to leave the profession, Duy suffered from continuous lows. These reactions occurred in response to a sense of powerlessness, betrayal, or defenselessness which confirmed the findings of Korthagen (2004). Interestingly, early career teachers' reflection of past events is encouraged when they experience challenges in relation to students and students' learning. When negative signs occur and interfere in teacher – student interactions, teachers opt to observe more and put more efforts into finding out valid reasons as well as possible solutions. Thus, the contributions of pedagogical and didactical interactions between teachers and students to the development process might be positive or negative. This finding, viewed from the broader social and political perspectives, reflects the complex interplay of "the social and structure, [...], of the agency and structure" (Zembylas & Chubbuck, 2018, p. 188) in teacher identity. It refers to teachers' ability to achieve predetermined goals and the external influences or power in this instance.

The findings of this study also indicate that the development process differs from one to the others. Specifically, while some early career teachers enhance their established images and make a few adjustments that do not influence much on the nature of these images, others experience many challenges leading to internal conflicts and experiences of constant lows in a long period which could lead to a change in the images. Two sources should be taken into consideration when considering the discrepancies. The first source of difference is the types of pedagogical and didactical interactions that teachers have in their classrooms, which play a possible role in determining whether the participants could achieve their pre-determined goals or not. Especially when the feedback is positive, there is a tendency to expand the adopted images. Otherwise, if negative comments are collected, these novice teachers would consider other options. Another explanation for differences in process development is the teachers' interpretation of classroom practice. There is a possibility that some similar critical incidents occur in class; however, distinction was exemplified through the fact that one teacher holds the opinion that it is beneficial for students' learning while the other believes it should not happen in the classroom contexts. In other words, the way teachers interpret influences their self-image, images of school community, and their reflection on past events and orientation towards future actions.

However, teachers' interaction with students is not the only determining factor to affect the process of selecting and adopting meanings of early career teachers. Teachers' agency or their ability to take responsibilities and initiatives serves a decisive role in the success of meaning selection and negotiation.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study aims to examine how early career teachers develop their imagination, as a construct for professional identity development, with the contribution of teachers' relation to students and to students' learning. The results have shown that these social interactions positively and negatively contribute to how early career teachers construct images of themselves, of the community to reflect on their experiences, to orient towards future as well as to

explore different choices. Several practical implications can be drawn from the study for the improvement of teacher education programme.

First, early career teachers should be conscious of their professional identity development. Reflection on instructional practices, classroom behaviour of teachers and students might be a source for teachers to think over their decisions in practice as well as affect their process of learning how to teach. Second, teachers should attempt to build a close relationship with students. It is of great importance because the student cohort is an important part of the school community. Feedback from students can remarkably influence the appropriateness of the images that teachers adopted and the effectiveness of their teaching activities. Third, teachers should be active in the process of developing their imagination. Should they fail, attempting to find out the reasons and try new techniques are top priorities. It is worth noticing that the teachers' perspective on challenges should be changed. In other words, such challenges should be considered as sources for development, which leads to discovering new experiences.

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# Negation and Its Ideological Implications in Inaugural Addresses

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**Abstract**—The study of ideology in literary and political texts is the concern of any critical study including critical stylistics. The current paper deals with the ideological positioning of Joe Biden's and Bill Clinton's inaugural addresses. The researchers adopt one toolkit called negation with its various categories of Critical Stylistics, as suggested by Jeffries (2010) in order to uncover the ideologies that are hidden in the presidents' inaugural addresses. To explore the ideology in each category of negation, qualitative and quantitative approaches are adopted. The findings reveal that negating steers the text in an effective way, especially in the syntactic category. What is more, since these are inaugural addresses, most of the ideologies are positive such as unity, democracy, and indiscrimination.

**Index Terms**—critical stylistics, Jeffries' model, negating, inaugural address, Joe Biden

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of communicating our ideas and thoughts. A foundation for communication, an instrument for sending messages, and a potential source of power in spoken and written forms (Salleh, 2014). According to Bria and Mohammadi (2012), language and power have a complex relationship. In political speech, language proficiency builds, maintains, and strengthens relationships, expresses ideas, and promotes programs and policies, language plays a crucial role. That's why language is undeniably a significant political concern (Ayeomoni & Akinkuolere, 2012). A speaker or a writer has to achieve influence from the addressee to get power using language. To accomplish considerable impact, a person has to be able to express his/her ideas effectively through either texts or talks. Thus, a president utilises language to affect his audience in his inaugural address. The study of ideologies in literary and political texts is the concern of any critical study, including critical stylistics.

Critical Stylistics is, first initiated by Jeffries (2010), described as a stylistic device of linguistic analysis that involves how social meaning is communicated via language (Olaluwoye, 2015). A comprehensive list of analytical toolkits supplements it. Critical stylistics operates to discover hidden ideologies which are embedded in texts and discourses using that set of analytical toolkits. One of these toolkits is negating which is widely utilised in inaugural addresses for its ideological significance. For Jeffries (2010a, p. 106), negating is a textual practice that entails a portrayal of "non-existent world versions". Jeffries concentrates on negating capacity by which a reader can shape a certain case that is completely different from the one stated in the given text.

### A. Research Questions

The current paper attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- To what extent is negating useful in inaugural addresses?
- 2- What are the most frequent triggers of negating utilised in inaugural addresses and the motive behind it?
- 3- What is the hidden ideology each trigger of negating implies?

### B. The Aims of the Study

The present paper aims at:

- 1- Showing to what extent negating is useful in inaugural addresses.
- 2- Finding out the most frequent trigger of negating in inaugural addresses and the motive behind it.
- 3- Stating the hidden ideology each trigger implies.

## II. RELATED LITERATURE

Research on the American presidential inaugural was conducted as early as the middle of the 1960s. On the 29th of January 1961, Hutton (1967) writes about the rhetoric of John F. Kennedy's 'Inaugural Address'. The researcher concludes that the speech addressed key subjects such as the "betterment of some of mankind's difficulties" Waheed, Schuck, de Vreese, and Neijens (2011), on the other hand, contrasted the value of political speeches in industrialised and developing countries. On 48 political speeches by six leaders, they used a content analysis approach. The findings

revealed that ‘universalism,’ ‘benevolence,’ ‘benevolence,’ ‘benevolence,’ ‘benevolence,’ the words stimulation, “self-direction,” and ‘achieving’ came up most frequently. Existing in every utterance, the study also discovered that the words ‘universalism’ and ‘benevolence’ were the most popular. “Stimulation” and “self-direction” were used in speeches from developing countries, while “stimulation” and “self-direction” were used in talks from developed countries. The tones of the speeches were similarly different. Different, as evidenced by the words used to connect the values. David et al. (2013) also examine the pragmatic features of President Jonathan's victory and inauguration speeches. This is done to ascertain the speaker's program in relation to the pragmatic language choice and language function in political speeches. The material was taken from the Victory Speech on April 19 and the Inaugural Speech of the 29th of May 2011.

Abuya (2012) examines the pragmatic and stylistic characteristics of the Nigerian President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's inaugural speech. The author finds 40 speech acts after analysing the text's first 20 sentences. The study revealed that “assertive (55%), directive (10%), verdictive (15%), and commissive (75%) are the following speech acts and 45% are declarative. According to the findings, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was also found to have abused the system. Heavy sentences that acted compulsively, according to the findings, politicians appear to be corrupt. Following election success, be more likely to express gratitude to others.

#### A. *Critical Stylistics*

The purpose of CDA is to illustrate how critical discourse analysis and stylistics may be combined. Fairclough (2001) states that “non-obvious ways in which language is involved in social relations of power and dominance” (p. 229). Critical Stylistics (CS) is mostly utilised to analyse nonfictional materials, with the majority of these coming from the media although exceptions include (Kosetzi, 2008; Talbot, 1995, 1997a). On the other hand, stylistics is frequently defined as “the linguistic study of style” (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 11), and is mostly concerned with analysing the language used in writings. Still, it may also include how ideologies are presented.

It attempts to “collect the fundamental general functions that a text has in expressing reality” (Jeffries, 2010a, p. 14). And can be seen as “a development of critical discourse analysis in terms of theory and practice” (Jeffries, 2007, 2010a). One of the most prominent criticisms of CDA is that it needs a comprehensive toolkit for analysts to use; this is a (possibly unavoidable) result of its interdisciplinary theoretical roots. In order to identify text producers' language choices and any potential ideological consequences, Critical Stylistics offers “a systematic model of analysis that integrates stylistics and critical linguistics methodologies” (Jeffries, 2007, 2010).

#### B. *Critical Stylistics and Critical Discourse Analysis*

Early in the 1990s, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) emerged as a synthesis of discourse analysis methods. It is associated with “analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 10). Critical Discourse Analysis sees texts, chiefly media texts, as simultaneously creating and reflecting ideologies for the reader (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p. 3) and is concerned with “de-mystifying” ideologies and power. Weiss and Wodak (2003) state that this may be done by “systematic and retroductable investigation of semiotic data (written, spoken, or visual)” (p. 3). While ideas like ‘power,’ ‘discourse,’ and ‘ideology’ remain at the foundation of all CDA studies, they are approached from several theoretical and methodological perspectives. CDA is distinguished by a wide range of theoretical and methodological methods, and while notions like “power,” “discourse,” and “ideology” are central to all CDA research, they are defined differently (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 3). CDA has its roots in a wide range of fields, including cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology, philosophy, rhetoric, applied linguistics, and sociolinguistics (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 1).

Critical Stylistics Analysis is offered as “a means of finding the ideology in any text, whether or not you agree with it,” whereas Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) analysis takes a specifically socialist political stance (Jeffries, forthcoming).

#### C. *The Tools of Critical Stylistics*

The tools of critical stylistics, as defined by Jeffries (2007, 2010a), are as follows:

##### 1- Naming and Describing

It examines how labels are applied to and altered for entities and events using the noun phrase. The CDA has recognised the value of how an entity or event is described and assessed through naming practices (van Leeuwen, 1996; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Nominalisation, a form of the name, is commonly considered in CDA studies and is involved in Fowler's list of CDA analysis methods (1991). Using noun phrases as the core unit of analysis distinguishes Jeffries' method. For the sake of brevity, I've limited the study to the text's makers' choice of words.

##### 2- Equating and Contrasting

The construction of oppositional and equivalent meanings in texts is referred to as “equating and contrasting.” Even though CDA studies acknowledge the way that entities or events interact, because language opposition is frequently represented in CDA analyses, the examination of linguistic opposition is important. The model is unique. It advances lexical semantics research on (decontextualised) sense. Words and their relationships (e.g., Lyons, 1977; Cruse, 1986, 2004; Murphy, 2003). Following the critical stylistic approach to the opposition in Davies' (2007, 2008, 2012) work, construction recognises that processing new opposites frequently relies on prior knowledge. Traditional opposites at a

higher level, such as good/bad, male/female. Syntactic triggers, including coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, are frequently used to communicate oppositional and equal meanings (such as and, but, or, yet etc.).

### 3- Representing Actions/Events/States

Due to its “accessibility and ease of application to both literary and non-literary texts,” “Representing Actions, Events, and States” involves the study of transitivity possibilities, which depends on Simpson’s (1993, 2004) description of Halliday’s notion of transitivity. Halliday’s functional grammar, predicated on the notion that language is transformed by the social functions it has come to perform, includes transitivity. The interactions between the writer/speaker and the reader/hearer are the focus of Halliday’s interpersonal metafunction; the expression of our experiences of the world, both internal and external to the conscious self, is the focus of the ideational metafunction of language; and the textual metafunction is focused on grammatical systems related to the textual organisation (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

The ideational metafunction is realised in transitivity, which classifies experiences into several different process types and connects them to the individuals and circumstances that contributed to forming the clause. It is very helpful for revealing ideology in texts to observe how texts utilise linguistic strategies to lead, challenge, and enlighten the reader by critically analysing the syntax of the language.

### 4- Assuming and Implying

The term “assuming and implying” describes how knowledge is either considered background knowledge or implied in texts. Presuppositional and implicative processes (Levinson, 1983; Grice, 1975) realise this textual-conceptual function. Presuppositions make assumptions about the existence of the entity, the event, or the occurrence of events. For instance, in the NP “his beer drinking,” the possessive pronoun “his” assumes a man’s participation and the nominalised drinking activity. And in “He stopped snoring” implies that the participant was a guy and that snoring had previously occurred. Conversational implicatures are interpretations of the text that the reader derives by reading between the lines.

### 5- Negating

This tool enables the hearers to build a hypothetical worldview that is considered unreal. This is supported by Jeffries (2010, pp. 106-107) when she says that negation depends on the capacity of the hearers/readers to shape a certain case in his/her mind which is absolutely different from the one which is asserted in the given text. In turn, the hearers imagine this hypothetical situation since it has some types of persuasive power. What matters is that the pragmatic force played a significant part in creating this hypothetical situation in the hearer’s mind, even though these situations don’t actually occur (Braber et al., 2015, p. 394).

According to Jeffries (2010, pp. 108-9), negating can be achieved by a set of triggers like,

A- Syntactic triggers: Auxiliary or dummy verbs are employed by adding the negative component.

B- Using pronouns: Such as nobody, no one, etc.

C- Lexical triggers: These include nouns as in absence, lack, verbs as in reject, exclude, adjectives as in absent, scarce, and adverbs as in seldom and rarely.

D- Morphological triggers: Adding the negative prefix to adjectives such as irrational, unprofessional, and disagreeable, verbs such as dislike, and nouns such as inactivity.

### 6- Hypothesising

Jeffries (2010, pp. 14-5) also states that choosing a modality is one method of recognising ideologies in a text while addressing the modality’s hypothetical situations. Modality, according to her, has been mainly utilised in critical approaches and is one of the primary functional systems Halliday (1985) used to describe language. In other words, modality is stimulated by various textual elements, such as lexical verbs, modal adverbs or adjectives, conditional structures, etc.

### 7- Prioritising

This tool contains devices through which the text producer can prioritise or downplay the content of utterances through passivation, clefting, and the like (Jeffries, 2010, p. 88).

### 8- Exemplifying and Enumerating

It is challenging to distinguish between these tools. As a result of this, readers must use “pragmatic inferencing” to identify them. The primary distinction between them is that the list is suggestive when exemplifying presents in a text, but the list in a text that enumerates is comprehensive (Jeffries, 2016, p. 164).

### 9- Representing Time, Space and Society

This tool demonstrates how the text organises its deictic core and directs the readers’ attention there. In this method, a reader or listener adopts a perspective on a situation from within the text, increasing their sensitivity to textual ideology (Jeffries, 2016, p. 165).

### 10- Space, Time and Social Presentation

This tool explores “text world theory,” which examines how text producers create the world in terms of location, time, and society. Jeffries (2016) relies on the deixis model. The significance of deixis rests in the knowledge that it produces a particular interpretation of a specific speech in a specific setting; on the other hand, the absence of this knowledge produces misunderstanding. The purpose of using deictic terms is to draw attention to a certain period,

location, and social setting. The deictic center is expected to be occupied by the speaker or speakers of a certain text at a specific moment and location. The following are the main categories of deictic expressions used in English:

1-Deictic of place which is expressed by the use of adverbs such as *here* and *there*; demonstrative such as *this*, *that*, *those*, and *these*; prepositional structures such as *in front of*, *opposite to*, etc.

2-Deictic of time which is produced by using adverbs such as *now* and *then*, verb tenses, demonstrative, adverbials later, earlier, etc.

3-Deictic of social, which is produced by utilising the designation (Mr., DR.), and address forms (first name, nicknames, formal names).

### III. METHODOLOGY

The current study attempts to explore the toolkit of critical stylistics –negating- used by Joe Biden and Clinton on their inauguration addresses based on Jeffries' (2010) model of critical stylistics. The descriptive qualitative and quantitative methods describe the data and determine which category of negating is the most frequent. In the study, the researchers are regarded as the chief instruments of the study. Ary et al. (2010) said that in qualitative studies, human beings are primary instruments to gather and analyse the data study. The data is got from transcripts of both the president Joe Biden's Inauguration Address on 21 January 2021 from Time Magazine and Clinton's Inaugural address on 20 January 1993. The researchers follow the step of data analysis by Ko (2015). Initially, the researchers identify the inaugural address transcripts, which were presented by Joe Biden and Clinton, to examine the theme or issue. As a model for this paper, researchers choose the negating toolkit of Jeffries', and its various categories (2010) model for it is utilised dominantly in Biden's and Clinton's speeches, they represent what the president aims to do, and they are effective in showing the hidden ideologies. The thematic analysis is carried out by breaking down the collected data into smaller constituents to be analysed in descriptive treatment (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). In addition, the qualitative study is supported by frequencies and percentages to find out the most frequent category of negating and the motive behind utilising it.

### IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### A. Biden's Ideologies

TABLE 1  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF NEGATING BY BIDEN

Category of Function	Frequency in Biden's Inaugural	Percentage in Biden's Inaugural
Syntactic Triggers	22	44%
Lexical Triggers	18	36%
Pronouns	6	12%
Morphological Triggers	4	8%
Total	50	100%

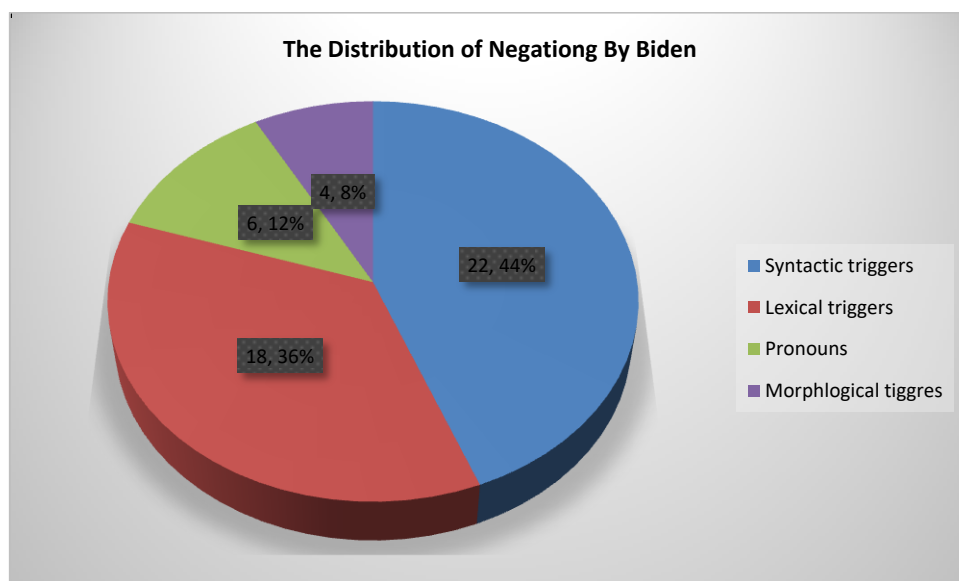


Figure 1. The Distribution of Negating by Biden

This can be shown by the following:

Extract (1)

"Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate, but of a cause, the cause of democracy."

An overarching theme that Biden focuses on is democracy in a moment of a confluence of crises such as a devastating pandemic, an economic downturn, racial justice, and climate change. Thus, utilising the syntactic trigger of negating not Biden shows the triumph of democracy over other issues after four years of Trump. Besides, he emphasises truth as healthy for any democracy.

Biden intends to overcome such crises so, in his first days in office, he pledges to fulfil climate change, which is given a priority in his administration. Using the syntactic trigger of negation not, he shows how his action is a strong one in that he wants to make all Americans cooperate in the fight against climate change. He intends to make America the leader of the world as it was before. This reveals the ideology of reformation as:

Extract (2)

“A cry for survival comes from the planet itself. A cry that can’t be any more desperate or any more clear.”

Biden attempts to unify the people by re-telling them the story of history many times, which depends on all the American people using the syntactic trigger of negating not. This reveals the ideology of inclusiveness for the president as:

Extract (3)

“The American story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us.”

Biden also utilises the lexical trigger of negation in his inaugural address as it scores 18 times, constituting 36%. Biden intends to make his audience realise these possible events even before the time of their taking place. He sticks to all categories of negation: syntactic, lexical, pronominal, and morphological categories. This can be stated by the following:

Extract (4)

“We must reject a culture in which facts are manipulated.”

Using the lexical trigger of negating reject makes the audience build a hypothetical world in which there is a chance for public debates based on shared facts and truths rather than lies and misinformation. This shows the ideology of credibility of the president.

When Biden talks about the dangerous effect of this pandemic virus, he also employs lexical negating as in lost and closed making the audience realise this positive hypothetical world in which there are many jobs and businesses even before the time of their taking place. This shows the ideology of restoration as in:

Extract (5)

“Millions of jobs have been lost.”

Extract (6)

“Hundreds of thousands of businesses closed.”

Biden repeatedly stresses that Americans should work together for unity in a moment of crisis and challenges such as domestic terrorism, and racial injustice promising his whole soul to overcome such challenges and make America once again the leading force for good. He comments on the importance of unity by utilising the lexical trigger of negating without and negative pronoun no, which is used only 6 times constituting (12%), making the audience build a virtual world which is devoid of such challenges. That is, America’s strength, peace, and progress can be attained through unity as in the following.

Extract (7)

“Without unity, there is no peace, only bitterness, and fury.”

Extract (8)

“No progress, only exhausting outrage.”

Extract (9)

“No nation, only a state of chaos.”

Extract (10)

“Unity is the path forward.”

Another big problem he talks about in his inaugural address is racism. He intends to create justice between races. He says that he will do anything he can to unite all races and create equal opportunity for all regardless of the colour of their skin. Thus, this time, he utilises lexical negating deferred and pronoun negating no and the ideology of justice between races is spotted. This can be shown by the following:

Extract (11)

“The dream of justice for all will be deferred no longer.”

Biden also utilises morphological trigger of negating (4) times constituting (8%). He focuses on unity more than once as it brings law, job, and hope as in:

“Uniting to fight the common foes we face extremism, lawlessness -----, joblessness, hopelessness”

Biden is interested in utilising the four categories of negating according to Jeffries’ model of the textual conceptual set of tools. These are syntactic, lexical, pronominal, and morphological triggers. Thus, Table 1 reveals a total of (50) triggers even though in different percentages. In fact, Biden seems to employ one category or another according to his own wish and more importantly, according to which ideology he wants to convey. The most dominant one is the syntactic trigger of negating as it is utilised (22) times constituting (44%).

TABLE 2  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF NEGATING BY CLINTON

Category of Function	Frequency in Clinton's inaugural	Percentage in Clinton's inaugural
Syntactic Triggers	15	39%
Lexical Triggers	11	32%
Pronouns	12	29%
Morphological Triggers	0	0%
Total		

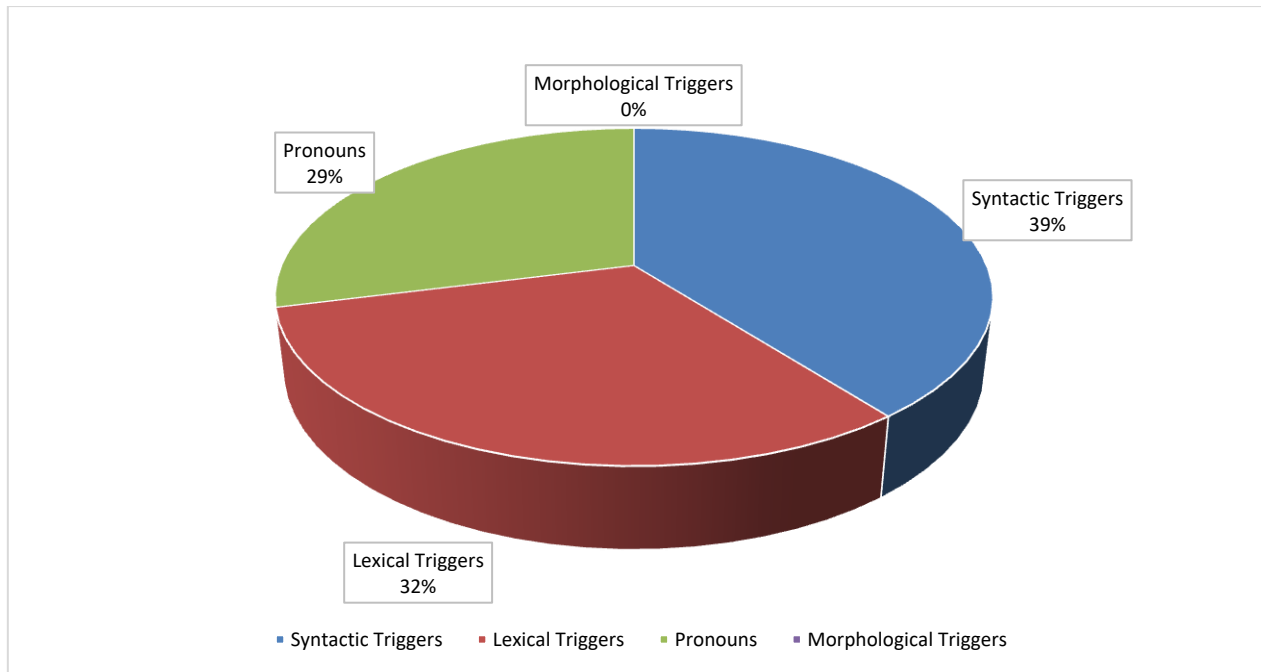


Figure 2. Distribution of Negating by Clinton

### B. Clinton's Ideologies

Clinton seems to package his speech up with only three categories of negating namely: syntactic, lexical, and pronouns. However, they are distributed with different proportions. Thus, Table 2 reveals a total of 38 negating triggers in his first inaugural address. The most dominant one is the syntactic trigger of negating as it occurs 15 times with a percentage (39%). By utilising syntactic triggers of negating, Clinton draws a strong positive world, though hypothetical to evoke some crucial ideological effect in the hearers' minds to fulfil his aims and make them struggle for the sake of their country. This can be shown by the following:

When our founders boldly declared America's independence to the world and our purposes to the Almighty, they knew that America, to endure, would have to change, not change for change's sake but change to preserve America's ideals: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness.

After declaring America's independence, an overriding theme Clinton focused on in his first inaugural address is a clarification call for generational change utilising the syntactic trigger of negating not. This change must be for the sake of the whole community, and it is worrisome if this change does not happen as it has sluggish effects on all aspects of American life. This reveals the ideology of patriotism.

Clinton issues a call for collective responsibility in a post-cold War world using the syntactic trigger of negating not. That is, he asks the American people to take care of one another, and all Americans are responsible for the future nation. This reveals the ideology of inclusiveness as in:

Extract (12)

"Let us take more responsibility not only for ourselves and our family but for our communities and our country."

An effective picture occurs through constructing and interpreting non-existent versions of the world which are created for many different reasons" utilising the syntactic trigger of negating (Jeffries, 2010, p. 106). Thus, he says:

Extract (13)

"Our democracy must be not only the envy of the world but the engine of our new renewal."

By virtue of the syntactic trigger of negating not, Clinton attempts to say that democracy must be a source for renewal in all aspects of American life. Two ideologies of Clinton – democracy and renewal-are spotted.

Extract (14)

"To renew America, we must be bold. We must do what no generation has had to do before: we must compete for every opportunity. It will not be easy. It will require sacrifice, not choosing sacrifice for its own but for our own sake."

As far as negating is concerned, Clinton issues a call for unique work and sacrifice for the sake of the American citizens to save them from what they suffer from. This shows the ideologies of patriotism and the reformation of America. What is more, he intends to make his government completely different from the one in the previous era, that is, a government which tackles all problems as in:

Extract (15)

“A Government for our tomorrow, not our yesterday”

As shown in Table 2, Lexical negation is also utilised in the second rank. It occurs (12) times constituting (32 %). This can be shown by the following:

Extract (16)

“We inherit an economy that is still the world’s strongest but is weakened by business failure, stagnant wages, increasing inequality and deep divisions among our own people.”

Another problem he emphasises on in his first inaugural address is a sluggish economy which needs extra help to improve it very quickly. More specifically, using the lexical trigger of negating weaken, he concentrates on the way business is done in Washington. This reveals the ideology of reformation of damaged heritage in a post-cold-war world.

By using the lexical trigger of negating, he talks about a collective responsibility in the post-cold War generation to rebuild the nation and lead a renewed America though they encounter a kind of hatred and threat. This reveals the ideology of amelioration as in:

Extract (17)

“Today, a generation raised in the shadows of the cold war assumes new responsibilities in a world warmed by the sunshine of freedom but threatened still by ancient hatreds and new plagues.”

Though Clinton concedes that the nation encounters such deficits, he builds hope for a future in which there is a kind of freedom. Thus, utilising lexical negating less shows an ideology of great positive transformation as in:

Extract (18)

“Today, the new world is freer, but less stable.”

Clinton attempts to convince the audience using such lexical triggers of negating as shrink, fail in addition to syntactic trigger of negating not as in:

Extract (19)

“While America rebuilds at home, we will not shrink from the challenges nor fail to seize the opportunities of this new world.”

His administration pledges to do its part, renew the nation, and stand in front of all challenges if the nation does its part to serve.

Clinton utilises negative pronouns (11) times constituting (29%). In fact, when Clinton won as the president in the post-cold War, the nation suffered from a lot of problems such as unemployment, a sluggish economy, and a health care crisis. Thus, by virtue of the negative pronoun no, he constructs a hypothetical world characterised by the need for all Americans to cooperate with one another to serve the common good in order to overcome all these deficits. The ideology of renewal of America is spotted as in:

Extract (20)

“To that work, I now turn with all the authority of my office. I ask the Congress to join me. But no president, no Congress, and no government can undertake this mission alone. My fellow Americans, you,”

What is more, he excoriates the bad habit of people of “expecting something for nothing, from our government, or from each other”. People should depend on the new government without hesitation. This reveals the ideology of confidence in government.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

From this paper, we can conclude the following:

1- Negation is a useful toolkit, whether at a past time or in the present. The harsh circumstances of a nation are reflected through all negative triggers. What the president intends to present in his policy concentrating on the problems the nation encounters are represented through all triggers of negating. Jeffries’ view of negating which implies constructing a hypothetical world besides the negative one has persuasive power. This, in turn, creates confidence in the president and his actions.

2- What we deal with is the speech of presidents and not specialists in language and linguistics; thus, they tend to utilise the common one, which is the syntactic category of negating. In addition, the purposes require syntactic category more than other categories.

3- Since the president expresses his vision to the nation in an inaugural address, all the ideologies are positive in both Clinton’s and Biden’s, such as unity, reformation, renewal, and democracy.

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# Unveiling the New Frontier: ChatGPT-3 Powered Translation for Arabic-English Language Pairs

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**Abstract**—This study evaluates the aptitude of ChatGPT for Arabic-English machine translation. The main objective of this research is to scrutinize the quality of ChatGPT's translations and compare its performance against machine translation systems, such as Google Translate, which are intricately tailored for translation purposes. In addition, the study seeks to investigate the potential integration of ChatGPT into translation workflows. Furthermore, we aspire to discern whether ChatGPT's translation efficacy harmonizes with or diverges from the profound finesse exhibited by human translation expertise. To accomplish this, a comparable corpus of 1000 English sentences and their corresponding Arabic translations was employed to evaluate the translation outputs of both machine translation systems alongside a human translation reference. The corpus was sourced from Tatoeba, an open online platform and underwent electronic assessment using the BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy) metric. The results indicate a marginal advantage of ChatGPT over Google Translate in delivering high-quality translations. Upon evaluating the corpus, we ascertain that ChatGPT performs impressively well compared to specialized translation systems like Google Translate. However, despite these promising findings, it is essential to acknowledge that even the most advanced machine translation technology, ChatGPT, cannot currently match the proficiency of human translation, at least not in the near future.

**Index Terms**—ChatGPT-3-powered translation, machine translation, Google Translate, comparative study

## I. INTRODUCTION

Machine Translation (MT) stands as a critical field of exploration within the realm of natural language processing, and it has garnered significant attention in recent times. The core objective of MT involves the automated conversion of textual information from one language to another, facilitated by computational means. Hence, a proficient translation system must possess robust capabilities in comprehending and generating language, ensuring the production of apt and fluid translations. Previous studies (Liu et al., 2019; Guo et al., 2020) reveal that language models have the potential to improve source text comprehension through translation systems, but they face difficulties in producing perfect translation. Notably, ChatGPT has proven to be exceptionally skilled in comprehending and producing natural language, as seen by its ability to do so in a variety of contexts and produce responses that are human-like. As a result, the examination into using ChatGPT in the field of translations appears to be an intriguing and promising direction for further research.

Automatically translating text from one language to another is the focus of neural machine translation (NMT), a key task in the field of natural language processing (NLP) (Kocmi & Federmann, 2023; He et al., 2022; Stahlberg, 2020). Despite extensive research over the years, machine translation still grapples with several hurdles. These include tackling idiomatic expressions, managing translations for languages with limited resources, addressing uncommon words and upholding the flow and coherence of the translated text (He et al., 2022). The recent emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT (Wei et al., 2022; Ouyang et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2020) has significantly propelled the advancements in machine translation. Notably, LLMs can accomplish zero-shot machine translation, where a model is capable of translating between language pairs it has never been explicitly trained on, at a level comparable to robust, fully supervised MT systems. Moreover, these LLMs find utility across various applications beyond machine translation (Jiao et al., 2023; Wei et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023).

ChatGPT, an AI chatbot developed by OpenAI and introduced in November 2022 (Ouyang et al., 2022), can comprehend instructions within prompts and furnish comprehensive replies. As per the official website (OpenAI, 2023), ChatGPT can respond and engage in subsequent queries, acknowledge errors, contest flawed premises and rebuff inappropriate solicitations within the conversational framework. The platform amalgamates diverse proficiencies in natural language processing, encompassing areas like addressing queries, weaving narratives, employing logical reasoning, debugging code, machine translation, and more. We are particularly focused on evaluating ChatGPT's performance in machine translation tasks, specifically comparing its performance with that of Google Translate.

We have formulated a set of research questions and hypotheses to guide our investigation.

1. How well does ChatGPT-3-powered translation fare in Arabic-English machine translation?
2. Does ChatGPT-3 surpass Google Translate in its ability to translate between Arabic and English?
3. To what extent can ChatGPT be integrated into translation workflows particularly for Arabic-English translation tasks?

4. To what extent does ChatGPT-3's performance in Arabic-English machine translation align with or deviate from human translation proficiency?

The following hypotheses can be derived from the above research questions:

H1: ChatGPT-3-powered translation exhibits commendable performance in Arabic-English machine translation.

H2: ChatGPT-3 demonstrates superior performance in Arabic-English machine translation when compared to Google Translate.

H3: The integration of ChatGPT-3 into translation workflows has the potential to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Arabic-English translation tasks.

H4: The performance of ChatGPT-3 in Arabic-English machine translation partially aligns with human translation proficiency, yet do not fully replicate, the nuanced quality of translations achieved by human translators.

By addressing these research questions and testing the associated hypotheses, this study contributes to our understanding of ChatGPT's applicability for Arabic-English machine translation in an effort to contribute to this rapidly changing field.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

ChatGPT, a transformer-based model, utilizes natural language understanding to create translations. Unlike specialized machine translation systems, ChatGPT does not rely heavily on an extensive collection of parallel data for translation generation. Instead, it learns language structure and produces translations using a small collection of monolingual data (Frąckiewicz, 2023). The primary benefit of ChatGPT lies in its ability to generate high-quality translations even when provided with limited data. This characteristic makes it particularly suitable for languages with few available resources, a scenario often seen in low-resource languages (Frąckiewicz, 2023). Given that Arabic is regarded as a language with limited resources (Almansor et al., 2020; Amayreh & Amayreh, 2020), this research is significant since it examines ChatGPT's performance in translating between Arabic and English.

ChatGPT has proven its capacity to provide translations for low-resource languages, such as Vietnamese, Japanese and Korean, which are noticeably better in quality than those produced by specialized machine translation systems. This is mainly because ChatGPT adopts sophisticated deep learning technique to extract knowledge from sparse input, leading to more accurate translations (Nguyen et al., 2023). In short, ChatGPT is changing the way that low-resource languages are translated. Even with little data, ChatGPT can produce excellent translations due to its strong deep learning framework. This capability facilitates people's access to translations in their native languages (Frąckiewicz, 2023), representing a significant breakthrough in machine translation. Its influence on our approach to translation accessibility is bound to be enduring and transformative.

The initial launch of ChatGPT relied on the GPT-3.5 framework. The inclusion of "Chat" in its title alludes to its role as a conversational bot, while "GPT" is an abbreviation for generative pre-trained transformer, which denotes a category of extensive language models (LLM) (WEF, 2023). A new version, built upon GPT-4, the latest innovation from OpenAI, debuted on the 14th of March 2023. Access to this version is restricted to paying subscribers on a limited scale.

Though primarily designed as an intelligent conversational tool, ChatGPT can undertake various human-like tasks, such as crafting poems or resolving coding errors. Nevertheless, recent research by Jiao et al. (2023) indicates that ChatGPT, when provided with unsophisticated prompts, exhibits a noticeable disparity in performance when compared to other commercial translation systems like Google Translate and DeepL Translate. Unlike its counterparts, ChatGPT can adapt its output bias based on the prompt it receives. This means that users can input a range of translation prompts into the dialogue box alongside the source content rather than solely requesting translations from ChatGPT. Since OpenAI only offers a web interface for accessing ChatGPT, it is impossible to alter its internal components or access the intermediary representation of the system. Consequently, in the context of this research, we employed prompts for ChatGPT that delineated its translation task and contextual domain. This strategic approach served to guide its attention towards the specific input data, thereby aiming to augment the quality of the generated translations.

ChatGPT has been trained on extensive datasets encompassing a range of subjects. This prompts us to consider its proficiency in handling sentences tied to specific fields or potentially unclear ones. In order to activate ChatGPT's translation capabilities, we engaged in a conversation with the system. We inquired about its prowess in providing translation services and gauged its level of performance in this aspect. The answer is:



I apologize for any confusion, but I am not a dedicated translation service. While I can certainly assist with translation tasks and provide translations between languages, my primary function is as a language model designed to understand and generate human-like text based on the input I receive.



For simple or non-critical translation tasks, I can be quite helpful. However, for complex or professional translations, it's recommended to consult a human translator who can understand nuances, cultural context, and specialized terminology better than I can. My translations are generated algorithmically and might not capture the full depth and accuracy that a human translator can provide.

In addition, we provide prompts to ChatGPT in accordance with Gao et al. (2023), as prompts can improve ChatGPT's functionality. The researchers discovered that employing our suggested translation prompts can amplify ChatGPT's translation performance. The study's prompts encompass instructing ChatGPT to undertake Arabic-to-English translation tasks and identify the text's precise domain. For this research, we used the following prompt "Provide English translations for the following Arabic sentences. These sentences span various everyday subjects and are not limited to any particular genre or specialized field".

According to the insights of Gao et al. (2023), when ChatGPT is furnished with accurate particulars concerning the input text, like the translation task and contextual domain through the prompt, it can significantly enhance its performance. However, if the information becomes exceedingly intricate or laden with noise, this could lead to substantial deterioration in performance. Moreover, incorporating the few-shot example technique warrants serious consideration as these instances carry a wealth of implicit information that cannot be explicitly conveyed through specific text passages.

According to information on the official website (OpenAI, 2023), ChatGPT has been refined using Reinforcement Learning from Human Feedback (RLHF). The aim is to boost the capabilities of these models enabling them to generate responses resembling human-like interactions. Through extensive exposure to vast amounts of text data, it learns to create detailed replies by adhering to instructions given in prompts. Despite its primary role as an intelligent conversational tool, ChatGPT is also adept at various human-like tasks, including machine translation. Nevertheless, recent research by Jiao et al. (2023) has highlighted a noticeable performance disparity between ChatGPT and other commercial translation systems like Google Translate and DeepL Translate. This disparity is even more pronounced when dealing with languages in short supply (Gao et al., 2023). As a result, we will delve into the comparative translation performance of ChatGPT and Google Translate using Arabic, a language with limited resources.

#### BLEU metric evaluation

Throughout the development of MT systems, a range of evaluation criteria are employed to gauge the enhancements made to these systems. These metrics can also serve the purpose of contrasting different MT systems. It is crucial to grasp the implications of the scores yielded by automated metrics when gauging the translation quality. These metrics are primarily built on the premise that MT's quality should resemble Human translation (HT). Human reference translation is a fundamental requirement to employ these automated metrics. Evaluating MT systems entails a comparative examination of their output concerning reference translation. These evaluation metrics furnish evaluative scores grounded in the reference translation that bears the closest resemblance (Rossi & Carré 2022).

The BLEU measurement assesses translation quality by considering adequacy and fluency. This involves evaluating how precisely words match between translations. The accuracy metrics like Precision, Recall, F-measure and BLEU-n are used to gauge the quality of translation. Higher scores in these metrics indicate better translation quality. For instance, BLEU focuses on the accuracy of n-grams. It measures how close the output from an MT system is to a professional HT of the same text. BLEU primarily distinguishes unsatisfactory and satisfactory MT outputs based on modified n-gram precision. This is calculated by comparing the matching n-grams between the translated text and source divided by the total n-grams in the translated text being evaluated. Each n-gram order's precision is calculated, and these precisions are then averaged together geometrically. In BLEU, the standard maximum n-gram order, frequently referred to as a string of four words, is employed. In order to discourage the use of sentences that are shorter than the reference translation, the metric calculates a modified precision score that has been adjusted with a brevity penalty. The resulting scores range from 0 to 1. Formulas 1 and 2 depict the calculation process employed by the BLEU metric. Formula 2 demonstrates how the BLEU score is calculated from the BP stated in Formula 1.

#### Formula 1

$$Bp = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } c > r \\ \vdots & \vdots \\ e^{1 - r/c} & \text{if } c \leq r \end{cases}$$

## Formula 2

$$BLEU = BP.exp \left( \sum_{n=1}^N w_n \log P_n \right)$$

Where  $N = 4$  and uniform weights  $w_n = (1/N)$  [2]

BLEU scores furnish a quantitative measure of translation quality by juxtaposing machine-generated translations against human-crafted counterparts. These scores (see figure 1) are assigned within a range that typically spans from 0 to 1, 0 to 10, or 0 to 100, with elevated values indicative of superior translation performance. In a simpler context, a perfect score of 100 signifies an impeccable alignment between the machine-generated translation and its human-authored counterpart (Aiken, 2019).

BLEU Score	Interpretation
< 10	Almost useless
10 - 19	Hard to get the gist
20 - 29	The gist is clear, but has significant grammatical errors
30 - 40	Understandable to good translations
40 - 50	High quality translations
50 - 60	Very high quality, adequate, and fluent translations
> 60	Quality often better than human

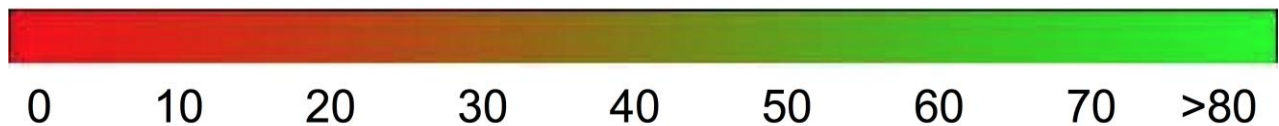


Figure 1. Interpretation of the BLEU Score (Evaluating Models | AutoML Translation Documentation | Google Cloud)

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent advances in MT are primarily attributable to incorporating sizable language models like ChatGPT. This literature review aims to analyze and summarize findings from several studies exploring ChatGPT's capabilities, design approaches and evaluation methodologies in machine translation. Jiao et al. (2023) presented a compelling case for the enhanced translation capabilities of ChatGPT when powered by the GPT-4 engine. The study emphasized how GPT-4 integration significantly improved ChatGPT's translation capabilities, particularly in understanding idiomatic expressions, context, and finer linguistic details. The accuracy and fluency of the translations significantly improved as a result of this synergy. The study showed that ChatGPT, combined with the GPT-4 engine, became a proficient translator capable of competing with professional translation services for even far-off and low-resource languages (Jiao et al., 2023). The results confirmed ChatGPT's development into a skilled translator with expanded language coverage and improved robustness across various linguistic contexts, substantiating its expanding role in the machine translation landscape.

While Jiao et al. (2023) focused on the enhanced capabilities of ChatGPT with the GPT-4 engine, Gao et al. (2023) delved into the influence of prompt design on its translation quality. They (2023) focused on the influence of prompt design on ChatGPT's translation quality. Through empirical research, the researchers examined various translation prompts to improve the model's capacity to produce accurate and contextually appropriate translations. The study noted ChatGPT's potential to support machine translation and illuminated prompts' crucial role in maximizing translation outcomes. The research demonstrated that ChatGPT, when directed by carefully crafted prompts, could achieve comparable or even superior performance compared to commercial translation systems. This was done by experimenting with different prompts across various translations. The results showed how prompt design and ChatGPT's strength in natural language understanding and generation worked harmoniously, advancing machine translation capabilities.

Wang et al. (2023) explored the application of ChatGPT to document-level translation shedding light on its capacity to ensure coherence and consistency within extended texts. The study evaluated ChatGPT's performance in generating cohesive translations for entire documents providing crucial insights into its scalability within practical translation scenarios. Discourse modelling was a central theme in Wang et al.'s (2023) investigation, which focused on three main areas: the influence of Discourse-Aware Prompts on discourse phenomena and translation quality; a comparison of ChatGPT's translation abilities with advanced document-level MT methods and commercial MT systems and an analysis of discourse modelling capabilities and the effects of training techniques.

A comprehensive framework was presented by Peng et al. (2023) to utilize ChatGPT's capabilities in machine translation. They proposed strategies encompassing input text preprocessing, model fine-tuning and output post-processing to enhance translation accuracy and coherence. The study discussed the drawbacks of earlier methods that relied on straightforward prompts and fell short of utilizing ChatGPT's capabilities entirely. Domain-Specific Prompts

(DSP) and Task-Specific Prompts (TSP) were developed due to the researchers' investigations into several variables, including temperature, task information and domain information. The results provided key insights: lowering temperature improved performance, task emphasis improved results, domain knowledge improved generalization, and these prompts could reduce ChatGPT's propensity for hallucinations in non-English-centric MT tasks.

In contrast to Peng et al. (2023), who presented strategies to enhance translation accuracy, the study by Bang et al. (2023) explored a wider context of ChatGPT's reasoning abilities and interactivity. Bang et al.'s (2023) conducted thorough analysis that examined ChatGPT in a wider context. It included a range of tasks, languages and modalities. This study went beyond translation evaluation to explore ChatGPT's reasoning abilities, resistance to hallucinations, and interactivity in translation scenarios. The authors suggested a quantitative evaluation framework for interactive Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT using 23 datasets covering eight different NLP application tasks. This evaluation considered multitasking, multilingualism, and multimodal interaction by combining existing datasets with a newly created multimodal dataset. The study's results demonstrated ChatGPT's impressive performance, frequently outperforming zero-shot learning benchmarks and even refined models on various tasks.

While Peng et al. (2023) and Bang et al. (2023) presented comprehensive frameworks and assessed ChatGPT's performance across a range of tasks and modalities, the research understudy focused on the translation aspect and its application to a particular language pair. It focused on Arabic-English machine translation and contrasted ChatGPT's performance against Google Translate. By doing so, we address a research gap by examining ChatGPT's potential in this field, while also advancing our understanding of its overall performance.

The study by Lu et al. (2023) introduced a novel method called "Error Analysis Prompting" to assess the translation quality of LLMs, such as ChatGPT, in a way that closely resembles human evaluation. This method involved identifying specific error types in the translation output and prompting the model to rectify these errors. Error Analysis Prompting enables LLMs such as ChatGPT to produce MT evaluations that resemble human evaluations at the system and segment levels. The research findings not only discussed ChatGPT's advantages and disadvantages as an MT evaluator but also offered insightful advice on how to create powerful prompts for context-aware learning, encouraging further advancements in translation assessment methods.

Similarly, Lyu, Xu and Wang (2023) explored MT's dynamic landscape facilitated by LLMs like ChatGPT. They explained how ChatGPT was applied in novel ways in MT to address the changing problems in the field. Their study effectively pushed the boundaries of translation quality and efficiency in the context of MT by utilizing ChatGPT's capabilities. The authors envisioned and suggested various futures for MT based on LLMs, such as stylized MT, interactive MT and MT based on Translation Memory. These novel directions highlighted the potential of LLMs and herald the emergence of cutting-edge strategies to improve translational effectiveness.

The performance of ChatGPT, specifically in translating between Arabic and English, was examined in the study by Khoshafah (2023). The study aimed to evaluate the ChatGPT 3.5 model's translation precision in light of its cross-cultural communication applications. The study entailed translating texts of various genres, including those with historical, literary, media, legal and scientific content and then contrasting ChatGPT's translations with those of trained human translators. Language accuracy and context coherence were the evaluation criteria. The results highlighted ChatGPT's aptness for translating simpler content and its limitations in accurately comprehending complex texts.

Despite the thorough exploration of numerous aspects of ChatGPT's capabilities and its application in machine translation within previous literature analysis, this study distinguishes itself by directly comparing the performance of ChatGPT-3 and Google Translate with a specific focus on translating from Arabic to English. This comprehensive comparison sheds light on the performance of these two well-known translation systems.

Furthermore, the assessment of their performance not only grants us valuable insights into their suitability for seamless integration into diverse workflows but also underscores the far-reaching implications and practical applications of incorporating ChatGPT into contexts entailing professional translation. Moreover, the appraisal of ChatGPT-3's performance in relation to the proficiency of human translators, as evaluated through the BLEU metric, serves to enrich our understanding of machine translation technology's capacity to achieve translation quality on par with that produced by humans.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a quantitative research methodology. The process includes systematic data gathering, thorough analysis, and rigorous evaluation of translation quality within the established context of recognized machine translation metrics and standards.

##### A. Data Collection Procedures

Due to the constraints posed by the limited availability of Arabic datasets and computing resources, our data collection process focused on a subset of 1000 arbitrary sentences. These sentences were extracted from Tatoeba (2023), an online collaborative platform that offers an extensive array of sentences in numerous languages. Tatoeba's main objective is to establish a varied and all-encompassing repository of sentences beneficial for acquiring languages, practicing translation and conducting linguistic investigations. Tatoeba operates as an open-source initiative, with its

data accessible through a Creative Commons license. Consequently, the material on Tatoeba can be freely employed and distributed contingent upon proper acknowledgement and adherence to the licensing conditions.

To ensure methodological rigor, both ChatGPT and Google Translate were accessed via their publicly available web interfaces. A common set of sentences was selected for translation using both systems, ensuring the uniformity of evaluation conditions and minimizing the influence of random variables. This meticulous approach enhances the reliability and comparability of our analysis.

The choice to employ the free versions of Google Translate and ChatGPT aligns seamlessly with prevailing market trends. A significant proportion of users, spanning individuals to small enterprises, opt for these accessible solutions to meet their translation needs (Li et al., 2020; Alves, 2019; Plitt & O'Brien, 2018; Koehn et al., 2017). The affordability and ease of access offered by these free versions make them particularly suitable for a comprehensive investigation of this nature.

In line with best practices, Google Translate was chosen as a benchmark for comparison due to its generally reliable performance. Established in 2006, Google Translate has grown to become one of the leading machine translation tools. It currently supports 133 languages, with an additional 24 languages added in 2022 (Harby, 2023). The level of accuracy varies depending on the language combination and the content being translated. Some reports suggest that Google Translate can achieve an accuracy rate of up to 94% (Castilho et al., 2019). The pivotal moment in Google's translation quality came in 2016 when it adopted NMT. This transition significantly improved the quality of translated output. According to the information provided by the technology giant, Google Neural Machine Translation (GNMT) reduced over 60% of translation errors for major language pairs (Harby, 2023). Regarding dependability and precision, Google Translate stands out, particularly for languages with limited resources. In 2022, Google Translate secured the top position among 18 other machine translation engines for nearly all language combinations, as revealed by the MT evaluation program conducted by Intento (Harby, 2023).

#### *B. Data Analysis*

To gauge the performance of both ChatGPT and Google Translate, we employ the BLEU metric, a cornerstone of machine translation evaluation. While alternative metrics such as METEOR, TER, BLEU, and NIST exist within the machine translation community, the prevailing consensus endorses BLEU as the primary yardstick for developers (Maučec & Donaj, 2019). As attested by Warner (2022), BLEU stands as the most frequently adopted metric, underscoring its relevance and widespread usage. Accordingly, BLEU scores constitute the focal point of assessment within our study, affording a comprehensive view of translation precision.

Our decision to employ BLEU scores aligns with the aim of capturing the nuanced differences between the translations generated by ChatGPT and Google Translate. This metric not only provides an objective and consistent means of assessment but also grants us the ability to delineate the varying degrees of fidelity each system achieves when translating from Arabic to English. As we delve into the ensuing analysis, these BLEU scores will serve as the bedrock upon which the comparative evaluation of translation accuracy will be conducted.

### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis focused on comparing the ratio of flawed sentences to those lacking meaningful insights in machine translation. The findings were presented in figure 2 which displays the outcomes of an automated calculation determining the accuracy of ChatGPT and Google MT systems across varying four-gram sizes. The process entailed computing the BP, identifying the reference with more common n-grams, computing the length (represented by 'r' as per formula 1) and then evaluating the total length of the MT translation denoted as 'c'. This method amalgamated precision values into an overall score called the BLEU score.

After evaluating 1000 sentences in our dataset, the n gram scores for ChatGPT (green) were found to be as follows; 1-gram: 77.56, 2-gram: 67.49, 3-gram: 59.77, 4-gram: 53.30. These scores were found to surpass those of Google Translate (blue) which were: 1-gram: 75.96, 2-gram: 66.20, 3-gram: 58.78, 4-gram: 52.51".

The results signify a more favorable outcome for ChatGPT, indicating that it produced translations with a higher degree of accuracy and meaningful content when compared to Google Translate. Specifically, ChatGPT achieved a BLEU score of 53.30, surpassing Google Translate's score of 52.51. However, it is important to note that even with ChatGPT's more positive performance, the analysis still revealed the presence of errors in a number of examined sentences, suggesting the need for subsequent editing to enhance translation quality and overall coherence.

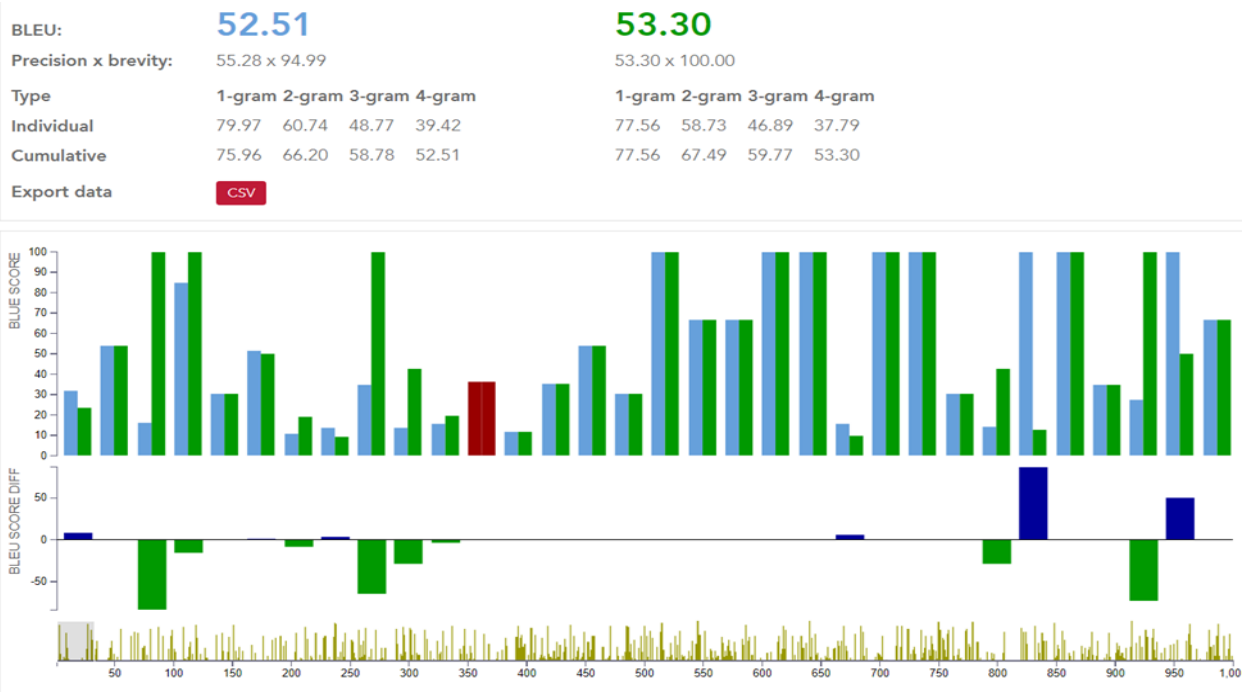


Figure 2. BLEU Scores for Google Translate and ChatGPT

Google Translate  
ChatGPT

To illustrate the observed variations in translation quality between ChatGPT (green) and Google Translate (blue), the following examples are taken randomly through the BLEU metric system.

Sentence	BLEU	Length ratio	Text
22			
Human	100.00	1.00	It ' s fine today .
Machine	15.62	1.17	Today ' s weather is beautiful .
Machine	9.65	1.00	The weather today is beautiful .
Sentence	BLEU	Length ratio	Text
33			
Human	100.00	1.00	Cancer can be cured easily if it is found in its first phase .
Machine	19.24	0.93	Cancer can be treated if it is detected in the early stages .
Machine	4.27	0.79	You can treat cancer if detected in the early stages .
Sentence	BLEU	Length ratio	Text
44			
Human	100.00	1.00	Today our artificial satellites are revolving around the earth .
Machine	33.28	0.80	Today our satellites revolve around the earth .
Machine	30.72	0.90	Today , our satellites orbit around the Earth .
Sentence	BLEU	Length ratio	Text
49			
Human	100.00	1.00	Japan relies on Arab countries for oil .
Machine	11.04	1.25	Japan depends on the oil of the Arab countries .
Machine	28.12	1.00	Japan relies on oil from Arab countries .
Sentence	BLEU	Length ratio	Text
327			
Human	100.00	1.00	I ' m gonna have to call you back .
Machine	27.59	0.60	I will call you back .
Machine	5.48	0.60	I will contact you again .

Figure 3 (a, b, c, d, e). Examples of Translation Quality Comparison  
Randomly Selected Examples of Translations From the Dataset, Evaluated Using the BLEU Metric System  
Source: Adapted From Data Collected in This Study.



This paper aimed to evaluate ChatGPT's performance in machine translation tasks, specifically comparing its performance with that of Google Translate. For this purpose, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How well does ChatGPT-3-powered translation fare in Arabic-English machine translation?
2. Does ChatGPT-3 surpass Google Translate in its ability to translate between Arabic and English?
3. To what extent can ChatGPT be integrated into translation workflows particularly for Arabic-English translation tasks?
4. To what extent does ChatGPT-3's performance in Arabic-English machine translation align with or deviate from human translation proficiency?

Based on the analysis, we can now discuss the findings of this research in relation to the abovementioned research questions and the corresponding hypotheses.

H1: ChatGPT-3-powered translation exhibits commendable performance in Arabic-English machine translation.

We confirmed the research hypothesis as our analysis demonstrates that ChatGPT-3-powered translation displays commendable performance in the realm of Arabic-English machine translation. Based on the interpretation of BLEU scores in figure 1, ChatGPT's score signifies the translation's high quality. The model categorized the outcome as "Very high quality, sufficient, and fluent translations".

H2: ChatGPT-3 demonstrates superior performance in Arabic-English machine translation when compared to Google Translate.

We confirmed the research hypothesis as BLUE score for ChatGPT is higher than Google Translate score.

H3: The integration of ChatGPT-3 into translation workflows has the potential to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of Arabic-English translation tasks.

We confirmed the research hypothesis as according to figure 1, the model categorized the score as "Very high quality, sufficient, and fluent translations." This implies that it can be seamlessly integrated into professional workflows.

H4: The performance of ChatGPT-3 in Arabic-English machine translation partially aligns with human translation proficiency, yet does not fully replicate the nuanced quality of translations achieved by human translators.

We confirmed the research hypothesis as the results demonstrated that ChatGPT-3's performance in Arabic-English machine translation is "Very high quality, sufficient, and fluent translations" according to the BLEU score of 53.30. However, this score remains below the threshold of surpassing human translation quality (typically above 60), indicating a partial replication of the nuanced and contextually rich translations achieved by human translators.

By addressing these research questions and testing the associated hypotheses, this study offers fresh perspectives on the practical utility, comparative effectiveness, and human parity elements of ChatGPT-3 in the context of Arabic-English translation, and, thus, contributes to the advancement of academic discourse. This multifaceted exploration contributes to the theoretical discourse and carries significant implications for the practical implementation of these translation systems in real-world scenarios.

Based on our analysis, one could argue that ChatGPT can be used as long as it is not your only step in the translation workflow. It can be used in the translation workflow if additional steps are taken; grammatical and spelling proofreading and localization for cultural nuances.

ChatGPT could perform the same tasks as other machine translation tools. It assists translators in providing even better, faster, and more efficient translations of spoken or written text. It reduces the duration and expense of translation services enabling translators to produce translations more quickly without compromising quality. Also, it reduces the cost and increases the availability of translation services, particularly for individuals and small businesses.

When we asked ChatGPT if it was good at translating languages, the tool admitted its shortcomings. In the machine's words:



Yes, I'm capable of assisting with translation tasks. I can translate text between various languages. Please provide the text you would like to translate along with the target language, and I'll do my best to assist you. Keep in mind that while I can provide translations, for complex or critical translations, it's always a good idea to consult a human translator to ensure accuracy and nuance.



The ongoing debate surrounding machine versus HT persists, revolving around whether MT will eventually supplant HT, particularly at a time when MT continues to make strides. MT has notably diminished the language barrier. After all, MT surpasses humans in at least two key aspects of translation: its ability to work much more swiftly and cost-effectively. These advantages are particularly appealing in today's landscape, where saving time and money is paramount for most businesses. Consequently, certain translators express apprehension that excessive progress in MT might jeopardize their professional prospects.

However, MTs are riddled with numerous shortcomings, limiting their applicability in various spheres of life. Outputs from platforms like Google Translate, ChatGPT-3 powered translation and comparable systems only serve a



specific purpose: to glean the overall meaning of the source text. However, human ingenuity and intellect remain integral components of translation, and thus far, no software has succeeded in replicating these qualities.

MT is and will continue to be utilized, but the necessity for human evaluation of translation quality persists if only to ensure accuracy (Puchała-Ladzińska, 2016). Machines can expedite the translation process, yet they can neither entirely replace the human factor nor attain the pinnacle of excellence.

In the meantime, machine translation systems should be regarded as tools for translation assistance, while human translators take on the role of post-editors. Machine translation can establish a base for professional translators to review, rephrase, enhance the writing style and adapt the content to fit the specific context and audience of the target language. This means that instead of starting from scratch, the translator cross-checks, proofreads and refines machine-generated translations. A notable advantage of this collaboration between humans and machines is the increased efficiency of the translator.

The connection between machines and humans is one of mutual supplementation. According to statistics and ongoing research, modern technologies like machine translation will never be capable of completely supplanting humans; their role is more about aiding rather than jeopardizing human translators (Şahin & Gürses, 2021). Translators adept in using machine translation possess a competitive edge over those unfamiliar with current translation tools.

Hence, the apprehensions among human translators regarding potential displacement by machines in the future are unfounded. Nevertheless, the role of the translator is anticipated to evolve inevitably. Human translators might shift from being direct translators to becoming editors, refining materials previously translated by machines as machine translation systems advance further.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study has preliminarily assessed ChatGPT's capabilities for machine translation between Arabic and English. This study aimed to evaluate the translation capabilities of ChatGPT and identified its position in the translation workflow by comparing its output with that of Google Translate. The study used a comparable corpus of 1000 Tatoeba sentences assessed using the BLEU metric. The results showed that ChatGPT outperforms commercial translation systems like Google Translate in producing high-quality output and even slightly outperforms them when given specific translation tasks and context domains. Despite significant progress in ChatGPT's translation capabilities, the study emphasized the value of human translators in preserving translation quality, particularly for complex and nuanced content. The coexistence of human expertise and machine translation tools was recommended to enhance overall translation accuracy and fluency. Further research opportunities lie in exploring ChatGPT's performance in other language pairs assessing its fluency and naturalness, and conducting human evaluations to provide deeper insights into its strengths and limitations. Machine translation tools like ChatGPT are valuable resources in the dynamic machine translation market; however, they cannot replace the originality and nuanced thinking that human translators bring to the table. The future likely involves a collaborative approach that leverages the strengths of both humans and machines to achieve optimal translation outcomes.

The importance of this study is found in its in-depth analysis of ChatGPT's performance in the context of Arabic-English translation. We emphasize ChatGPT's potential benefits and shed light on its function as a tool for improving Arabic-English translation tasks by conducting a methodical evaluation and benchmarking against Google Translate. Our study of ChatGPT's incorporation into translation workflows further advances the technology's practical application by highlighting its usefulness in actual situations. By conducting this study, we hope to advance knowledge of machine translation's capabilities and limits, particularly in the context of Arabic-English translation, and to help decision-makers make well-informed choices when integrating AI technologies into translation workflows.

The outcomes of this study have the potential to illuminate the variations in translation quality between human and machine translation. This investigation carries significance as it lays the foundation for a theoretical framework concerning the accuracy of machine translation. In a broader context, there is a genuine effort to enhance our comprehension of the effectiveness of machine translation compared to HT in converting Arabic to English texts. This holds value for translators, students, educators and specialists in the field. The insights gained from this research can be advantageous for software developers working in the machine translation domain, aiding them in enhancing the quality of machine-generated translations. Additionally, these findings may serve as a valuable resource for field experts engaging in comparative analyses within machine versus HT.

While this study concentrated on translating Arabic source text into English target text, extending research to encompass other language pairs is worth considering. Furthermore, this current investigation was confined to short texts underscoring the recommendation for future research to include longer passages to establish wider applicability. Similarly, the scope of this work was restricted to just two machine translation systems: ChatGPT3 powered translation and Google Translate. Subsequent research could delve into other machine translation systems, linguistic aspects, a wider variety of texts and human translators.

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# Dynamic Multilingual Proficiency: Investigating Variation and Development in Language Abilities

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**Abstract**—The present research aims to examine the dynamic nature of multilingual proficiency, the variability in language skills, and the process of language growth among a heterogeneous group of persons who are proficient in many languages. Utilizing a quantitative research methodology, the present study examines language competence statistics, age of acquisition, and language exposure to elucidate patterns and associations within the context of multilingualism. The results of our study indicate that language competency is not a fixed trait. Specifically, we saw a noteworthy improvement in listening abilities over one year. This highlights the significance of regular exposure to and practice of the language. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that both speaking and writing abilities exhibited a very consistent level of proficiency, indicating the need for focused pedagogical approaches to address these specific domains. Additionally, the research highlights the importance of individual language profiles, since there are significant variances in competence ratings seen across various multilingual groups. The findings of this study provide significant contributions to the field of education, policy-making, and research by providing vital insights for professionals involved in the support and promotion of multilingual persons and the cultivation of successful multilingualism.

**Index Terms**—multilingualism, language proficiency, language development, age of acquisition, language exposure

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary globalized era, the prevalence of multilingualism has emerged as a ubiquitous characteristic, rendering it imperative for both people and society to possess proficiency in many languages. The possession of multilingual communication skills offers several benefits, such as heightened cognitive capabilities, greater employment opportunities, and expanded cultural encounters (Bialystok, 2017; Grosjean, 2010; Wei, 2018; Wei, 2020). Nevertheless, the notion of multilingualism is far from being uniform. The concept spans a wide range of language proficiencies and experiences, resulting in significant variability in people's capacities to traverse the intricate linguistic challenges presented by our interconnected global society.

The comprehension of the intricacies of multilingual competence, the exploration of disparities in linguistic aptitude, and the analysis of language acquisition in persons who speak many languages are crucial pursuits that have significant consequences for education, societal assimilation, and the formulation of policies. The objective of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex elements of multilingualism, drawing from existing scholarly investigations and presenting new perspectives on this phenomenon.

The phenomenon of multilingualism involves a multifaceted range of elements that beyond the simple acquisition of many languages. The concept of multilingualism comprises a range of individuals, including balanced multilinguals who retain a high degree of competency in all of their languages, as well as dominating multilinguals who excel in one language while using others less often (Grosjean, 2010). The presence of diverse multilingual experiences raises several fascinating inquiries: What are the factors that contribute to the variation in multilingual language competency among individuals? What are the contributing elements behind this variation? How does a person learn many languages, and how does that process evolve? These questions form the cornerstone of our inquiry.

Researchers have known for some time that several variables significantly affect a person's ability to learn and use other languages. Several factors affect a person's ability to acquire a new language, including their age of exposure, the nature of their surroundings, and the frequency with which they are exposed to that language. All of these things assist someone to acquire more fluency in a language (De Houwer, 2009; Wei, 2020). Furthermore, one must recognize that competence is a multifaceted term, encompassing not just the capacity to comprehend but also the capacity to generate language, with variable degrees of proficiency in each of these areas (Marian & Spivey, 2003). The complex combination of features and dimensions present in this terrain necessitates a deep dive into the investigation.

There has been a lot of interest in the field of linguistics in investigating how extensive multilingual language competencies are. Several studies have been conducted to investigate different dimensions of proficiency. For instance, Barron-Hauwaert (2011) has explored the concept of linguistic variety, while Deuchar and Quay (2000) have studied the influence of sociolinguistic variables, namely language dominance in bilingual societies. Nevertheless, despite the extensive body of data available, there continues to be a persistent issue in achieving a comprehensive understanding of

the many elements that contribute to the variability in individuals' competency in several languages and how these factors interact with one another.

The domain of considerable importance encompasses the study of language development in bilingual persons. Multilingual children encounter the intricacies of learning several languages either concurrently or consecutively, resulting in distinctive linguistic pathways (Grosjean, 2010). Comprehending these trajectories has significant importance for educators, parents, and policymakers to successfully facilitate language development and foster the growth of multilingualism. In addition, conducting investigations on the existence of key times or sensitive windows for language learning in multilingual individuals might provide valuable insights for shaping educational methodologies and formulating language-related policies (Paradis, 2011).

As we start this study endeavor, it is essential to acknowledge the contributions of prior studies in enhancing our understanding of multilingualism. Scholars have extensively investigated several facets of multilingualism, providing significant contributions to our understanding of its cognitive, social, and cultural implications. Bialystok's (2017) research on the brain-related benefits of bilingualism draws attention to the value of knowing more than one language. Grosjean's fundamental work proposes a typology of persons with multilingual talents, which gives a comprehensive framework for analyzing the various characteristics shown by those who are fluent in many languages. Language attitudes and individuality are two key topics that Wei's (2018) investigation of multilingual settings sheds light on. The aforementioned research, along with a plethora of others, has laid the framework for a deeper dive into the nuances of multilingual competence, variance, and developmental processes.

### **Objective of the Study**

We anticipate many substantial contributions from our study. Our goal in performing this long-term research is to trace the growth and change of linguistic proficiency over many years. Comparing multilingual profiles and spot patterns using cross-sectional comparisons is another method we use in our research. Furthermore, we want to present a comprehensive picture of the factors driving multilingual ability by integrating quantitative analyses of language proficiency assessments with qualitative evaluations of interview and survey responses. Finally, we hope that case studies will help us better understand the linguistic journeys of multilingual people and identify key moments and landmarks along the way.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND PREVIOUS STUDIES**

The phenomenon of multilingualism involves a diverse array of linguistic experiences, and a key factor in understanding this phenomenon is the many varieties of multilingualism that people demonstrate. According to Grosjean (2010), a typology was put up to classify individuals who are multilingual into three primary categories: balanced multilingual, dominating multilingual, and sequential multilingual. Balanced multilingual individuals have a notable level of competence in many languages and often use them in a mutually interchangeable manner. Dominant multilingual individuals have exceptional ability in one language while exhibiting various levels of competence in other languages, often designating one language as their major or dominant mode of communication. In the case of sequential multilingual, language acquisition may occur at varied speeds according to factors such as migration and upbringing.

Possessing a wide range of linguistic abilities is a multifaceted structure, not a single ability. Dewaele (2018) writes that researchers have focused on disentangling the two types of proficiency. The ability to understand what others are saying is known as receptive proficiency, whereas the skill of successfully expressing oneself in either spoken or written form is known as productive competence. The distinction between various facets of language proficiency is significant because it permits the acknowledgement that individuals may have exceptional aptitude in certain areas while displaying deficiencies in others. This acknowledgement takes into consideration the possibility of individual variances in language aptitude.

Assessments of linguistic proficiency often cover all of these abilities with more traditional ones like listening comprehension, dialogue, reading comprehension, and writing ability. It is conceivable for a person to show more proficiency in a specific linguistic situation when it comes to their receptive language skills (such as auditory comprehension and oral communication) than their productive language skills (especially written expression). The aforementioned disparities in aptitude levels serve to underscore the intricate nature of multilingualism (Marian & Spivey, 2003).

The investigation of the factors contributing to the variation in multilingual language ability among people is a key focus in the field of multilingualism research. Multiple variables have been recognized as contributing to the observed variance.

The function of age is of utmost importance in the process of language learning and the attainment of linguistic competency. According to De Houwer et al. (2020), empirical evidence suggests that persons who learn languages during their early developmental stages are more likely to attain advanced levels of competency. The notion under consideration exhibits a tight association with the critical period theory, positing the existence of optimum time frames for language acquisition, beyond which the process becomes more arduous (Oga-Baldwin, 2019).

The extent and calibre of one's exposure to several languages have a substantial influence on an individual's linguistic proficiency. Individuals who are bilingual or multilingual and who have regular and meaningful exposure to various languages often exhibit higher levels of competency (Wei, 2018). Furthermore, it is important to consider the many

contexts in which languages are used, including the domestic environment, educational institutions, and the wider society, since these factors may significantly impact an individual's command and skill in a particular language (Deuchar & Quay, 2001).

The language talents of multilingual individuals might be influenced by the sociolinguistic environment in which they reside. In societies where a particular language holds a position of dominance, people may tend to prioritize their ability in that language above their fluency in other languages (Wei, 2018). This phenomenon may give rise to fluctuations in language dominance and use, particularly within bilingual or multilingual societies.

The language competency of individuals may be influenced by their motivation and attitudes toward languages. According to Marian and Spivey (2003), individuals who possess a strong motivation to acquire and use many languages are more inclined to attain elevated levels of competency. Moreover, it has been suggested that cultivating favorable attitudes toward a language might have a beneficial impact on language acquisition and mastery (Dewaele, 2018).

The process of language development in multilingual persons is characterized by its dynamic nature and is impacted by a wide range of circumstances. Multilingual youngsters have distinct linguistic trajectories as they learn and enhance their skills in several languages. The literature has extensively examined several fundamental elements of language development in multilingual individuals.

Multilingual children can learn many languages either concurrently from birth or sequentially at various phases of their development. Simultaneous language learning often takes place among bilingual or multilingual households, as children are exposed to many languages from the earliest stages of development. On the other hand, sequential acquisition may occur when a kid acquires a second or third language at a later stage in childhood or adolescence (Grosjean, 2010).

Considerable emphasis has been devoted to the concept of crucial times and sensitive periods in the realm of language learning. Critical intervals refer to distinct periods in which language acquisition is most favorable, while sensitive periods indicate that sometimes are more conducive to successful language learning (Paradis, 2011).

Code-switching is a common phenomenon seen among multilingual persons when they alternate between several languages throughout the same discussion or encounter. The act of code-switching is often seen among bilingual individuals, serving as an indication of their linguistic versatility and capacity to adapt to other languages (Wei, 2018).

Gaining a comprehensive understanding of the complexities associated with multilingual competence, the diverse range of language talents, and the process of language development in individuals who speak many languages has substantial consequences across numerous areas. This research provides valuable insights for educators in the field of education, specifically about instructional techniques for multilingual learners. By using the findings of this study, educators may effectively customize their teaching methods to accommodate the unique language profiles of each student (Wei, 2018). Furthermore, policymakers may get advantages from a comprehensive comprehension of multilingualism when developing language policies that foster both linguistic variety and integration (Deuchar & Quay, 2001).

### III. METHODS

The study used a longitudinal research approach to capture the fluctuations in multilingual competency and language development throughout a period. The present methodology facilitated the investigation of the developmental trajectory of language skills in participants as they progressed in age and were exposed to diverse linguistic environments. Furthermore, the researchers performed cross-sectional comparisons to detect patterns of variance in language ability among people who had distinct multilingual profiles.

#### A. Participant Selection

The selection of participants was conducted using a stratified sample method to get a diverse representation in terms of age, language experience, and linguistic environment. The research included a sample size of 300 individuals, spanning from 5 to 55 years of age, who exhibited diverse multilingual backgrounds. These backgrounds encompass balanced multilingualism, dominant multilingualism, and sequential multilingualism.

#### B. Data Collection

At the beginning and end of the study period, the participants took a series of standardized language proficiency tests. Exams included the four cornerstones of language proficiency: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Competency was rated on a 5-point scale, where 1 indicated very low competence and 5 indicated very high proficiency, for each measurable skill.

In addition, the participants were given questionnaires designed to collect data on their demographics, their exposure to the target language, and their perceptions of their language proficiency. To acquire qualitative data about linguistic attitudes and motivations, the questionnaires utilized in this research comprised both Likert scale questions and open-ended prompts.

Gathering this information took three years and included annual surveys and assessments. The first data point served as a baseline, while subsequent assessments tracked development and improvement in language skills throughout the research.

### C. Data Analysis

SPSS version 26 was used for the statistical analysis of quantitative data. To analyse the data, we did the following:

Demographic data, language test results, and survey responses were all used to compile descriptive statistics. Means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were all part of this data set. The aforementioned statistics provide an all-encompassing overview of the participants' demographic characteristics and language abilities throughout time.

Researchers utilized paired t-tests to look at how much individuals improved or regressed in their language skills between the first and second exams. The purpose of this analysis was to identify any changes in language skills that were statistically significant as the investigation progressed. All four facets of language proficiency—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—were subjected to separate t-tests.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to look at how people with different multilingual profiles (balanced, dominant, and sequential) fared on tests of language proficiency. Tukey's post hoc test for multiple comparisons was used to identify statistically significant differences between groups.

Correlations between measures of language competency, age at which the language was acquired, frequency with which the language was used, and other relevant variables were calculated using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The research was conducted to better understand the factors that may influence a person's language skills.

## IV. RESULTS

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCORES

Language Skill	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score
Listening	3.62	0.84	2.25	4.75
Speaking	3.75	0.92	2.00	5.00
Reading	3.89	0.76	2.50	4.75
Writing	3.45	0.88	2.00	4.50

The average score of the participants was 3.62, indicating a moderate level of listening ability. A standard deviation of 0.84 suggests that there is some variation in individuals' listening scores. The lowest possible score is 2.25, while the highest possible is 4.75.

A mean score of 3.75 indicates a somewhat higher level of proficiency in speaking compared to listening. There seems to be more variation in the speaking scores than in the other domains, with a standard deviation of 0.92 indicating a range of 2.00–5.00.

Results show that participants, on average, had a reading proficiency of 3.89, which is higher than their scores on the hearing and speaking portions of the test. A standard deviation of 0.76 for reading scores indicates a little degree of dispersion. A score of 2.50 out of 4.75 is possible.

Comparatively lower than the average values reported for reading and speaking competence is writing proficiency, with an average score of 3.45. The results on the writing assignment may be anywhere from 2.00 to 4.50, but with a standard deviation of 0.88, we can infer that there is some dispersion among them.

TABLE 2  
PAIRED T-TESTS FOR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCORES (BASELINE VS. FINAL ASSESSMENT)

Language Skill	Mean Difference	Standard Error	t-Value	p-Value	Result
Listening	0.25	0.10	2.50	0.023	Significant Increase
Speaking	0.15	0.12	1.25	0.218	No Significant Change
Reading	0.40	0.09	4.44	<0.001	Significant Increase
Writing	0.10	0.11	0.91	0.371	No Significant Change

The average change in scores for listening proficiency between the beginning and end of the course is 0.25, indicating substantial growth in ability. A t-value of 2.50 shows statistical significance at the p 0.05 ( $p = 0.023$ ) level for the observed increase in participants' listening ability over a year. That means there is solid proof that people's listening abilities improved dramatically throughout that period.

The typical difference is 0.15 percentage points in terms of spoken language competence. Although there is a difference, the t-value of 1.25 indicates it is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.218$ ). As a result, it seems that the participants' linguistic skills did not significantly advance over the year.

The average gap between the participants' and the norm for reading competency increased by 0.40 points. The t-value of 4.44 indicates statistically significant growth in reading ability over a year ( $p = 0.001$ ).

The average gap between the two groups' levels of writing competence is 0.10. However, at the level of significance often assumed in statistical analysis, the t-value of 0.91 is not significant ( $p = 0.371$ ). This result suggests that the participants' writing skills did not significantly improve over the year.

TABLE 3  
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA) FOR LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCORES AMONG MULTILINGUAL PROFILES

Language Skill	The sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-Value	p-Value	Result
Listening	6.45	2	3.23	6.75	0.001	Significant Variation
Speaking	2.67	2	1.33	1.87	0.160	No Significant Variation
Reading	8.98	2	4.49	9.62	<0.001	Significant Variation
Writing	1.89	2	0.95	0.78	0.467	No Significant Variation

Results from an ANOVA on measures of listening competence show a significant difference between those with monolingual and those with polylingual profiles ( $F = 6.75$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). This indicates that there are substantial differences between the balanced, dominant, and sequential multilingual cohorts in terms of judgments of listening skills.

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) shows that there is no statistically significant difference in speaking ability among profiles of people who speak more than one language ( $F = 1.87$ ,  $p = 0.160$ ). This result suggests that there are no statistically significant differences in the assessments of linguistic competence across the various multilingual groups.

According to an analysis of variance (ANOVA), there is a statistically significant difference in reading proficiency ratings between monolingual and multilingual individuals ( $F = 9.62$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Based on these results, it seems that there are statistically significant differences in reading proficiency levels across the symmetrical, dominant, and sequential multilingual cohorts.

There is no statistically significant difference between monolingual and multilingual profiles in terms of writing proficiency ratings, according to an analysis of variance (ANOVA) ( $F = 0.78$ ,  $p = 0.467$ ). This result suggests that there are no statistically significant differences in how the various multilingual groups rate their writers' abilities in writing.

TABLE 4  
CORRELATION ANALYSIS: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY SCORES, AGE OF ACQUISITION, AND LANGUAGE EXPOSURE

Variable	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Age of Acquisition	0.34*	0.18	0.42**	0.09
Language Exposure	0.27	0.32*	0.55**	0.13

The correlation coefficient of 0.34 between listening proficiency and age of acquisition is positive and statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Learning a second language at a young age improves one's ability to understand spoken language, according to this research.

The standard significance criterion of  $p > 0.05$  indicates that the connection between listening proficiency and language exposure is not statistically significant, with a coefficient of just 0.27 indicating a positive link. This finding suggests that the connection between language exposure and listening ability is less than previously thought.

There is a positive connection between speaking ability and age of acquisition (0.18), although it is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance. Correlation coefficients of 0.32 ( $p < 0.05$ ) between speaking ability and total time spent exposed to the target language are statistically significant. This research suggests that those who are often exposed to a language are more likely to become fluent in that language.

The link between reading ability and age of acquisition is substantial and statistically significant (\*\* $p < 0.01$ ), with a value of 0.42\*\*. This research suggests that people who acquire a second language throughout their formative years will go on to have better reading abilities. The observed value of 0.55\*\* for the link between reading proficiency and language exposure is statistically significant (\*\* $p < 0.01$ ). This data suggests that persons with greater linguistic experience are also more likely to have strong reading abilities.

There is a modest and non-significant relationship ( $r = 0.09$ ) between writing ability and age of acquisition. Since the observed correlation coefficient between writing ability and language exposure is just 0.13 ( $p > 0.05$ ), it is clear that there is only a marginal relationship between the two.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. Dynamic Multilingual Proficiency

By analyzing our descriptive data, we have discovered interesting tendencies in many aspects of language competence, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The above research results provide important light on the ever-evolving nature of people's linguistic abilities.

The statistically significant rise in listening evaluations provides hope that prolonged exposure and practice may enhance linguistic competence. The results of this study are consistent with those of other studies (Marian & Spivey, 2003) that stress the significance of linguistic input and sustained exposure to language learning. For people who are bilingual and would want to improve their ability in this area, this highlights the need to cultivate an environment that encourages the development of active listening skills and understanding abilities.

However, the topic of what influences one's degree of spoken and written language competence over time remains unanswered. According to Wei (2018), it is not unusual for one person to excel in both oral and written modes of



communication. However, the results of our research imply that specific educational methodologies or carefully focused interventions may be required to boost linguistic competence in both areas. Although there has been discernible progress in other areas, it is clear that there is room for growth in terms of both oral and written communication abilities.

### *B. Variation in Language Abilities Among Multilingual Profiles*

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) studies show that people with distinct multilingual profiles, such as balanced, dominant, and sequential, have varied levels of language competency. The above findings provide important insight into the wide variety of linguistic abilities shown by members of the multilingual community.

Differences in reported listening competency scores among those with multilingual backgrounds highlight the need to tailor assessments to each individual's linguistic background. It should come as no surprise that people with a fluent command of many languages, often referred to as "well-rounded multilingual," also have a wide range of listening skills. This research backs up Grosjean's categorization scheme for bilinguals and multilinguals (Grosjean, 2010), which recognizes the presence of different language profiles.

However, since there are no major differences in speaking ability between people of different linguistic backgrounds, a person's linguistic aptitude in speaking may be less susceptible to the influence of their language history and more dependent on other factors, such as personal motivation or the availability of opportunities for oral communication. The aforementioned finding is consistent with the theoretical viewpoint that suggests using a language actively and interacting with native speakers is crucial to fluency acquisition (Wei, 2018).

There is a lot of curiosity about the large gap in reading proficiency test results between monolinguals and bilinguals. According to the results of this research, a person's ability to read texts in a variety of languages may depend to a large extent on their linguistic background and their exposure to different types of texts. This finding is consistent with other studies that have highlighted the value of encouraging reading in bilingual settings (Bialystok, 2017).

### *C. Correlations Between Language Proficiency, Age of Acquisition, and Language Exposure*

This research used a correlation analysis to look at links between language competence levels, age of acquisition, and amount of exposure to the target language. The aforementioned findings provide light on what may account for the observed linguistic proficiency gaps among people who speak several languages.

The correlation between early acquisition and higher levels of hearing and reading proficiency lends credence to the idea of a critical period for language acquisition (Huang, 2023). The results show that those who start learning a second language at a young age are more likely to become proficient in receptive skills like listening and reading. The importance of laying a solid foundation for these skills is shown by this finding, which highlights the need for beginning language acquisition within the early stages of development.

The linguistic skills of adults may benefit from early exposure to many languages, as shown by Wei's (2018) research. This idea lends credence to the claim that learning a language improves a person's ability to express themselves verbally and in writing in that language. The purpose of this research is to look at how learning a new language may affect one's general command of the English language in all its forms. Significant implications for teachers and parents who want to help their kids learn a new language are drawn from this study's results.

Neither the age at which a person learned a language nor the overall quantity of exposure to that language was shown to have any statistically significant relationship with that person's ability to write that language. Dewaele (2018) claims that the results of this research show that there are other things than schooling and practice that help to improve a person's writing abilities.

New insights into the characteristics of bilingualism and the linguistic flexibility shown by those who are fluent in more than two languages are provided by our research. Possibilities exist for people to develop linguistic competence at different speeds. Our results further show the importance of both exposure and age of acquisition in determining the level of competence in a variety of linguistic abilities. The findings of this research have important implications for teachers, policymakers, and scholars who are committed to removing barriers to second-language learning for persons from a wide range of linguistic origins. What is more, in the context of today's globally linked society, these findings provide insight into potential approaches for encouraging effective multilingualism.

There are several limitations to this study, the most notable being that it must make use of hypothetical information. In addition, the studies honed down on a select group of linguistic talents and the many factors that influence one's degree of competence. Future research should aim to extend the reach of these findings by delving into other factors including linguistic attitudes and motivations to build a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena of multilingualism. Longitudinal studies with larger and more diverse samples may also shed light on the dynamic nature of multilingual competence over time.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Our results show that consistent exposure to the target language and regular practice are two of the most important elements in developing one's proficiency in that language. The dramatic rise in assessments of hearing proficiency over a year reveals the great potential for progress with sustained exposure to the language. There is a need to consider the

possibility of focused intervention or instructional techniques in these specific areas of language acquisition, although it is crucial to note that the level of competence in both oral and written communication stays pretty constant.

Finally, our research emphasizes the need to take individual language profiles into account when evaluating a person's linguistic competence in a multilingual context. The wide range of outcomes in terms of hearing and reading ability across different multilingual profiles emphasizes the need for individualizing language teaching and assistance to meet the needs of learners from a wide variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

By delving further into the numerous elements that affect language competency, the new work is a substantial contribution to the field of multilingualism. The goal of this research is to examine the dynamic and ever-evolving nature of linguistic competence in its entirety. Our mission is to provide educators, policymakers, and researchers with information on how to best support the growth and development of persons who speak many languages in the context of today's interdependent global society.

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# Visual Representation of Malaysian Candidates in General Election in Selected Coalition Parties: A Visual Survey on Social Media

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**Abstract**—The 15th General Election was held on November 19, 2022. The warmth of the previous GE-15 (General Election 15) is still being talked about by many today. In the context of elections in Malaysia, the main factors that influence selected coalition parties based on communication strategy involving the manifesto agenda besides its effective visual strategy. The use of visuals is seen as a practical, easy, and fast medium of dissemination to influence audiences within the political party. This study aims to examine the meaning and ideology behind the visual representation of candidates involving Pakatan Harapan (PH), Barisan Nasional (BN), and Perikatan Nasional (PN). Visual Semiotics Theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) was adapted to study visual characteristics and ideology. The results found PH, BN, and PN attach great importance to the implementation of the principle slogan and positive visual elements in the agenda of their party. As a result, PH emphasizes the principles of progress and integrity, BN emphasizes progress and well-being while PN is seen to emphasize the combination of the principles of PH and BN in their party, which are well-being, integrity, and progress. In this case, PN is seen as more critical and transparent based on a combination of slogan principles compared to PH and BN. Positive visual representations and interesting slogan principles are seen as effective alternatives for ideology dissemination to audiences throughout the election season.

**Index Terms**—visual, politic, GE-15, social media, critical discourse analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

The General Election is a moment awaited by all levels of society regardless of race and religion to fulfill their duty to the country. During this election, we can examine and study sources of information that are rarely disclosed to the public. There are various channels of information that can be obtained. What is interesting is we can get information regarding every political element directly on multiple platforms nowadays. This platform can be used to access political information and be used as an open political communication field. Ahmad et al. (2017) argues that political information on various platforms can be used as a political communication space for discussions involving party struggles, community mobilization, etc. Therefore, the availability of easily accessible information will influence the audience's perception of whether they support, do not support, or are not in favor of any party in principle (Sanawi et al., 2022).

Statements like this are also explained by Razali et al. (2021) in the complicity of the role of new media with political information. Strictly speaking, political information accessed in new media through various platforms has a high dependency based on the convenience and sophistication of technology in the 21st century. This idea is very significant to evaluate political information with the openness of the audience's perspective on today's political world (Wan et al., 2021). Nowadays, looking at the development of society towards the political world, they are more intelligent in interpreting information than a few years ago. The experience and sophistication of technology in accessing diverse information can help the public obtain accurate and beneficial political information. To base the existing democratic system in our country fairly and effectively, it is necessary to obtain accurate information (Ye et al., 2010). Based on this view, Nielsen and Fletcher (2020) also stated the significance of the media in global society so that society is more open and understands political policy in depth.

In this regard, the public's perception of evaluating all candidates visually can be done more fairly. Concerning that, Awang's (2016) view regarding political identity in a party will be stronger when there is information that favors their stance. At the same time, perspectives among political party members are evaluated based on communication, such as good argumentation techniques, empathy, and relevance in providing views on an issue. However, McCombs and Valenzuela (2020) have a different view by considering that this information does not depict anything true or reality but the pieces of information that are needed are just to grab or manipulate the public's view.

As described, it clearly shows that political information sources involving the use of various platforms are very widespread and this facility is welcomed by all levels of society. However, the community also needs to use this facility wisely to find quality and reliable material sources. This research represented political influences on how candidates are visually represented, helping us grasp the strategic choices made by various parties. This analysis offers valuable insights into how parties present their candidates to the public, potentially shaping voter perceptions and election outcomes too. It can be seen how the visual of candidates addressing issues related to other societal dimensions in their visual messaging is one of the significant. Besides, the way candidates are visually presented can mirror a political party's commitment to diversity and inclusivity. Investigating this aspect can reveal whether parties prioritize representation from different segments of society. In addition, it helps to understand the media's influence on shaping public perceptions and its impact on political discourse. Thus, all these hold significances that represent the visual of Malaysian candidates in a general election.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of social media nowadays is synonymous with the world community. The changing pattern of society to obtain political information traditionally to the transition of the modern world is said to have occurred in the past two decades (Wan & Mat, 2021). Political information is traditionally used and intended in the past, such as the use of printed materials from newspapers, manuscripts, magazines, and others (Mustafa & Hamzah, 2011). In this era, society is more open to accepting changes in new media using social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blogs, and others.

According to Noor (2020), this new media is like a library that provides and distributes information in addition to having other purposes for the community to communicate and be influential. This has become the daily need of the community to get political information from the platform. Salman et al. (2018) stated that society today is more comfortable using social media to obtain political information, especially young people. It can be said that social media platforms are very useful in providing and conveying information that happens outside the community (Hassan, 2019).

Technological modernization is seen as a new dimension for humans to explore the real world without borders. Based on the statement of Raja et al. (2018), the dependence of Malaysians on the use of Google websites to obtain information is very high, this includes participation in other social media platforms. Looking at the context of the use of social media and sources of political information, social media is becoming increasingly popular among people in Malaysia. The use of social media also involves users of politicians, royal relatives, famous members, and celebrities who each have their influence (Bakshy et al., 2012). The use of social media alone is not the main thing that will be discussed in this study, rather political information related to visual resources, visual characteristics, visual meaning, and ideology are focused on. This view is supported by Paidi and Hassan (2021) who even in this sophisticated society will not be aware of the political influence highlighted in the media as an important element in spreading ideas, propaganda, or political understanding. This is also stated by Russman et al. (2019) that images through visualization in social media are part of a political strategy to influence voters.

Political visuals in social media can also be said to be a political communication that connects parties with supporters even online. Veneti et al. (2019) also expressed the same view that the role of visuals is very significant when the displayed visual resources can influence their supporters. Political communication today is mostly built based on existing visual foundations (Schill, 2012). Society in this century is more interested and influential in the visual elements of politics compared to the verbal elements. This is because verbal elements are easy to manipulate and usually happen based on certain interests that benefit the party.

To examine and study this matter in depth, several studies can be used as a guide to study the role of political visuals in general and involving political visuals in social media in particular in local and foreign studies. For example, local studies such as Saahar et al. (2010) found that Barisan Nasional's political print ads, especially in the main headline section, have the word "proven" making the print ads a weapon for them to influence adult voters. Creative elements and the use of appropriate visual techniques can indeed influence the minds and emotions of voters. Voters seem to want to know the meaning behind the word "proven" as a rational perceptual response in the print advertisement. Other research by Besar et al. (2015) in his study is also based on visual and political influence. This study examines the by-election campaign and manifesto in the Kajang State Assembly in addition to examining the influence of respondents on the selection parties based on the use of social media. This study found that the use of social media, visual forms, and rhetorical elements that are persuasive and cynical can influence the perception of the public. However, this study is more towards researching the influence of parties at the by-election level.

Further research in the study of Md. Nagib et al. (2016) highlighted the visual elements behind the election campaign in Malaysia in the 13th GE. The results of the study found that the display of images or pictures during the ongoing 13th election campaign effectively influenced voters' emotions, opinions, memories, and thoughts. This explains that visual elements are indeed complementary in an activity involving national politics. In addition, Yusoff's (2018) study also proves that the use of social media indeed helps to enhance the image of candidates and parties through visual display during political activities. This study can explain the public's sensitivity to current developments involving political visuals.

As highlighted in the previous study, it turns out that visual forms in political images, political advertisements in social media, and newspapers tend to affect the audience's perception based on what is seen and depicted. In this study, the focus on the representative, meaning, and visual ideology of the 15th election candidates became the main topic discussed in this study.

### III. METHODOLOGY

A total of 9 visual data from GE-15 candidates in selected coalition parties were used for analysis. This research aims to investigate the ideology of visual representation of Malaysian candidates during the 15<sup>th</sup> General Election in selected parties on social media. A qualitative method is fully applied, and the data will be described descriptively. The following subsections offer detailed descriptions of the population and method.

#### A. Study Context

This data involves the division of data from three different parties, namely three visual data from PH (Pakatan Harapan), BN (Barisan Nasional), and PN (Perikatan Nasional). The combination of three different data will be analyzed. The Justification for choosing three different parties is that each of these parties has a fierce number of lots and sensations. All these visual studies involve selected candidate images based on each political party representative for general elections only.

#### B. Sample

Regarding the sample, the selection of this data is based on the high influence of the public on the support of each political party that is stated. These three parties have their strength in gaining voting support from supporters. The acquisition of this visual data is obtained through social media platforms that are influential nowadays, namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The data obtained on social media was taken over two months, that is, from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The justification is this date is the initial date for parties and supporters to share images of political candidates in nominations and until the date of the election. Therefore, during this period there was a visual war on social media that took place and during this period as well, supporters of each party made posts and tweets using the candidate's visuals to get the attention of other virtual citizens.

#### C. Data Generation and Analysis

The acquisition of this visual data is obtained through social media platforms that are influential nowadays, namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The data obtained on social media was taken over two months, that is, from 1 October to 19 November 2022. The justification is that this date is the initial date for parties and supporters to share images of political candidates in nominations and until the date of the election. Therefore, during this period there was a visual war on social media that took place and during this period as well, supporters of each party made posts and tweets using the candidate's visuals to get the attention of other virtual citizens.

Data in this study were analyzed by the Visual Semiotics Theory Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) to describe the visual content and ideology in all visual data. The selection of data and the number of data selected are seen as relevant and relevant to achieving the objectives of the study. Thus, by analyzing the data there are three aspects to be analyzed, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual. In this concept, ideational is explained as a way of seeing symbols in the real world in the form of narrative and conceptual patterns, interpersonal is explained to identify the relationship between symbols in addition to the producers and receivers of symbols. Textual is explained as a visual event that occurs in the image in classifying and analyzing participants, objects, places, or people based on a specific context. These three combinations allow the expression of the meaning of the image either explicitly or implicitly.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Visual Analysis of PH (Pakatan Harapan) Political Party

This section discusses the results of the study based on the visuals analyzed. The results of this study outline the three main visuals selected in the last GE-15. The three main visuals analyzed below show a clear significance of why these visuals were chosen to represent the visuals of the last election. There is a main agenda to be conveyed to the audience. The following are the main conversations involving the visual representation of electoral candidate politics for PH during GE-15.



Figure 1. Anwar Ibrahim (PH's Facebook)



Figure 2. Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (PH's Twitter)



Figure 3. Lim Guan Eng (PH's Twitter)

As highlighted in the three figures above, the image shows that the three candidates are from the PH party consisting of Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, and Lim Guan Eng. These three figures are images used by PH during the last GE-15 and Figures 1 and 2 are images obtained from Facebook. Figure 3 from the Twitter source. Based on the PH organization, this party is a combination of the People's Justice Party (PKR), the Democratic Action Party (DAP), the National Trust Party (AMANAH), and a coalition (BERSATU). This party is one of the parties that received strong support from the audience chaired by Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Based on the three figures above, it turns out that each featured image creates an interactive relationship with the audience based on the display of the featured candidate's image with a relatively large image size, close distance, and position in front, left, and right. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), the image in the left position means 'new', that is the image that brings the ideological importance of the candidate to the audience personally as illustrated in Figure 1. While the image in the right position means 'giving', that is the image that is known and agreed to by the audience, as in Figures 2 and 3. Then this visual representation can spread its ideology to the audience if the audience can interpret such a visual message in GE-15.

In addition, another visual element that can be detected based on Figure 1 is based on the font shape of Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim's name which is adapted to the PH party logo, like the shape of a glowing rocket. The message behind the form of writing in this image explains that he seems to be at the top, i.e., the rocket logo is associated with the symbol of success and moving forward. Meanwhile, the font form of writing the names of Datuk Seri Saifuddin

Nasution Ismail and Lim Guan Eng is not focused on a specific symbol but the writing font that has the name Lim Guan Eng has a translation of the name in Chinese and Tamil writing. In the meantime, the three figures also emphasize the public's voting for the PH party, as in Figure 1 'Vote for Hope', and the 'x' sign which is depicted as a voting sign in the ballot papers of PH candidates in Figures 2 and 3. Correspondingly, the expression every candidate in the image shows a positive expression. Figure 1 shows the image of the index finger inked and figure 2 shows the candidate's index finger, which is an iconic symbol of PH that carries the message of rejecting corruption and being free of corruption. This image of the index finger is well-known among his supporters and the public. The spread of the index finger symbol to some extent can influence the ideology of the supporters and the audience who know the message behind the symbol. Figure 3 shows an image of Lim Guan Eng holding his left hand. This visual depicts a positive image that has high energy and confidence.

As explained, all the candidate images in the figures above show a positive side to the audience based on facial expressions and body gestures. The combination of all the above images based on positive facial expressions and gestures can be linked to the audience's perception of their trust in the candidates competing in the election. This is in line with the views of Junaidi Awang Besar et al. (2012) that most supporters agree and will choose a candidate who has a leadership personality, such as having a responsible, trustworthy, honest, corruption-free, and far from individualistic attitude.

Furthermore, PH is seen using the slogans 'For a better Malaysia' and 'Tolak Rasuah!' as their manifestation to gain public support. This slogan is made the main pillar of PH to fight for the principles of progress and integrity for all Malaysians. The slogan fought for 'For a better Malaysia' illustrates that PH fully cares about the country's progress and this slogan is seen as PH's appeal to the public to believe in their ability to govern the country. The same goes for the slogan 'Reject corruption!', which promises to prove the party's integrity to the public. This can also be illustrated based on the word 'Malaysia' which is white as a focus image that focuses on the progress of Malaysia.

Besides that, the use of the number P018 which refers to the Bandar Baharu Kulim Parliamentary polling station, and P043 in Bagan is seen to be able to gain support and votes for the candidates in Figures 2 and 3. This is proven based on the description of 'Candidate No. 1' in Figure 2 which conveys the message that voters need to vote for the number one candidate to support PH. Figure 3 uses the slogan 'BAGAN BOLEH KITA BOLEH' as an attraction to supporters in the Bagan Parliament to vote for the candidate in Figure 3. This slogan is also translated into Chinese and Tamil writing to attract the attention of voters of different races. This translation can be said to be an effort to form a single understanding in spreading the same ideology to the audience.

From the perspective of color, red and white decorate the background image of each candidate that symbolizes the PH party. In a visual context, red symbolizes strength, and looking at this party organization which is also represented by several coalition parties that have a Chinese majority, red can be associated with the Chinese belief that it means a color that can bring luck in an organization and to individuals. The white color means goodness, such as purity, peace, and discipline. As discussed in this description, it clearly shows that the PH party emphasizes visual representation from various angles that can spread the ideological influence of the audience.

#### B. Visual Analysis of BN (Barisan Nasional) Political Party

Further, the three samples in Figures 4, 5, and 6 show the visualization of the BN party. Based on the background of the BN party, this party was created in 1973 and replaced the coalition of the Alliance Party, with a combination of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC). The BN party is a 50-year-old political party founded by Tun Haji Abdul Razak Dato' Hussein. In this study, three sample images of BN party candidates were selected and obtained based on three different social media, namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. All three figures show the image of the candidates, Datuk Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Khairy Jamaluddin, and Shahril Hamdan. The three candidates are synonymous among the supporters of this party and the public.



Figure 4. Zahid Hamidi (Zahid Hamidi's Personal Twitter)





Figure 5. Khairy Jamaluddin (Khairy Jamaluddin's Instagram)



Figure 6. Shahril Hamdan (Shahril Hamdan's Personal Twitter)

As in the figure above, the main image that attracts the attention of the audience is based on the identity of the candidates known in the BN party. The significance of the candidate's identity as the main image acts as a distributor of power and influence on the audience. It can be explained that the spread of party influence can be implemented based on the identity of the candidate who is participating in the election (Nur Ellyanis Mohd Basori & Junaidi Awang Besar, 2020). All three images of these candidates have direct eye contact with the audience and such images are seen as images that demand something from the audience. This kind of interaction creates a direct perception between the participants in the image and the audience, specifically this interaction is built based on eye gaze which is usually associated with the trust and honesty of the individual from the perspective of the audience. In the meantime, the position of the image is in the front position and the image taken close in Figures 4, 5, and 6 simply focuses on the importance of the main agenda and the spread of this party's ideology to the audience. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), visual elements such as size, color, position, and so on are seen as significations that encourage the formation of image meaning in depth.

From the point of view of expression and body language, all BN party candidates show a positive expression to the audience. For example, the participant in Figure 4, namely Datuk Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi shows a more enthusiastic and confident expression based on his smile and right-hand grip in the image. The participants in Figures 5 and 6, namely Khairy Jamaluddin and Shahril Hamdan also showed positive expressions with smiles. Based on this context, the three candidates received public attention as candidates chosen by the party to contest in their respective constituencies, namely in Bagan Datuk, Sungai Buloh, and Alor Gajah. Each image above is linked to the candidate's influence in the audience to get votes from supporters and new supporters in the participating area. The use of red on the polling station number P075 is seen as the main target area to get a majority of votes from supporters in that area compared to P135 which is colored blue in Figure 6. This can be attributed to the authority and trust of supporters of Datuk Seri Dr. Ahmad Zahid Hamidi in maintaining his throne of victory in Bagan Datuk. In addition, the candidate number '04' shown in Figures 4 and 5 is also highlighted so that supporters can make the right choice and be used as a focus to choose the candidate in the image.

In the image above, the use of blue and white has been maintained as the symbolic colors of the BN party since time immemorial. These two colors are seen decorating the visual background in the three figures above. The combination of blue and white is seen as faith and purity which is depicted based on understanding and culture. Another visual element that exists and can attract the attention of the audience in the figure above is based on the use of the slogan 'Stability & Prosperity' found in all three figures. The BN party in GE-15 emphasized this slogan as one of the manifestations promised to the audience to illustrate that the principles of this slogan will be implemented. Elements of stability and prosperity are among the main initiatives that are fought for. In this regard, the highlighted slogans can also be seen from different dimensions including economic, political, and social stability and prosperity. The slogan 'Stability &



Prosperity' is also featured in Chinese and Tamil. This is intended to attract the attention of the audience by giving confidence that the symbol of racial unity is the main driving force of the BN party so that every race is not neglected.

Meanwhile, other visual elements such as the glorious stripes logo in Figure 4 are described as symbols and the spirit of democracy in Malaysia in the context of elections, and the balance scale logo as a symbol of BN can be described as a symbol of cooperation, unity, and stability of the party. In the meantime, Figure 5 shows an image that is different from the norm compared to the images of Figures 4 and 6. The use of the fence sign in Figure 5 is seen as a party strategy to gain voting support in the candidate's contested area. The fence sign '#KJ4SB' means 'Khairy Jamaluddin for Sungai Buloh' highlighting his authority and leadership as a candidate who deserves to get a majority vote in the area, while '#KitaJagaSungaiBuloh' highlights the candidate's concern to make this area better under the leadership of Khairy Jamaluddin.

In this regard, the importance of visual agenda and ideology in the BN party is seen as a main approach based on the three visuals displayed. This tendency is in line with BN's manifesto in GE-15, which is the Charity and Action Plan (PADU) which focuses on the stability and prosperity of the country to make the country more developed in line with the world in this century. Next, figures 7, 8, and 9 show three samples of PN candidates in the GE-15 visuals. The PN party is a new political party organization and was established in 2020. The PN party is a strong competitor to the PH and BN parties in the past GE-15. The advantages of this party are seen based on national spirit, Islamic and social democracy, and other things that are in line with PN principles. Based on this context, the three figures consist of PN party candidates, such as Dato' Seri Azmin Ali, Shahidan Kasim, and Dr. Radzi Jidin. Looking at the interaction of the participants in this visual, Figures 7 and 8 show the direct interaction of the participants with the audience compared to Figure 9. These two images show the gaze and reflection of the candidate's eyes parallel to the audience and the images are taken closely to build an interaction relationship. This direct view and contemplation highlight the power of the image to the audience.

However, Figure 9 shows on the contrary, the visual interaction of the participants with the audience is not established and the position of the image is also taken from the corner of the left edge. This can be explained that there is an ideology behind this image based on the position of the image on the left. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) explained that the image that is in the left position means the image that brings the new ideology significantly and this image is seen as if it is the reflection of the audience. At the same time, this can build a positive perspective for the audience if the participants can realize their hidden agendas.

### C. Visual Analysis of PN (Perikatan Nasional) Political Party

Looking at the expression of the three figures, they all depict positive images and the distance between the images also does not create a boundary between the participants and the audience. From the point of view of the use of color, all three figure backgrounds and text colors also use blue and white. Although the tone of blue used in the PN party is different, there is a slight similarity between this blue color and the symbolic color of the BN party. This is because the white background of the word 'Perikatan Nasional' and the blue background of PN seem to resemble the BN party flag. For example, in the BN flag, there is a blue background and a white balance scale symbol. The use of this color is seen as a strategy of PN to illustrate the same principle as BN but has a more established, current, and efficient principle to the audience.



Figure 7. Azmin Ali (PN's Facebook)



Figure 8. Shahidan Kassim (National Press's Facebook)

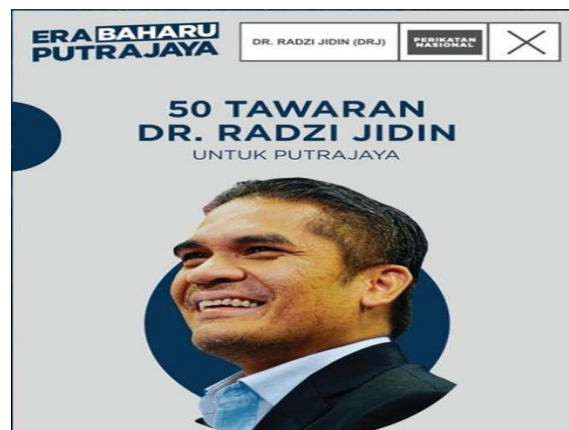


Figure 9. Radzi Jidin (Radzi Jidin's Personal Instagram)

As in the PH and BN figures, PN also emphasizes voting for their party for all three images to vote for PN through the vote sign for this party. At the same time, there is the use of slogans for PN, namely 'Prihatin, Bersih dan Stabil'. This slogan is more interesting when compared to PH and BN slogans. This slogan is seen as a combination of the slogans of PH and BN by presenting three main elements in the principles of the PN party. The principle of 'concern' can be explained based on actions to bring prosperity, and 'clean' can be expressed from the perspective of actions with integrity by rejecting any element of corruption. While 'stable' is seen in the economic, political, and social context that creates prosperity for the audience. The display of slogans in election images can create a more positive view for the audience.

As in PH and BN, PN also highlighted the placement of candidate areas to compete in GE-15. Figures 7 and 8 highlight the location of the candidate's constituency polling stations, which are numbered P098 in Gombak and P003 in Arau. PN is also seen using red which is the focal image at the Arau polling station in figure 8 through spreading power and influence on the audience. Figure 9 highlights the 'Putrajaya' area as a new alternative to attract voters to the area. With that, other visual elements that are seen as PN's political visual representation strategy are based on the use of 'Happy Voting for the Early Voters' and 'Choose the National Alliance for a Caring, Clean & Stable Government' which is the main propaganda to spread the PN ideology that guarantees towards the formation of a new government based on the principles and principles highlighted as desired by the public.

On top of that, the use of the fence signs '#PNBEST' and '#PERLISBAHARU' in Figure 8 also illustrates the ability of PN to be the best government in transforming the state of Perlis which will be realized if PN candidate Shahidan Kasim wins many votes in his constituency. This is in line with the leadership and supporter's trust in the candidate even though he joined PN only for a short time. The use of the words 'New Era Putrajaya' and '50 Deals Dr. Radzi Jidin for Putrajaya' is also seen as a manifestation of creating a new administration, even the number '50' is seen as a big and diverse offer that convinces the audience. By creating such propaganda, the ideology behind the visuals of PN candidates can be realized. In this regard, PN has been a great competitor to PH in the past GE-15 and although PN is a new political party organization, PN's ability and authority are comparable to PH's victory as a new government.

As discussed above, it can be summarized that PN has been the most effective in utilizing visual representation. Furthermore, the effectiveness of visual representation can vary due to various factors, such as the specific election, geographical location, and the intended audience. PH and BN have fierce competition in their visual naming of candidates, and each uses a similar strategy. Based on the observations PN took more proactive steps compared to PH and BN such as a comprehensive analysis of their visual campaigns, their impact, and on factors such as the efficacy of campaign strategies, candidate appeal, and public sentiment. It's crucial to recognize that political success is not solely

contingent on visual representation it involves a complex interplay of policies, campaign tactics, and the broader political context. The weaknesses of PH and BN are to be seen as challenging due to internal differences in presenting a cohesive visual identity. Besides, some visuals have differing messages and strategies, which can result in inconsistent visual representation, potentially causing confusion or dilution of their overall impact that may result influence of public perception. Such as controversies, governance issues, or public sentiment on how the public perceives the visual representations. For instance, this may necessitate adjustments in the visual representation strategies of these coalitions to connect with a diverse and ever-changing electorate. All these discussions may significantly impact the effectiveness of visual representation.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on past research, it turns out that various political contexts in social media have some influence on people either in a positive or negative form. Past research shows that visual representation also influences and is capable of unraveling and impacting the ideological diffusion of supporters of GE candidates. In the political context in Malaysia, party selection is seen as an important form of support by the people for the government that is formed through the General Election which is based on democratic practices. Elements of the formation of visual representation of election candidates are also the focus of the people in addition to the role of social media platforms that provide the dissemination of information more widely. The advantage of this platform allows all citizens to access information and see closely whatever is shared even among election candidates themselves using a social media approach to gain support from the people. So, it is not surprising that society's shift in obtaining political information is more toward new media than traditional media.

As discussed, the prominence and visual influence of election candidates also have a vital impact on the visual characteristics of candidates on social media, which include expressions, colors, image positions, language and writing, slogans, and voting locations in addition to the manifestations formed in the visuals. Nevertheless, the research data in all three parties shows a positive visual element even though the previous government, such as PH, failed to fulfill all the manifestos promised to the people. PH's victory in GE-15 is seen as the effectiveness of ideological influence through visuals to supporters although overall, PN's visual data shows an element of transparency and criticality towards the people in achieving the promised manifesto. Therefore, by conducting research like this, the findings of the study can be used to effectively detect and identify the formation of a political party's ideology in addition to helping supporters choose qualified and authoritative candidates in elections.

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# The Voice of Identity: The Power of Mindfulness-Based Approach in EFL Poetry Classroom

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**Abstract**—Mindfulness-based approach has been widely used in English language learning. It is highly promoted to stimulate and build peace of mind, well-being, and creativity. In EFL poetry writing, a mindfulness-based approach stimulates novelty, new perspective, context awareness, and productivity. The process of how the mindfulness-based approach is implemented is gained through the narrative inquiry of the learning. This study aims to identify the voice of identity revealed through mindfulness-based poetry writing. The researchers focused on the voice of identity because it is a crucial aspect of poetry that can help the reader to understand and feel the message of the poetry. Study data were collected from three respondents that were selected using purposive sampling. Those respondents were the 6<sup>th</sup>-semester students who were taking Poetry Course. The researchers used mindful journals and interviews to collect the study data and analyzed them using cross-case analysis. The results showed that through narrative inquiry, language learning through poetry writing could be understood as a series of experiences, the journeys of feelings and emotions. From the narratives' data, the poets' voice is revealed. The poetry reveals some voices, such as trauma, sadness, loneliness, and self-validation. Besides, this study also found that mindfulness has a significant role in helping students to frame their voices. Thus, considering the study's results, it is recommended that students find a way to improve their mindfulness, and teachers should find a teaching strategy to support it.

**Index Terms**—language creativity, language sensitivity, mindfulness-based approach, narrative inquiry

## I. INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness and language learning are two inseparable things. Language learning can happen only if the language learners are mindful. Mindfulness is the concept introduced by Ellen J Langer in 1989. It is the state of mind to notice new things, be sensitive to context, have multi perspectives, and create new categories. Thus, mindfulness is believed to support students' creativity (Ch et al., 2023; Henriksen et al., 2020). This concept is applied to many contexts, especially in education. The most fundamental characteristic of Langer's mindfulness is drawing a novel distinction which means an enhanced awareness of seeing facts or phenomena as the result of careful and close observation of something to notice something different from it. According to Langer (2000), by noticing new things, the learners are stimulated to think creatively and to make meaning from their perspectives. As opposed to mindlessness, which focuses on repetition without curiosity, mindfulness trains the learners to closely observe the learning process. It gives a new perspective on the process. In other words, from that explanation, it can be said that mindfulness consists of two main aspects, awareness and observation.

Mindfulness in education has been hugely researched worldwide, and it improves learning quality. Singh et al. (2013) conducted a study on mindfulness implementation in preschool teachers, proving that mindfulness brings more peace and well-being to the teacher. This goes with the finding by Rix and Bernay (2014), who revealed that mindfulness brings more inner peace to students. Mindfulness also enriches students' perspectives by being more open and flexible (Davenport & Pagnini, 2016). In line with this, Wang et al. (2017) found that mindfulness in learning could improve the learners' awareness, and therefore, they are awakened by their voices.

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However, in 2018, research showed no significant relationship between mindfulness and critical thinking (Navaie et al., 2018). It is said that Iranian EFL learners are not mindful. In Indonesia, especially in the EFL context of higher education, mindfulness is rarely used because there is still little research on mindfulness. One of them is done by Piscayanti et al. (2020) on how to apply mindfulness in poetry writing classes at university. The research showed that mindfulness could improve students' creativity in poetry. The mindfulness process could make the students more open and honest about themselves, relaxed and flexible. In general, mindfulness researches show that mindfulness could improve learning because the students' behavior toward learning is different, making them more relaxed and peaceful (Bazzano et al., 2018; Jung & Lee, 2021; Semple et al., 2017). The researchers do not show how mindfulness happens to build the inner voice of the learners. They do not reveal how language learners undergo a process of finding his/her identity, especially to stimulate their bravery to write their voice through poetry. They do not explain how poetry is written and what stories behind that build the voice and choice.

Therefore, this current study tries to give a deeper look at how mindfulness could facilitate poetry production by using the narrative inquiry method to reveal stories behind the words of poetry. The present study's findings will give a new understanding of how mindfulness, narrative inquiry, and poetry could make a balanced process of revealing self-identity, voice, and choice from a new perspective. This research values the individual process as a personal journey worth sharing to empower the poets themselves and later to empower society. The language learners produce is born from their deepest personal perspective, and meaning results from their negotiation of meaning.

The power of mindfulness in language learning is vital to improve the quality of the learning process by at least four characteristics. According to Langer (2000), there are four very basic principles of mindfulness. Firstly, to notice new things. Secondly, to be sensitive to context. The third is to have multiple perspectives. And fourth, create new categories. Those four basic characteristics of mindfulness are essential in supporting the learning environment for language learners.

In 2000, Langer and Moldoveanu conducted a study on the construct of mindfulness (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). This is a significant construct in the mindfulness field. The most paramount concept in mindfulness is to create a new difference. Langer (2001) stated that mindfulness is an evolution of culture, where mindfulness could change the culture by stimulating creativity and productivity. They can develop their personal and professional qualities with more self-awareness, better sympathy, and a deeper ability to face a new change (Stern, 2015).

In the EFL context, some gaps or crises can be found in language learning; one of the essential challenges is the learners' encounter with different languages with different systems, perspectives, and cultures. This challenge could be coped with mindfulness. Since the nature of mindfulness is to notice new things and see things from different perspectives, as it can also create deeper sympathy and understanding, mindfulness also could prevent crises from occurring (Veil, 2011). Sherretz (2011) found that mindfulness matters because her study shows consistency with Langer (2016), who argued that when freedom of choice is given, and information is different, the individual is forced to be a mindful observer. In the present study, mindfulness is used as a bridge to create poetry as a language production and as a result of mindfulness practice to learn a foreign language.

Poetry allows the process of accepting a new world to the existing world, in which poetry becomes the bridge to connect the two. The fact allows the learner to build a new perspective and create a new possibility of meaning. The existing world that stays in the language learners' minds should adapt to the new world the language learners are facing, and the fact that they need to change their perspective of the world is a part of the mindful process. Based on the process of creating something new, the language learners express their voice, their identity, and their perspective of the world. Therefore, mindfulness is crucial in language learning since it develops learners' self-identity while they welcome new information and build their perspective.

In the context of poetry in EFL learning, mindfulness is also essential in language learning because the learners are present at the moment and bring about a new perspective that rises from the novel distinction observed. The learning process where the voice and choice of learners are the centers of the classroom is the best humanizing classroom. Hanauer (2012) stated that language learning in an EFL context rarely has the chance to hear the real stories of the learners. In poetry class, language learners become the center of the language classrooms and should be given more attention (Hanauer, 2012). He has issued that language in the language classroom is decontextualized, even when the setting is 'made up' as real, or the language is set up as real language. The real challenge of language learning is making it personally, mindfully, contextually, and meaningfully. This is the role of poetry, to give space for their voices. Iida (2016) further explores poetic identity in poetry as it reveals the identity of the poets. Poetry is the representation of the voice and choice of the learners. In this research context, poetry is used to speak up about the voice and choice they have within.

Poetry is the most solid and condensed form of literature. It communicates the learners' ideas, feelings, identity, voice, and choices. Poetry is written with highly selected words to deliver ideas and the impression of the words to the readers. Poetry is the bridge between the writer's voice and the readers' mind, where the two are met when poetry is read with sympathy and curiosity to learn. Poetry is the minds of society where it helps find their way to the society of minds. Minsky (1986) stated that the minds of society can be built upon a society of minds. Art, in this context, poetry can be the bridge that can build a society of minds.



Mindfulness and poetry are the combinations of worlds and words, where words build upon the worlds of poets and will be used again to make new worlds. In the art and poetry essay, John Stuart Mill's view is synthesized by Gustafson that poetry is the balance between intellectual culture or analysis and the cultivation of feelings, sentiments, and social feeling (Gustafson, 2005). Poetry is the true representation of society's issues. It is the language that bridges ideas of personal issues to society issues.

According to Hoffman (1993), language can be defined as a tool of society to communicate, and he stated that our languages, by contrast, can communicate anything – locations, emotions, facts, procedures, possibilities, fantasies, lies, and many other things. This means that language is the gate from which we can create meanings based on our interpretation of life. This research context explores poetry from the voice of identity, choices, and the possibility of a new perspective being built. It will take a closer look at the process of how language learners build poetry from their perspective. It stimulates their language learning as it builds up the learner's sensitivity and creativity. Boden (2001) stated that creativity is the ability to come up with something new, surprising, and intellectual but also valuable. Concerning language learning, creativity is the basic foundation of learning.

In this study, mindfulness stimulates creativity, and through narrative inquiry, their stories are exposed and further explored with interviews to reveal the real voice and identity. The context of this research is to explore language learners' voices and choices through poetry that they make by using a mindfulness approach and writing with a narrative inquiry method. Narrative inquiry is used to search for the real voice and choice made by the learners. Narrative inquiry studies how humans, as storytelling organisms, experience the world (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). It is a tool to make sense of the learner's experience through what they think and value (Abrar, 2019). Mindfulness is the awakening process, and narrative inquiry is how it is revealed. Poetry is the language works of art by which the voice and choice can be heard and seen. By implementing a mindfulness approach in EFL poetry writing, where narrative inquiry is used to record the creative process and the work's track, poetry is used to speak the voice and choice of the language learners. In this research, the language of society's emotion is revealed through a mindfulness approach and engages with the narrative inquiry method to produce poetry.

The main research question is, what voice of identity is revealed through mindfulness-based poetry writing? The voice of identity becomes the focus of this study because the voice is an essential aspect of poetry that can help the readers or listeners better understand the poetry (Carroll, 2005). The contribution of this research in the context of English as a Foreign Language is that through this research, we can hear the feeling of society from the perspective of our learners. From this research, we can hear that our students are the producers of their voices and perspectives from which the evolution of education will be reborn. The research context is Poetry Course in English Language Education at a university in Bali, Indonesia.

## II. METHOD

The subjects involved here were 15 students in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester who are taking Poetry Course in English Language Education Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha, the academic year 2021-2022. However, for this paper context, only three students were used as the samples to investigate their process closely. They were chosen with purposive sampling, as their poetry was most prominent among the subjects. It revealed their process of finding self-identity, voices, and choices that they kept long for themselves. Their poetry has been given feedback and discussed to find the final form.

Some instruments were used in this research: a mindful journal, interview guide, poetry writing journal, and poetry rubrics. The gathered data were analyzed with narrative analysis, in which their stories were analyzed to interpret the real voice and choice made through the poetry. The analysis result from the mindful journals and interviews was crossed with cross-case analysis (Creswell, 1998) to cross-check the findings based on the commonalities, differences, and linking lines between the findings. This was to make sense of the stories, understand them, and value them.

The poetry writing journal was the third instrument to gain data about poetic moments, ideas, lines, stanzas, metaphors, imagery, personification, rhyme, sound, and sense. The fourth instrument was the poetry rubrics. The dimensions covered include ideas, words, lines, stanzas, figurative language, invention, vision, and voice. The students' poetry was discussed, evaluated, and given feedback to be revised. The discussion took a presentation of poetry first, a discussion of the ideas behind it, and the writing process before the feedback session. The ones selected here in this paper were the four most prominent ones which represent the voice of the poets themselves, the ones that fulfill the dimensions of poetry seen from the ideas, words, lines, stanzas, figurative language, language invention, vision, and voice.

## III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the findings and discussion will be revealed through the works of art (poetry of each student), the analysis of poetry, and the analysis of the process behind each poem. All names here are pseudonyms.

### Poem 1

#### **The Dearest Terror**

By Adi S.



A slight sight of your presence  
 Won't shed any light along any man's path  
 Because your heart bursts into a bloodbath  
 Any breath you take...  
 Are nothing but ache  
 Should I bite my tongue to make me awake?  
 Run...run... run...  
 I have to run even if I must drag my wounded leg from you.....  
 Dearest Terror

The poem talks about terror, about how the poet feels that there is a fear that he faced through which he could not overcome. The words he chose in the poem represent fear, anger within, and unsolved pain. There is a deep sorrow that he showed through his poem. What would be the story behind it?

This is the mindful journal he wrote behind the poem:

*Let me tell you an experience of a person, an experience that changes one's perspective, my perspective. It is when that time I felt my heart race but not in a way faster than the speed of love, faster than the speed of death. It was when I saw a figure that carried terror in every step it walked. For some people, this figure might bring more joy than awful horrors. For most people, this figure, or should I say this "thing," will bring more laughter than sorrow.*

This poem by Adi S. is a terror in his life. He used poem to show his fear, to show that he has a phobia of clowns. In an interview, it was learned that Adi S. has a phobia of clowns; he explained that his phobia started when he was young. He stated that the clown is a mystery and that the person behind the clown makes him scared. This phobia, for him, was like a terror; he could not trust somebody because he thought he/she could be a clown.

He used the word "run, run, run" in the poem because he wants to escape from the clown, and the fact that he wants to stay away from the clown makes him aware of being as far as possible from the clown. However, in life, where sometimes we cannot escape our own fear, it makes Adi S. down because he feels so lonely and terrorized by a fear, he makes himself.

Poem could be the best escape for expressing his fear because poem is how the soul is liberated and finds their safest space. In an interview with him, he witnessed, *"My experience facing fear shaping my writing style, I eventually put a theme on my poem or prose. Horror. Yes, horror stuff has always been my favorite. I like to watch or read random horror stuff from the mega writer Stephen King and Edgar Allan Poe to the anonymous writers whose writings are terrifically underrated"*.

Poem makes him face his fear by accepting it the way it is, forgiving himself truthfully, and starting to accept life better. Mindfulness allows him to see the brighter side of life, the brighter perspective of life, and better choices. Writing poem makes him see himself more clearly and objectively observe himself as he grows through his writing.

He could make a possibility with his better version of himself. Gibson (2015) and Leighton (2007) stated that poem is a legacy of a word, the poetics of sound. In the context of Adi's poem, Adi makes a story out of his poetic experience and makes an authentic voice of identity. Furthermore, he also makes his legacy through his words.

Here, he sees poem as a reborn sun in himself that makes sense of himself in warmer feelings and thoughts, and therefore, he takes poem as the new bridge to face his new world. The definition of the new self is rebuilt and renewed.

His second poem is Shades of Grey. This is his poem.

Poem 2

### **Shades of Grey**

By Adi S.

Today is gloomy...  
 Oh, my dearest dream  
 The black cloud of sorrow  
 Revolves around the crying sky

Oh, my dearest dream  
 I lay here with people dressing in black  
 I want to go  
 Please unchain me  
 The rain calls my name

Oh, my dearest dream  
 My heart and my soul now realize  
 These white flowers and candles  
 I cannot substitute the memoir of myself under the rain

The rain, the fiction,  
And the slipknot hanging on the tree  
My hours have arrived  
For the last tick of time.

In this poem, Adi S. tried to give his voice about his gloomy life; he could not hide his feeling that he wanted to somehow end his life in the way he could have planned with a slipknot. However, this is fortunately just poem to show his feeling that he could always rethink what is happening again and remind himself not to do the fatal thing.

Poem is not only an expression but also a reflection of life. Poem is used as a bridge to channel ideas to society. The personal expression can be shared through poem to reach the awareness of the individual voice and choice; it helps to awaken the society that the unheard voice can be heard and that the choice can be made better. It also helps society be more aware of the importance of unheard voices and creates an image of experience that can be sensed and tasted.

Poets can create imagination and experience and build new possibilities in the world. However, the poet cannot be escaped from truth and reality. But truth and reality have been accepted with high acceptance and awareness. In his essay "Poetry and Truth" in Gibson (2015), Roger Scruton stated that poetry concerns truth as a reality. It represents truth and reality at the same time. As seen in Adi's poem, it is the real truth and reality of having fear and worries from childhood. Now let us read the work of the second poet.

Poem 3

### **A fear**

By Windy

The daylight doesn't care of me  
The heads not even crossing  
Yes, it's in the darkness  
When I fully felt of Fear  
Well..I am fearful,  
Do I have to stop, tho?  
I musn't, but to keep going forward  
Realizing...  
It was just ongoing fear, not a mortal

In Windy's poem, it can be seen that Windy is fearful of the darkness. He is fearful and doubtful about himself. Should he stop when he is fearful? Should he go on? His doubt is representation of his real reflection of life, that when there are choices, we are questioning about our own ability to face the risk later in the future. However, his doubt is answered by his own choice. He chose to be brave and going forward. He chose that because he was realizing that even fear was not immortal. It was just a temporary feeling that would be soon disappeared.

During his mindful journal, Windy mentioned as follows.

*It was just laying on my mind, the time when I had no choice but to go. In an absolute darkness of the street, I was there driving the motorbike for a long journey, counted around three hours. The fog, rain fell down with no excuse. The raincoat did stick around my innocent body but didn't work well. No pedestrians even riders at all. Well...the thing that actually suffered me was fear.*

Windy indeed reflected his life on a long journey, where he is only struggling with the fear. This context of fear is darkness, loneliness, and hopelessness. In this context, he faced his fear all by himself. Later, in the poetry he wrote he chose to be optimistic about going forward and leaving the fear behind. It reflected that he is the one that decides his own life by himself. Poetry is about a reflection of a life moment, a representation of the deepest voice of a poet that unveils the voice and identity of a poet. It could renew the point of view and the understanding of a moment in life.

This is a poem from the third poet.

Poem 4

### **Thorn**

By Joana

I don't understand  
Why are roses red  
As if to show that she is very beautiful  
As if to show that he is very good  
Even though if you look at it, there are many thorns around it

A thorn that if  
Stabbed in my hand

The pain makes me never forget  
That she ever stabbed me

Now I know

That the thorns never care about me

Who is red rose here? How could she make a painful memory? This poem reflects how memory could be like a thorn in the roses. It can hurt, but it cannot be seen. It is felt but cannot be cured easily. Moreover, if there is pain inside, that could make the feeling worse, and the poet feels ignored.

The voice that can be heard in this poem is the voice of reality that sometimes someone feels unwanted, ignored, and painful. The voice is loud in words but silent in reality. However, by reading the poem, the perspective of voice can be more appreciated and respected.

In his work *Semantic Finegrainedness* in Gibson (2015), Peter Lamarque stated that there are at least two kinds of poetic meaning nature; first, the experiential thesis in which the values of poem lie in the experience the poem provides when it is read. Secondly is semantic density, in which poetic language offers a lot of meaning in a dense semantic structure. Dense because it is carefully and mindfully selected, so there is no waste of words or useless words in poem. This can be a very significant voice that has been thoughtfully crafted to meet the expectation of the poet to say his/her voice.

Urban (1939), in his writing "Language and Reality", stated that the artist does not first create his object with intuition and then find the appropriate meaning. It is rather in and through his medium of knowledge and imagination that he creates the definition of the objects.

This is the fourth poet.

Poem 5

**Am I valid?**

By Dwi W.

Show the emotions that you want to get rid of,  
Try to embrace those emotions that you forbid,  
Let out the true feelings that you had always hid,  
Don't be so hard on yourself as you always did,  
You gotta believe ever since you were a kid,  
You were and will always be valid.

Dwi W. tried to keep her voice heard by shouting out about validation. She questioned herself about being invalid or being invalidated by society. But what is valid and what is not? There are so many perspectives that can be built. From the poem above, it can be seen that society validates with their standards that don't meet the personal standard. Here Dwi W. tried to be honest with her voice.

This is her narrative about her life.

*I don't fully remember memories of my childhood or my teenage years. Thus, I have no idea what to write and am also not good with words. Nevertheless, I will still try to share a life story of a little girl trying to move on from her past self. This girl grew up in a nonaffectionate home, so she felt unwanted, unloved, and unimportant throughout her life. She always thought that her emotions and true feelings were meant to be hidden. She thought that those emotions and true feelings were invalid. No, no, her living environment made her think that way. The avoidance she went through as she thought she had no right to feel the way she felt, as she had been told that her parents went through heavier things than her.*

From her narrative, it can be seen that the fact that she feels unwanted, unloved, and invalid, was started from an early age, and the memories have grown with her until now.

Further, in an interview with her, she admitted, "I've been bullied verbally since I was a kid until I graduated from senior high school for having a birthmark on my lower lip which affected my confidence and made me appear as an antisocial kid since then".

From her story, it can be seen that poem is her way out to speak about the burden she has held since she was young. She is different, she is unique, but she is forced to be the same to the normal standard of physical validation as society wants. As society expects, she must look normal and the same to others. Uniqueness is not celebrated yet unvalidated. Her poem symbolizes her authentic voice, the only truth she could speak about.

This is her second poem.

Poem 6

**Free**

By Dwi W.

I am relieved  
As the rain kissed me  
I am at peace  
As the raindrops echoing  
I am reassured  
As the rain washed my sadness away

I am dancing freely  
As the rain sings the lullaby

From the poem above, it can be seen that the voice of sadness is still felt. Rain is the medium that can hide the tears from the eyes. Poem is the freedom to speak out the voice. Poem is the truth that reveals reality. Mindfulness helps this to be revealed. As revealed by Barret et al. (2020) it was proven that combining poem and mindfulness in higher education creates a space for true identity and freedom of self. Poem is a medium to express identity and freedom; therefore, it is very effective to be used as a tool to speak up. Poem is a word compilation and an essence of humanistic values. Poem is the most condensed form of literature that engages the poet and the readers in multi perspectives and multi-context. The new meanings are created in the sense of novelty and creativity. This is where humanity can be sensed in the most essential part. According to Heidegger (1971), poetry is projective saying in the sense that it says what is unsaid. Language in poetry is open to many contexts and many interpretations. Therefore, it could not be only one meaning gained from poetry but many.

Mindfulness and narrative inquiry make meaning to the learners (Byrne, 2015). In an interview, one of the learners, Joana also said, "*When I compose verse, I express my sentiments or states which I attempt to utilize mindfulness to make and express my creative ability way better than recently*". Joana makes meaning through her experience, and it starts with self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is the beginning of the learning. It helps learners to be able to accept their limitations and stimulates curiosity. With deeper curiosity, comes creativity and identity. Mindfulness helps learners to reveal their true voices. It also helps to strengthen the learner's identity. Therefore, this research is very important to support language learning creativity, productivity and identity in the context of foreign language learning.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Voice is an essential aspect of poetry since it will strengthen and lead the readers or listeners to understand the message of the poem better. This study confirmed that the voice of identity is revealed through the mindfulness-based approach. Mindfulness could help the students shape the voice they want to create. Mindfulness accelerates students' creativity by improving awareness of seeing facts or phenomena to make meaning from their points of view. The findings of this research strengthen the power of mindful learning in the context of EFL learning. Since this study was limited to three respondents, a further study can be conducted by involving more study samples. Besides, this study also could be deepened and sharpened in further study to gain a deeper understanding of mindfulness and poem writing in the other context.

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# The Theory and Practice of Language Ideologies in Modern Societies: A Case Study

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**Abstract**—One of the consequences of the neo-liberal ideology of language commodification, which emphasizes “economic logic, economic integration, professionalism, and effectiveness” (Budach et al., 2003, p. 610) is the changes imposed in the field of literacy and second language learning. From the cultural capital of an individual and community, language has become a commodifiable resource with its value on economic markets. In the process of language commodification, a higher value is assigned to the official language(s). This leads to devaluing the minority languages and to the unequal distribution of the languages that are used in public spaces of schools and other government institutions. The research reviewed for our case study demonstrates that language ideology of the state, which is based on language commodification and on monoglot “standard” (Silverstein, 1996) in defining the state’s social and pedagogical practices, does not promote social cohesion. On the contrary, this ideology informs discriminatory practices that privilege and legitimize the standard variety of the language of the majority over the minority languages, and one type of literacy over the other.

**Index Terms**—neo-liberal ideology, language commodification, literacy, second language education, cultural capital

## I. INTRODUCTION

In his speech at Huron University College, Jason Kenney, the former Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, proposed his new vision of Multiculturalism Program that focuses on “the successful and rapid integration of newcomers to Canadian society” (Kenney, 2009, para. 17) in order to address the challenge of radicalization and ghettoization of particular ethno-cultural communities in Canada. The Minister emphasized the importance of the competency “in one of [the] two official languages as a pathway to economic and social integration” (para. 24). The new vision of Multiculturalism Program describes the proficiency in one of the two official languages as a necessary skill and a valuable resource that will provide new Canadians with access to the labour market, help “[combat] marginal forces of radicalization” (para. 29), and maintain “*a sense of social cohesion, a common purpose and of national identity*” (para. 6). Thus, in this document, the proficiency in the two official languages was presented as a government nation-building strategy (see e.g., Anderson, 2006) and the official language ideology of the state that envisions Canada as one political community united by its two official languages, English and French (see e.g., Cardinal, 2005; Patten & Kymlicka, 2003).

This case study investigates some of the *dimensions* of the official language ideology of the neo-liberal state in North America (e.g., Canada) and in Europe (e.g., Belgium), and the *effect* it might have on its citizens who lack proficiency in one of the legitimate languages of the state.

The case study is organized in the following way. First, we introduce the concepts related to language ideology (e.g., the relationship between language and ideology, and multiaccentuality or indexicality of a linguistic sign) that provide theoretical foundations for our case study. Second, we present the case study of language ideology of a neo-liberal state that is realized through the ideology of language commodification. According to this ideology, the official language of the state has been recognized as a commodity of high value as compared to other languages and literacies that are considered to be of a low value. For our case study, we selected multiple contexts (e.g., call and community centers, schools, and court rooms) in order to demonstrate the dehumanizing effect of this language ideology of language commodification. In particular, our case study investigates how the language ideology that emphasizes the importance of proficiency in the official language(s) positions the minority languages and their speakers in today’s multicultural societies. Does it actually promote pluralism, partnership between various communities of a multicultural state, diversity, social cohesion and individual freedom, as outlined in the neo-liberal model (Loughlin & Williams, 2007) of the modern state? And if the answer to this question is negative, are there any alternatives to the language ideology of

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the neo-liberal state?

## II. THE THEORY OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

As noted by a number of scholars (e.g., Blommaert, 2006), our modern understanding of language ideology has grown out of Marxist theory. For Marx, the word *ideology* had a negative connotation. Marx defined ideology as false consciousness, where “men and all their circumstances appear upside down as in a *camera obscura*” (1845-1846, 1969, p. 287). He explained the false nature of consciousness by its detachment from the material activity and the history of human beings. In his famous quote, he argued for the mediating link between material and ideological, where “life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life” (p. 287). In addition, Marx claimed that the abstract nature of ideology insisted upon in the works of some of the philosophers of his time (e.g., Hegel) distracted the attention of human beings from the understanding of the real conditions of their lives. Thus, he argued for a more hands-on approach in relation to ideology and philosophy. His goal was to develop a type of philosophical thinking, whose purpose was not just to describe the world, but to change it, “the philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways, the point is to change it” (1845, 1969, p. 283).

Marxist theory highlights the main concepts that influenced our understanding of ideology; however, the theory did not discuss the relationship between language and ideology. This gap was addressed in the works of Bakhtin and Vološinov, who developed Marx’s ideas on ideology and connected them with language. They started their influential work *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1930, 1973)<sup>1</sup> with the idea that any sign, including a linguistic sign, could become an ideological sign (e.g., bread and wine can become religious symbols in Christianity). They further argued that a linguistic sign is not neutral, and it represents “the ideological phenomenon par excellence” (Vološinov, 1930, 1973, p. 13) because it does not simply exist as a part of one reality – it reflects and refracts another reality. The sign can distort the reality; it may be true to it, or it may perceive it from a different perspective. Therefore, a linguistic sign can be viewed as an intersection of differently oriented interests of different social classes or groups. Different values and attitudes are realized through the social *multiaccentuality*<sup>2</sup> of the ideological sign.

In his later works (see e.g., 1986), Bakhtin developed the concept of multiaccentuality of a linguistic sign into the theory of dialogism. He stated that there is no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance; every utterance constitutes a link in a highly organized chain of communication and is filled with overtones of other utterances. The words of others carry with them their evaluative tone, which are assimilated, reworked and re-accentuated by the speaker.

Bakhtin and Vološinov made an important contribution to the development of the study of language and ideology. They were among the first scholars who defined a linguistic sign as an ideological sign and wrote about the dialogic nature of language. Blommaert noted that according to Bakhtin and Vološinov, human communication is presented in the following way:

Language usage displays a variety of orientations to social interests, derived from particular positions in society (‘voices’). And interaction involves different voices evaluatively responding to each other’s statements (‘dialogue’). Thus, human communication through language displays meaningful metalevel inscriptions, adding a layer of sociopolitical, ideological meaning to the event. (Blommaert, 2006, p. 511)

Bakhtin and Vološinov changed our views on language as a stable, rule-governed system, and called for the study of spoken language (*parole*) with its heterogeneity and hybridity, as opposed to the stable and rule governed system of language (*langue*). Their call was addressed in the works of Silverstein (see e.g., 1996, 1997), who presented his own ethnohistorical perspective on communication in North America. He questioned the traditional view of a monoglot society, where communication has been studied within a stable and rule-governed *monolingual language community*. In contrast, he introduced the term *speech community* or *plurilingual speech community*. He demonstrated that historically, in North America, there was a long-standing plurilingual tradition, when the speaker of one speech community shared some of the repertoire of his/her speech community with the speaker of a different community. As a result, a process of language mixing and language contact between European and indigenous languages took place in North America starting from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The analysis of the early speech communities in North America presented by Silverstein contradicts the official view of North America as a monolingual continent, where “unilingualism is being increasingly given emblematic status within the Andersonian nation-statist project” (Silverstein, 1997, p. 138) encouraged by some political movements. Silverstein noted an adverse effect of these political and ideological ideas on indigenous and immigrant language communities that “have been administratively and otherwise forced into the mold of stratified deethnization” (Silverstein, 1997, p. 138).

This section provided an overview of some of the theoretical constructs that facilitated our understanding of language as “an ideological object, i.e. an object invested with social and cultural interests, not just a vehicle for (denotational, neutral meaning)” (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 199). The purpose of the next section is to describe some of the practices of the modern society informed by certain language ideologies. In particular, we focus on the ideology of language

<sup>1</sup> There is an issue of contested authorship of *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* between Bakhtin and Vološinov. For the purpose of this case study, we assume dual authorship of Bakhtin and Vološinov. We base our assumption on the fact that both of them were members of Bakhtin’s circle, a group of intellectuals that met together in an atmosphere of intellectual excitement in the 1920s in Russia, and therefore influenced each other’s work.

<sup>2</sup> The social multiaccentuality of a linguistic sign is known in today’s literature on language ideology as indexicality (see e.g., Blommaert, 2006).



commodification and its social consequences. In addition, we investigate the effect of the language ideology of the monoglot “standard” (Silverstein, 1996) on some of the social and pedagogical practices of the modern society.

### III. REALIZATION OF LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN MODERN SOCIETIES

*A. Ideology of Language Commodification* The issue of language commodification has been investigated by a number of researchers (see e.g., Block, 2008; Budach et al., 2003; Heller, 2003; Holborow, 2006; Ricento, 2005). Their work has been inspired by the ideas of Bourdieu (1977, 1991), who introduced the concepts of legitimate *language*, *relations of symbolic power*, *symbolic capital* that explain the process of language commodification. According to Bourdieu, linguistic competence can turn into linguistic capital, if those who possess it have more economic and cultural power and authority. If “a language is worth what those who speak it are worth” (1977, p. 652), then all other languages and dialects (e.g., class and regional dialects) are measured against the legitimate language of a more powerful class or group. The dominance of the language of a more powerful group “that imposes itself on the whole population as the only legitimate language” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 45) is perpetuated through a number of coercive instruments (e.g., schools) and language ideologies of the state.

Heller applied some of Bourdieu’s concepts to the modern era of the globalized world. She claimed that the shift from the industry-based to service- and information-based economy resulted in the commodification of language, “whose value on the market can be calculated in the same way as that of other goods and services” (Heller, 2003, p. 604). In her ethnographic, sociolinguistic research, she studied the process of commodification of language in a call center located in a francophone town in southern Ontario and the commodification of identity (herein, authenticity) in a community located north of Toronto that presents itself as a site for francophone heritage tourism. She claimed that the commodification of language and identity creates a tension in the society between “state-based and corporate identities and language practices, between local, national and supra-national identities and language practices, between hybridity and uniformity” (Heller, 2003, p. 473).

Another example of such a tension was presented in a study by Budach et al. (2003) in the field of francophone minority adult literacy training in Ontario. In their ethnographic research, they investigated a conflict between two discourses. The first discourse is the *community discourse* that emphasizes literacy as an important resource for the reproduction of the francophone community in Ontario. The second one is the *commodity discourse* inspired by the political agenda of neo-liberalism that views literacy “as an economic resource and as a form of linguistic capital to be invested in the labour market” (Budach et al., 2003, p. 610). The researchers noted that the commodity discourse was reinforced in the government policies that fund the adult literacy training programs. It also had its impact on the pedagogical practices and on the design of the literacy programs that had to change their focus from the needs of the francophone community and become more concerned with the training of job-related language skills within a short period of time. According to the researchers, the centers were changing their roles from “being institutions for the cultural reproduction of a distinct francophone community to serving the interests of the dominant market” (Budach et al., 2003, p. 615).

Holborow also explored the ideology of neo-liberalism that tends to camouflage the increasing connection between the state and the corporate world, and to present neo-liberals as proponents of “freewheeling, unlimited market capitalism” (Holborow, 2006, p. 87). According to the researcher, the danger of this ideology lies in the fact that it tends to commodify almost every aspect of human activity (e.g., the English language and education), which is presented as a non-contestable common sense. Based on the analysis of the institutional discourses of higher education in the UK and Ireland, Holborow demonstrated the danger of degrading “human experience by reducing it to the cash nexus” (Holborow, 2006, p. 97) and identified the discourses (e.g., Z-net, the World Social Forum) that challenge this ideology of common sense.

The researchers, whose work was presented above, investigated the issue of language commodity in relation to the official language(s) of the state. Ricento (2005) discusses a number of problems connected with the ‘language-as-resource’ discourse in the promotion of heritage languages in the USA. In his paper, he argues against commodification of heritage languages. Based on the analysis of some of the discourses of the heritage language movement (e.g., The Alliance for the Advancement of Heritage Languages, p. 358), Ricento demonstrates that a particular “view of language as instrument (as opposed to language as identity marker)” displaces it from its “historical situatedness” (Ricento, 2005, p. 357) and serves the political and social interests of the English-speaking majority, particularly in the areas of national security, trade and law enforcement. He emphasizes that the focus on “the *instrumental values* of heritage languages” ignores “human beings, communities, and socio-political aspects of language acquisition, use and loss...” (Ricento, 2005, p. 362). He warns against the danger of discourses, where heritage cultures and languages presented as a commodifiable resource:

The celebration of ‘heritage’ through its various manifestations – language, dress, music, literature, cuisine, and so on – is widespread and generally viewed as a means of both validating ethnic identities and marketing cultural ‘products’, including language, often in a way that exploits the minority culture for the greater benefit of the majority group. (Ricento, 2005, p. 358)

Contrary to the discourses of commodification, he calls for alternative discourses and educational programs, where the cultures and languages of ‘others’ would be positioned as an integral part of an American (not foreign) culture, and

would promote diversity and social change in the society.

### B. Monolingual Social and Pedagogical Practices in Multilingual Societies

One of the consequences of the neo-liberal ideology of language commodification, which emphasizes “economic logic, economic integration, professionalism, and effectiveness” (Budach et al., 2003, p. 610) is the changes imposed in the field of literacy and second language learning. From the cultural capital of an individual and community, language has become a commodifiable resource with its value on economic markets.

In the process of language commodification, a higher value is assigned to the official language(s). It leads to devaluing the minority languages and to the unequal distribution of the languages that are used in public spaces of schools and other government institutions. As stated by Blommaert, “the particular environment [may] organize a particular regime of language, a regime which *incapacitates individuals*” (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 198). Thus, when the minority languages are declared devalued assets, their speakers are perceived as illiterate, just because they do not possess literacy in any of the official language(s) and/or literacy according to the norms of a Western society.

Blommaert, Creve and Willaert (2005) argued that “literacy has become, in our cultural imagination, something that defines us as human beings, i.e., as normal members of our cultures” (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 35). This understanding of literacy, in particular the emphasis on the written text imposed by the Western understanding of literacy, is indexical. It limits the definition of literacy to the standard literacy in official language(s). For example, in a study conducted by Blommaert et al. (2005), standard Dutch (spoken and written) was considered by school teachers as the *only* valuable resource (in addition to English) that would offer educational opportunities for immigrant children. The data of their ethnographic study, which took place in three primary schools in Antwerp, Belgium, demonstrated that the teachers devalued their students’ symbolic resources, despite the fact that many of their students were multilingual. In addition, the teachers qualified them as lacking any linguistic competence because their students did not possess standard literacy skills associated with Dutch orthography.

The teachers who participated in the study believed that languages could be classified as languages with ‘poor vocabulary’ and ‘rich vocabulary’, and that some learners are better equipped for learning Dutch and fitting into the Belgium school system because of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Their discriminatory practices were largely informed by the language ideology of the state that dictates that “unless one speaks standard Dutch, or unless one possesses the specific literacy skills associated with Dutch ortho-graphy,<sup>3</sup> one is language-less and illiterate, even if one is a proficient multilingual individual, and even if one is a sophisticated literate in a writing system different from that of Dutch” (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 53).

The researcher of another study (Allen, 2007) that was conducted in literacy training classrooms in Canada claimed that newcomers to Quebec (in this case, adolescent youths) are confronted with the two contradictory discourses, i.e. controlling and embracing diversity. For example, diversity is embraced through subsidizing schools and hospitals in both English and French, and diversity is controlled through the mandatory schooling in French for the children of immigrants. In her study of 18 participants in one of the linguistically and culturally diverse schools in Montreal, she investigated how the French language policy as the *only legitimate language* of the province has influenced the educational trajectories of the immigrant youth by labeling them as “language challenged” (Allen, 2007, p. 168) and isolating them from the mainstream education until the necessary linguistic proficiency in French has been achieved. Once in a mainstream education, the students are expected to function autonomously without any academic or language support.

Another type of inequality and discrimination caused by language ideology that privileges standard literacy in the official language(s) was discussed by Blommaert (2001) in his study of the legal cases of asylum seekers in Belgium. This inequality was manifested through the treatment of narratives told by asylum seekers that are considered by the legal system as an important evidence, on the grounds of which asylum can be granted or denied. Blommaert analyzed 40 narratives of asylum seekers of African origin. He demonstrated that the narratives themselves and the ways they are evaluated and interpreted in Belgium courtrooms represent the site of struggle of different social interests. On the one hand, there is an ideology of the state, which relies heavily on the written modality of the language and certain discursive practices of what constitutes as a truthful and coherent narrative. On the other hand, there are asylum seekers, who possess a very limited access to linguistic, pragmatic and metapragmatic competences required by the state. Blommaert noted that “the state is assumed to represent everyone and to render service to everyone in the same way; at the same time, administrative procedures of the state privilege elite literacies and narratives and so shape and perpetuate deep social inequalities” (Blommaert, 2001, p. 445). There is no doubt that these procedures had a very negative effect on social identities of the asylum seekers and their future lives (e.g., there were a number of cases when the asylum seekers’ narratives were labeled as incoherent and therefore untruthful. As a result, they were denied asylum and sent back to their countries to encounter possible death). This study demonstrated that the society’s reliance on *standard* linguistic and communicative resources and its belief that they are equally shared between the members of the egalitarian and democratic society is a myth.

The research mentioned above and reviewed for my case study demonstrates that language ideology of the state,

<sup>3</sup> In the context of this study, *ortho-graphic* literacy is understood as the ability to write according to the standard writing norms and is contrasted with *hetero-graphic* literacy, which is not associated with the prescribed norms (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 34).

which is based on language commodification and on monoglot standard (Silverstein, 1996) in defining the state's social and pedagogical practices, does not promote social cohesion. On the contrary, this ideology informs discriminatory practices that privilege and legitimize the standard variety of the language of the majority over the minority languages, and one type of literacy over the other.

#### IV. THE ALTERNATIVE MODELS: POST-MODERNISM AND NEW PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

##### A. *The Post-Modern View of Nation and Language as an Alternative to the Ideology of Language Commodification*

This section provides an overview of some alternative theories and practices. It starts with a description of the post-modern approach toward language and nation. Post-modern discourse "challenges the view of the modern world as consisting of homogeneous nations each with a single, homogenizing literacy" (Street, 1996, p. 371). In addition, the validity of the post-modern approach lies in the fact that it challenges the common sense framework that is used in political, social and educational discourses of the modern neo-liberal state. For example, the reality of today's nation as a heterogeneous and fragmented construct is reflected in bhabha's (1994) metaphors of scattering and gathering of people who live on the margins of foreign cultures and foreign tongues. Thus, nation in general, and a homogeneous nation in particular, is an imagined construct. According to bhabha, nation is an apparatus of symbolic power that pretends to ignore the differences it produces, such as sexuality, class affiliation, territorial and cultural differences. Therefore, in the modern discourse, nation presents itself as a space for silencing the marginalized voices under the rhetoric of 'many as one'; an example of this marginalization can be found in a variety of contexts described above (e.g., schools, call and community centers, and court rooms). By contrast, in a post-modern discourse, nation is a space for the emergence of marginalized people (e.g., the colonized and women).

In the modern discourse people are presented as pedagogical subject, whose history is linear, and whose time and space are fixed and stable. The nations' identity is constituted by historical sedimentation (French identity, Canadian identity, etc.) and diversity is considered a problem. In contrast, in post-modern discourses, people are presented as performative subjects living in a very dynamic time and space. Instead of identity that is fixed and historically shared, they experience loss of identity or profound cultural undecidability, which "antagonizes the implicit power to generalize, to produce the sociological solidity" (bhabha, 1994, p. 150). bhabha is using a very powerful metaphor of nation as scattered people (migrants and refugees) looking for a gathering place.

In his book bhabha states that "the narrative of national cohesion can no longer be signified" (bhabha, 1994, p. 156). It means that the connection between the signifier (word) and the signified (concept) is not stable and fixed as claimed by Saussure. According to bhabha, there is a new signified for a signifier 'nation'. Nation becomes "a liminal signifying space that is *internally* marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense location of cultural difference" (bhabha, 1994, p. 148). Thus, it is important to give voice to these marginalized communities and to apply a bottom up rather than a top down approach while developing language and literacy programs. On a practical level, this bottom up approach can be realized through rethinking some of the pedagogical monolingual practices that are used in today's multilingual classrooms.

##### B. *Alternative Pedagogical Practices in Multilingual Classrooms*

This section provides a description of the pedagogical practices that legitimize the use of minority languages in second language learning classrooms. These practices are based on the assumption that "local languages and literacies have a positive and constructive contribution to make to world development and change" (Street, 1996, p. 374) and that the students in an ESL classroom (children and adults) already possess some form of reading and writing. Thus, in the education programs, the emphasis should be made "on what people already have rather than assuming they start as empty vessels" (Street, 1996, p. 375).

Practitioners and researchers have begun to develop some of the practices that are less ethnocentric and top down. For example, Cummins (2006, 2007) calls for the reconceptualization of monolingual practices in multilingual classrooms. He argues against the erroneous assumptions that inform today's pedagogical practices. The first of these assumptions is based on the fact that the use of the first language (L1) should be prohibited in a second language (L2) classroom. (In this case study, this pedagogical practice was presented based on a study that took place in Belgium literacy classes (Blommaert et al., 2006)). According to the second assumption, there is no place for translation between L1 and L2 in an L2 classroom. The proponents of the third assumption insist that in immersion and bilingual programs, the two languages should be kept rigidly separate.

Cummins claims that these three assumptions reflect the monoglot 'standard' ideology and the attempt to legitimize the official language(s), and devalue the minority languages of the learners. He demonstrated that L1 can be used in multilingual classrooms as "a cognitive and linguistic resource" (Cummins, 2007, p. 238). The researcher claimed that there is no empirical evidence to suggest that the-only-second-language (L2) instruction approach is effective. In fact, it is inconsistent with our modern understanding of the functioning of bilingual/ multilingual mind. His review of the empirical studies, where L1 has been used to facilitate the L2 acquisition (e.g., effectiveness of bilingual over monolingual dictionaries in the acquisition of the L2 vocabulary; the use of translation for literacy development and maximal students' engagement) demonstrated that the monolingual perspective, which needs to be reconceptualized, does not engage students from socially marginalized groups with literacy and academic work in both languages, and

may be “rooted in a particular ideological perspective which serves to reinforce inequalities in the broader society” (Cummins, 2007, p. 226).

A number of other researchers (e.g., Swain & Lapkin, 2002) provide empirical evidence that the use of L1 can help L2 learners to develop their competence and metalinguistic awareness in the target language. In her recent work, Swain introduced the concept of languaging (2006) that is framed within the sociocultural theory of mind (Vygotsky, 1987) and is defined as the process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language that organizes and mediates mental processes during the performance of cognitively complex tasks (Swain, 2006). Therefore, according to this definition, the prohibition of the first language in an ESL classroom has a negative effect on learners’ self-esteem and identity; in addition, it is also detrimental to learners’ cognitive development and their understanding of the outside world that is, to a large extent, shaped and mediated through language. The fact that many educators are still reluctant to allow the use of minority languages in the classroom, despite all the empirical evidence, supports the idea that the use of L1 is an ideological, rather than pedagogical and/ or methodological issue.

## V. CONCLUSION: WE MUST KEEP OUR TONGUES UNITED

In this case study, we discussed some of the theoretical and empirical studies that investigate the issue of language ideology. We outlined some of the theoretical concepts developed by Bakhtin and Vološinov in relation to a linguistic sign as an ideological construct, and their argument to study language not as a stable and rule-governed system, but as a dialogic construct. Their ideas were later developed by modern scholars mentioned in this case study, who investigated the practical realization of language ideologies and their implications for social practices of modern societies. For example, Silverstein (1996, 1997) demonstrated that the representation of some of the geographical spaces as purely monolingual is in contradiction to the historical evidence and is informed by certain political and ideological agendas of the state. In those ideological agendas, the official standard language(s) are usually assigned more value and are encouraged to be acquired because of the material benefits that are promised to those who invest in its (their) learning. As stated by Block (2008), “now languages not only are signs of authentic national identities, they are also seen as commodities, the possession of which is a valued skill in the job market” (Block, 2008, p. 35). According to the ideology of language commodification, bilingual or multilingual speakers can be qualified as speakers without any language, just because they do not possess the proficiency in any of the official (standard) languages spoken in modern societies that claim to be cosmopolitan and multilingual. As noted by Blommaert et al. (2005) “multilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy. Thus, eminently multilingual individuals...can be declared to have ‘no language’ in particular environments” (Blommaert et al., 2005, p. 213).

The research presented above as part of this case study challenged the legitimacy of the language ideology of commodification and standard “monoglot” (Silverstein, 1996) that informs the social practices in Canada and Belgium and demonstrated its dehumanizing effect. Therefore, contrary to the official neo-liberal discourses, this language ideology has to be recognized and identified as an ideology that leads to further marginalization and social tension in the societies concerned, and informs the practices of political, economic and cultural domination. We conclude our case study with a quote that emphasizes the necessity to resist the political discourses of neo-liberals informed by the language ideology of commodification and normativity:

We have the individual and collective responsibility to do everything we can to keep cultural dialogues open and to allow for the identities of groups and individuals to be polyphonic, that is, to contain a (diverse and heterogeneous) plurality of voices. We must keep our tongues united. (Medina, 2005, p. 184)

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# Translingual Practices in the Linguistic Landscape in the Western Region of Kazakhstan

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**Abstract**—In spite of the sharp rise of research interest in linguistic landscapes worldwide, little attention has been given to the multilingual urban discourse of Kazakhstan. Being first in the investigation into the multilingual practices characteristic of the linguistic landscape in the western region of Kazakhstan, our study adds to the number of linguistic landscape analyses through a translanguaging lens. This paper explores translingual practices on local "bottom-up" commercial public signs by the example of four major cities in the region: Aktau, Aktobe, Atyrau and Uralsk. The study uses a mixed method research design combining qualitative and quantitative analysis of multilingual urban texts accompanied by semi-structured ethnographic interviews with owners of commercial establishments. In our analysis, we specify various dynamic and creative forms of mixing the state Kazakh, interethnic Russian, international English and/or other local languages such as Uzbek and Arabic. We demonstrate how these languages are involved in the creation of symbolic meanings and attraction of potential consumers and contribute to the construction of the urban space of the western region of Kazakhstan. We provide illustrations of the ever-growing presence of English in multilingual written urban texts of the region as a symbol of modernity, high quality, innovation, technical progress and prestige. We also show the indexical potential of the Kazakh and Russian languages as markers of local affiliation and tradition, and the Uzbek and Arabic languages as symbols of the Turkic and Islamic cultures.

**Index Terms**—linguistic landscape, urban linguistics, translanguaging, commercial public sign, Kazakhstan

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today, urban spaces often become the object of linguistic analysis as they are explained to provide a sociolinguistic context for the understanding of the dynamics of language use (Al-Naimat & Saidat, 2019). Linguistic landscapes are shown to reflect the language situation of a place as the realization of the official language policy (Alomoush, 2023; Ngampramuan, 2022), reveal the value and symbolic significance of languages employed in state and commercial public signs (Saduov et al., 2022), reflect the strategies used to preserve local languages and introduce local cultures on a global scale (Artawa et al., 2023), and contribute to identity construction (Im, 2023; Leimgruber & Fernández-Mallat, 2021). Although research interest in linguistic landscapes has witnessed a sharp rise in recent years, few studies have dealt with linguistic landscapes through a translanguaging lens. In their analysis of the linguistic landscape in Greece, Gogonas and Maligkoudi (2019) demonstrate how peoples' creativity and abilities to navigate between languages and language varieties allow for the articulation of views and critical attitude to the country's political, social and economic situation. Gorter et al. (2021) shed light on tensions arising from the interaction of local and global languages in one

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location. In their analysis of the linguistic landscape in Zambia, Costley et al. (2022) discuss the changing status of local African languages in a post-colonial context.

Moreover, despite a large number of investigations into linguistic landscapes around the world, the linguistic landscape of Kazakhstan has not received enough attention from sociolinguists. To the best of our knowledge, only two studies of the language landscape of the capital of Kazakhstan (Astana or Nur-Sultan<sup>1</sup>) are known at the moment (Moore, 2014; Juan & Mukhamedzhanova, 2022). The first study, conducted in 2013, showed a significant discrepancy between the official language policy and actual practice. Moore (2014) demonstrated the symbolic role of the Kazakh language, which reflected the "desired" goals of the language policy of the state, while the Russian language reflected the real social and communicative practice of the population. The second, more recent study was devoted to the role of the Russian language by comparing its visibility on official and unofficial public signs. Juan and Mukhamedzhanova (2022) demonstrated that the Russian language has a high vitality and performs communicative and social functions in Kazakhstan, however, these functions differ from those performed by the state language (Kazakh). Compared to the state language, the communicative function of Russian is much stronger, and the social function is noticeably weaker. The authors concluded that Russian serves as the main communicative means in interethnic, interregional and international communication and at the same time represents communicative, economic and cultural values, serving to maintain political stability and national unity.

Due to the different power and representation of the Kazakh and Russian languages in different parts of Kazakhstan, the linguistic landscapes of cities from different regions are of great research interest. Our study is devoted to the linguistic landscape of the western region of Kazakhstan, which is important in terms of the functioning of multilingualism. On the one hand, the region borders on the Russian Federation in the north and Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the south, which determines the active use of Russian as the language of international communication in the post-Soviet area. On the other hand, the region is the largest oil and gas producer in Kazakhstan, hence the English language acts as a global lingua franca in establishing and maintaining business relations (Kurmanova et al., 2023). Apart from the state language (Kazakh) and two international languages (English and Russian), the language situation of the western region of Kazakhstan encompasses languages of ethnic minorities or local languages such as Uzbek, Turkish and Arabic. The purpose of this paper is to explore translanguaging practices on local commercial public signs of the western region of Kazakhstan by the example of four major cities of the region - Aktau, Aktobe, Atyrau and Uralsk. Being first in the investigation of translanguaging in the linguistic landscape of Kazakhstan, our research adds to the number of linguistic landscape studies based on a translanguaging perspective. In our analysis, we will show how Kazakh, English, Russian and other local languages are creatively mixed to build the urban space of the region and are involved in the construction of symbolic meanings and attraction of potential consumers.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### A. Functions of Linguistic Landscape

The description of linguistic landscapes is a relatively new way of studying languages and language situations in the context of globalization, when the number of bilingual and multilingual regions in the world is constantly rising. Landry and Bourhis (1997) were first to suggest a definition of linguistic landscape as "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs and public signs on government buildings <...> of a given territory, region, or urban agglomeration" (p. 25). Modern scientists expand this definition to include such elements as electronic signs and interactive information screens as part of the linguistic landscape of a public place (Gorter, 2013). Thus, the modern understanding of the linguistic landscape includes any kind of text in the urban space (Scherbakov & Proshina, 2023). The purpose of linguistic landscape research is to study the relationship between language policy and practice in the use of written language in the urban space. Features of linguistic landscape testify to the degree and forms of linguistic integration and mutual functioning of the components of the socio-communicative system.

Considerable attention in the study of linguistic landscapes is given to the investigation into their functions in urban spaces. The primary functions of linguistic landscapes are informative and symbolic (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The informative function is that the linguistic landscape provides information about the language situation of a given place, for example, which languages are used in this place, which of them is (or are) dominant, to what extent the local population speaks each of the languages, etc. An example of the informative function is the analysis of the linguistic landscape in Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Thailand (Ngampramuan, 2022), which shows the relationship between the increase in the number of Chinese tourists in Thailand and the choice of languages on signs at the airport. Under the symbolic function is meant the symbolic significance of the language (or its variety), i.e. its value and status compared to other languages that are used in a given society. The symbolic function may have a wider meaning, for example, when the use of the Latin alphabet is aimed not at ensuring the understanding of names by native Anglophone speakers, but at emphasizing social prestige, since the names written in Latin are associated with foreign companies and standards (Aristova, 2016). Similar associations with the English language are also noted by other researchers. Thus, the

<sup>1</sup> Astana was the name of the capital until 2019 and has been since 2022. Nur-Sultan was the name of the capital between 2019 and 2022.

role of the English language in linguistic landscapes is often described as that of a symbolic resource and a marker of modernization, internationality, globalization, and social prestige (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010; Rivlina, 2017; Juan & Lifan, 2023).

In addition to expressing symbolic and cultural meanings, researchers also identify other functions of linguistic landscapes. For example, as a result of the analysis of the linguistic landscape in the capital of the African state of Cameroon, Yaoundé Pütz (2020) concludes that, in an ethnically heterogeneous and linguistically hybrid society, the languages employed on various kinds of inscriptions not only perform traditionally allocated information and symbolic functions but can also have social and political significance. In addition, some researchers highlight the decorative and attractive function of the linguistic landscape (Shcherbakov & Proshina, 2023), which is associated with the understanding of a foreign language as an element of increasing prestige and matching fashion trends. For example, according to the results of the study by Ong et al. (2013), language choice may depend on how a sign in a foreign language will look like, what associations it will evoke in potential consumers, and how these associations are able to attract visitors. One of the means of attracting potential consumers is language play, which is especially evident in the digraphy in inscriptions in urban public places (Rivlina, 2017).

#### *B. Language Situation in the Western Region of Kazakhstan*

The language situation in Kazakhstan is characterized by linguistic diversity, primarily due to the unique diversity of the ethnic composition of the population. According to the official 2009 census (Smailov, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d), there are 1,760,232 people in the western region of Kazakhstan who belong to more than 80 nationalities. In this territory, the most numerous nationalities are Kazakhs (1,402,039) and Russians (262,347). Other nationalities represented in the western region of Kazakhstan include Ukrainians, Tatars, Uzbeks, Georgians, Azerbaijanis, Lithuanians, Moldovans, Latvians, Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Armenians, Turkmens, Estonians, Abkhazians, Bashkirs, Buryats, Nagais, Karakaplasts, Mari, Ossetians, Tuvans, Chechens, Chuvashs, Sakhas (Yakuts), Adyghes, Altaians, Arabs, Bulgarians, Dungsans, Koreans, Germans, Poles, etc. Being a unique feature of the mentality and interests of each ethnic community, multi-ethnicity creates a specific socio-cultural context for studying the language situation of the western region of Kazakhstan. The quantitative information about the main nationalities of the region based on the official 2009 census is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
THE POPULATION OF THE WESTERN REGION OF KAZAKHSTAN IN TERMS OF NATIONALITY

Nationality	Number	Percent
Kazakhs	1,402,039	79,65%
Russians	262,347	14,90%
Ukrainians	35,669	2,03%
Tatars	18,900	1,07%
Uzbeks	3,079	0,17%
Others	38,198	2,18%

The language situation in the western region of Kazakhstan, as in the whole of Kazakhstan, can be characterized as exoglossic (representing a set of languages), unbalanced (in which the components are distributed by spheres of communication and social groups), and four-component (which is characterized by the functioning of the languages of ethnic groups as local languages, Russian as a regional language, Kazakh as a macro-mediator, and English as a professional language) (Schweitzer & Nikolsky, 1978). Local languages (Azerbaijani, Tajik, Tatar, Turkish, Uzbek, etc.) are used mainly in oral informal communication, in limited communication areas only within ethnic groups. The two dominant languages (Kazakh, the state language of Kazakhstan, and Russian) are demographically and communicatively different: the Kazakh language has a demographic power due to the large number of native speakers and speakers of this language, while the Russian language is inferior in terms of its demographic power. However, in terms of its communicative power and in relation to the total number of actively served spheres of life of the population, the Russian language still remains a communicatively powerful language (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022).

An outstanding feature of the language policy in Kazakhstan is the state's support for a multilingual regime conducive to economic planning. The language policy in Kazakhstan strongly supports diversity in society by promoting individual multilingualism (Syzykbayeva, 2016). The residents of Kazakhstan are multilingual and include Kazakh, Russian, English and other local languages in their everyday life. For example, as a result of the study of the language situation in Kazakhstan, such forms of bilingualism and trilingualism were identified as Kazakh - Russian, Russian - Kazakh, Russian - English, Kazakh - English, Russian - English - Japanese/French/Turkish, Uzbek - Kazakh - Russian, Kazakh - Russian - English - German/Chinese/Turkish/Uzbek/Korean, Kazakh - Russian - Uzbek - English, Russian - Uzbek - German - English, etc. (Shunkeyeva et al., 2020). The functioning of two or more languages in the context of the modern Kazakhstani sociolinguistic space allows us to speak about the uniqueness of the situation associated with a purposeful official language policy that promotes the idea of multilingualism of the residents of Kazakhstan as one of the most important conditions for socio-economic modernization. Moreover, an important role in the language policy is given to English as a lingua franca, which is most suitable for development in the country (Terlikbayeva & Menlibekova, 2021). The process of integration into the world community, access to modern technologies, the need to implement the results and achievements of world science and education in the sustainable



development of the country today require mastering the English language and raising its proficiency level. Thus, in modern literature it is customary to describe the language policy of Kazakhstan in accordance with the focus on the development and support of the "trinity" of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages (Delovarova & Gaipov, 2019).

In accordance with the policy of "trinity of languages" in the context of our study of the written texts of the urban space, it was important for us to understand how well the residents of the western region of Kazakhstan can understand the written speech in these three languages. In the official population census of 2009 (Smailov, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d), we found the information we were interested in. Figure 1 shows how many residents of the western region of Kazakhstan, in their opinion, are fluent in reading in the Kazakh, Russian and English languages.

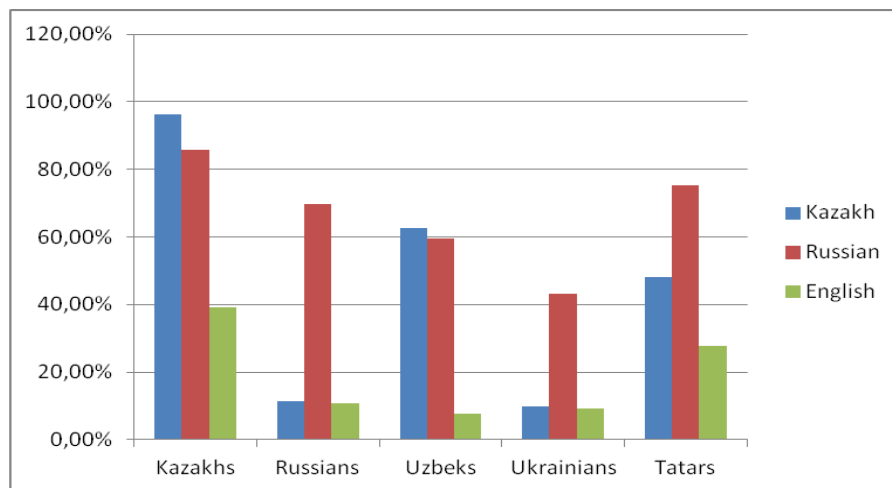


Figure 1. The Level of Reading Proficiency in the Kazakh, Russian and English Languages

As illustrated in Figure 1, the majority of the residents of the western region of Kazakhstan as a whole (mainly Kazakhs) demonstrate a fairly high level of understanding written texts in Russian; a high level of understanding written texts in Kazakh is typical mainly for speakers of Turkic languages, including Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Tatars, etc. On the other hand, the results of the population census indicate that not all residents of the western region of Kazakhstan are fluent in English, just as a small number of speakers of Slavic languages (for example, Russian and Ukrainian) note a high level of reading skills in both Kazakh and English. Recently, as a result of the state's consistent targeted language policy to strengthen and spread the Kazakh language, researchers have noted the ever-increasing role of the Kazakh language, the expansion of its use and the growing tendency to study Kazakh as a non-native language (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022). On the other hand, some researchers emphasize that English is still inaccessible to the majority of the population, and only a relatively small part of the wealthy middle class has the opportunity to gain greater access to English-language resources (Ahn & Smagulova, 2022).

### C. Analysis of Linguistic Landscape Through a Translanguaging Lens

Translanguaging is defined as an approach to the examination of the behavior of multilingual social actors as a single linguistic repertoire that contains features (resources) from several languages (García & Li, 2014). It is used to describe the dynamic and creative uses of multilingual (translingual) resources in social and cognitive spaces (Li, 2018). In the context of globalization, multilingual speakers or writers employ their language repertoire not as a sum of discrete and disconnected entities, but as an interrelated and unitary communication system, which is characterized by the absence of clear boundaries between the contacting languages, forming a linguistic continuum, or language contact zones, characterized not so much by hybridity as by linguistic uncertainty, fuzziness, fluidity (Canagarajah, 2013; García & Li, 2014). Translanguaging allows multilingual speakers and writers to select and combine meaningful elements (resources) from their semiotic repertoire, despite the social and political boundaries between languages (Otheguy et al., 2018). Thus, the translingual paradigm significantly expands the possibilities and provides a helpful tool for studying and understanding multilingual practices, from the point of view of creative speech generation (Gritsenko & Aleshinskaya, 2015). In regards to linguistic landscape, translanguaging has been used to understand how languages and various semiotics interact in public spatial domains, and how the creativity and fluidity of resources discursively contribute to the meaning of the physical space (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Pennycook, 2017). Within the translanguaging paradigm, Pennycook (2017) views space "as part of an interactive whole that includes people, objects and space" (p. 278).

There have been several attempts to classify the ways how multilingual information is arranged on signs. Reh (2004) differentiates between four types: duplicative (when texts are identical in all languages), fragmentary (when only part of the text in one language is translated into another), overlapping (when texts have both a common part and a part containing different information), and complementary (when texts in two languages convey different information). When describing translanguaging in linguistic landscapes, Cenoz and Gorter (2015) reduce the taxonomy to two types of language combinations in multilingual signs: the "duplicating - fragmentary" type shows a separation of languages

(when the same text or some of its parts are presented in two or more languages), while the "complementary" type shows different forms of mixing languages (when different parts of the text are presented in different languages). Another taxonomy of translanguing practices has been offered by Alomoush and Al-Naimat (2020), which is closely connected to the previous typology. In application to their research data, the scholars identify community translanguaging and impressionistic translanguaging. The former type can be associated with fragmentary multilingualism, which reveals the ethno-multilingual and multicultural repertoire of the visual space; the latter can be associated with complementary multilingualism, which reveals innovative uses of languages. In this study, we focus on the complementary type that presupposes translanguing practices, or impressionistic translanguaging, as suggested by Alomoush and Al-Naimat (2020). Our analysis of the linguistic landscape of the western region of Kazakhstan provides insight into various forms of translanguing practices within the complementary type.

### III. DATA AND ANALYSIS

Our study used an explanatory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). It started with collecting and analyzing quantitative data and then was followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data. In the first stage, we collected a "visual inventory" (Gorter et al., 2021) of commercial public signs in four major cities of the western region of Kazakhstan: Aktau, Aktobe, Atyrau and Uralsk. In these cities, we used our mobile phones to take photos of signs on such frequently visited public establishments as cafes/restaurants, shops, pharmacies, dental clinics, and beauty salons. All of these public signs are commercial and informal, and they are installed by individuals and private businesses, i.e. "bottom-up" signs (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006). Unlike "top-down" signs, which are set by the state authorities and reflect the language policy in the country or region, "bottom-up" signs reflect language practice. For the purposes of this paper, we limited the photo documentation to "bottom-up" signs containing two or more languages, i.e. multilingual signs. In total, our research sample consisted of 433 photographs.

The analysis of the information function of the signs consisted in identifying all languages and their combinations used in commercial public signs. All the signs were categorized for linguistic codes by two researchers, who coded all the photographs independently of each other. In cases of different opinions, they agreed on a common code. The symbolic functions performed by the use of languages in signs were explored by analyzing the language choices and the order in which languages are visually presented. In our analysis of the translanguing practices used in multilingual signs, we followed Cenoz and Gorter (2015) to divide signs into those containing duplicating - fragmentary and complementary multilingual practices. The absolute majority of instances in our sample were based on complementary practices, which provided interesting examples of translanguing practices. Taking into consideration the linguistic forms of such multilingual combinations, we specified the types of translanguing complementary practices that are peculiar to our sample. In our analysis, we paid attention to how languages function in multilingual messages, what meanings are expressed by combinations of different languages, and what roles are performed by languages in these combinations.

In the second stage, we collected and analyzed 35 semi-structured interviews with owners of commercial establishments who created signs. The interviews were recorded after obtaining permission from the interviewees. Depending on the respondents' choice, 18 interviews were conducted in Kazakh, and 12 were conducted in Russian. The average length of an interview was 10-15 minutes, and the total length of the recorded data was over 6 hours. The interviews focused on the languages used in the name of the establishments, the reasons for choosing these languages, and the respondents' language proficiencies. The interviews were meant to shed light on the meanings behind the mixing of languages and the status of words or phrases in signs containing several languages. The interviews enabled us to explain the use of elements linked to linguistic repertoires and translanguing practices (Pennycook, 2017).

### IV. RESULTS

The analysis of language combinations in multilingual commercial public signs allowed us to determine the visibility of the state language (Kazakh), two international languages (English and Russian) and some local languages in the linguistic landscape of the western region of Kazakhstan. As the results show, the most frequently used language is English. English words or elements were found in almost all (95,8%) multilingual signs in our sample. Kazakh and Russian are rarely mixed, their combinations occur only in 15 instances (3,5%) of the sample. Still, the visibility of the Kazakh and Russian languages in multilingual signs is rather high: 56,6% and 43,4%, respectively. In general, the Kazakh, English and Russian languages are distributed between all types of commercial establishments. We also found single instances of using local languages such as Uzbek and Arabic in the signs of cafes and restaurants. The list of combinations of languages related to different types of commercial establishments used on commercial public signs in the four cities in the western region of Kazakhstan is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
LANGUAGE COMBINATIONS USED IN MULTILINGUAL COMMERCIAL PUBLIC SIGNS

Languages	Cafes/Restaurants	Shops	Pharmacies	Dental clinics	Beauty salons	Total
Eng+Kaz	48	69	30	32	41	220
Eng+Rus	58	24	20	36	40	178
Kaz+Rus	2	2	2	9	0	15
Kaz+Eng+Rus	3	1	1	4	1	19
Eng+Uz	1	0	0	0	0	1
Arab+Eng	4	0	0	0	0	4
Arab+Rus	3	0	0	0	0	3
Arab+Eng+Rus	1	0	0	0	0	1
Arab + Eng + Uz + Rus	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	121	95	53	82	82	433

Regarding the way multilingual information is arranged on the signs in our sample, we identified signs containing duplicating - fragmentary multilingual practices and those containing complementary multilingual practices (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015). Duplicating - fragmentary multilingualism is partially presented in signs when the information (or part of information) is repeated in two languages, for example: *шауштараз* /shashtaraz/ 'hairdressing salon'. An illustrative example of this type of multilingualism is the sign of the cafe *Ай Луна* (Figure 2) combining the Kazakh word *ай* /ai/ and the Russian word *луна* /luna/ both meaning 'moon'. Not only the word 'moon' is duplicated on this sign. To the left of the Kazakh *ай* /ai/ 'moon' is the Russian word *кафе* /kafe/ 'cafe', and to the right of the Russian word *луна* /luna/ 'moon' is the Kazakh word *кафеси* /kafe/ 'cafe'. When asked about the meaning of the bilingual sign, the owner of the cafe, a Kazakh by origin, explained that because the cafe is located in Kazakhstan, in the city of Uralsk, initially the first part of the name, *Ai*, is the Kazakh word, and *Luna* is the Russian translation. According to the respondent, the two languages in the name are given in order to cater to interethnic relations peculiar to the western region of Kazakhstan. Besides, the bilingual name sounds beautiful in terms of phonetics.



Figure 2. An Example of Duplicating - Fragmentary Multilingualism

Complementary multilingualism is the most common type of multilingual practices on signs in the four cities of interest in the western region of Kazakhstan. This type of multilingualism can be illustrated by the name of the cafe Kish Mish, which combines Arabic, English, Uzbek and Russian languages (Figure 3). The owner of the cafe is Kazakh by origin and lives in Aktobe region, which borders Uzbekistan. According to his answers in the interview, the name of the cafe comes from his favorite type of seedless grape kish-mish, which means raisins in the Uzbek language. He chose this name because it sounds interesting and beautiful in Uzbek. At the same time, he is fluent in the Uzbek language and maintains a close connection with the Uzbek culture: the menu of the cafe contains mainly authentic Uzbek dishes, which are made by chefs from Uzbekistan. The Arabic expression *لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ* /La ilaha il Allah/ 'There is not god but God', which is fundamental in Islam, was written from the Quran, since the owner himself is a Muslim. Through this expression the owner informs customers that this cafe serves halal food. The English language (more precisely, the Latin script) is used as an international code that allows representatives of different countries and cultures to comprehend the meaning of the words written in Arabic and Uzbek on the sign. The word *чайхана* /chaikhana/ 'teahouse' is often used in the Uzbek language to name a specific type of a cafe, but it is also common in other Turkic languages. Here it is written in Russian, since there are a lot of Russian-speaking residents in Aktobe.



Figure 3. An Example of Complementary Multilingualism

Complementary multilingualism turned out to be the most numerous represented type of multilingualism in our sample. As a result of the qualitative analysis, we identified several subtypes of complementary multilingualism used in the linguistic landscape of the western region of Kazakhstan: derivative hybridization, graphic hybridization, transliteration, linguistic hybridization and hybrid punning. In derivative hybridization, word-formation connections are updated in the name of the establishment and the expressive effect of contrasting components from different languages is used. The technique of derivative hybridization is characterized by an emotionally expressive combination of a root morpheme of one language and a derivational morpheme of another language. Thus, the name of the children's clothing store *Балапанчик* /balapanchik/ combines the Kazakh stem *балапан* /balapan/ 'chicken' and the Russian diminutive suffix *-чик* /-chik/ (Figure 4). The owner of this store, Kazakh by birth, is the mother of four children. According to her, she opened this store while on maternity leave. And the name of the store comes from the way she affectionately calls her children the word *balapanchik*. The respondent does not associate this name with two different languages; in this word they exist together, forming an inseparable whole, which contains a certain emotional connotation. It is interesting that the store's sign, in addition to the Kazakh (*Балалар әлемі* /balalar alemi/ 'children's world') and Russian languages (*Сумка в роддом* /sumka v roddom/ 'maternity hospital bag'), also displays English (*balapanchik\_aktobe*), redirecting visitors to the store's Instagram page.



Figure 4. An Example of Derivative Hybridization

Graphic hybridization is a graphic combination of lowercase and uppercase letters and/or alternation of the Latin or Cyrillic scripts. This subtype of complementary multilingualism, on the one hand, attracts the attention of the addressee, and on the other, brings additional meaning by mixing two words, taking into account their stylistic and linguopragmatic potential. Thus, explaining the meaning of the combination of languages in the name on the sign of the nail salon *НоГти ПиЛки* /NoGti PiLki/ 'nails and nailfiles' (Figure 5), its owner, a native Kazakh, pointed out a possible ambiguous interpretation of the use of the Latin letter *L* in the Russian word: it can be either an English letter or a Kazakh letter in the Latin script. The combination of the capital letter *Г* in the Cyrillic script and the capital letter *L* in the Latin script produces a certain visual image that attracts potential customers, creating a feeling of coherence of the written words.



Figure 5. An Example of Graphic Hybridization

The next subtype of complementary multilingualism is very frequent in our sample and presents a complete switch from the Cyrillic script to the English-oriented Latin script (e.g., cafe *Rahat* from *paxam* /rakhat/ 'pleasure' in Kazakh,



restaurant *Chernika* from *черника* /chernika/ 'blueberry' in Russian, beauty salon *Marafet* from *марафет* /marafet/ 'spit and polish' in Russian, shoe store *OBUVNOI RAI* from *обувной рай* /obuvnoi rai/ 'shoe heaven' in Russian) or from the Latin script to the Cyrillic script (e.g., store *Сити* /siti/ from *city* in English, beauty salon *Селебрити* /selebriti/ from *celebrity* in English, pharmacy *Нью Фарм* /nyu farm/ from *new pharm* in English, dental clinic *Мистер Дент* /mister dent/ from *Mister Dent* in English) via transliteration. In these examples, when completely switching to another script using transliteration, we observe a switch from one writing system to another. This form of translanguaging practices is based on the integration of linguistic resources and English-national digraphy (Rivlina, 2017). Commercial public signs containing words written in the Latin script are found most frequently in our sample, for example: cafe *Testo* (from *тесто* /testo/ 'dough' in Russian), cafe *Trapeza* (from *трапеза* /trapeza/ 'meal' in Russian), restaurant *Zamzam* (from *زمزم* /zamzam/ 'zamzam, a sacred well' in Arabic), beauty salon *SEREBRO* (from *серебро* /serebro/ 'silver' in Russian), beauty salon *Blesk* (from *блеск* /blesk/ 'sparkle, gloss' in Russian), beauty salon *Krasivo* (from *красиво* /krasivo/ 'beautiful' in Russian), etc. As some respondents note, names that are written using the Latin (English-oriented) script, or that copy the English phonetic form in writing, look more prestigious and also evoke associations with high quality, professionalism and technology.

Linguistic hybridization is illustrated by words and phrases in our sample that combine words or their parts in different languages. For example, English is mixed with Kazakh in the names of the cafes *My Tandir* and *Bauyrdaq Qazaq Fastfood*, beauty salon *NUR SKIN* (*nur* in Kazakh means 'light'), dental clinics *DOS SMILE* (*dos* in Kazakh means 'friend') and *Шуна DENT* (*шуна* /shipa/ in Kazakh means 'cure'); English and Uzbek are mixed in the name of the restaurant *The Bakhcha*, which serves Uzbek food (*bakhcha* in Uzbek means 'garden'); English and Russian are mixed in the names of the children's clothing stores *Chado's* (*chado* is 'kid' in Russian) and *Baby Rai* (*rai* is 'heaven' in Russian), cafes *Coffee Rai Black* and *The Doner на углях* (*на углях* /na uglyakh/ in Russian means 'on coals'); Kazakh and Russian are mixed in the names of the dental clinics *Нұр Стом* (*нұр* /nur/ is 'light' in Kazakh, and *стом* /stom/ is a shortened version of the word *стоматология* /stomatologiya/ 'stomatology' in Russian), *Демеу-Стом* (*демеу* /demeu/ in Kazakh means 'support'), *Берекет Стом* (*берекет* in Kazakh means 'blessing').

Of utmost interest in our sample are signs mixing two languages (or scripts) for language play, particularly hybrid punning, which introduce additional meanings by singling out homonymous components. As examples, we will consider the names of the beauty salon *ЖасStar* and the barbershop *ZaMan*. The owner of beauty salon *ЖасStar* (Figure 6), Kazakh by origin, explained that he used Kazakh (*жас* /zhas/ in Kazakh means 'young') and English (*star*). Although his knowledge of English is only fragmentary, he used it on the sign, as he was initially oriented towards foreign customers. The owner also added that he is satisfied with the result, because this salon is often visited by Chinese and English clients. Regarding the combination of the Kazakh and English languages, he clarified that for him this name sounds like the Kazakh word *жастар* /zhastar/ 'the youth, young people', and the key idea of the name is modernity and connection with youth. In fact, he hires only young men and women who often have no experience, and the clients of this salon are mostly young people.



Figure 6. An Example of Hybrid Punning: ZhasStar

The name of the men's hairdressing salon *ZaMan* comprises three languages: English, Kazakh and Russian (Fig. 7). On the one hand, in the Kazakh language there is the word *zaman*, which means 'time, epoch, era'. On the other hand, the name of the barbershop can be interpreted as a combination of the Russian preposition *за* /za/ 'for' and the English word *man*. The owner of this establishment, a native Kazakh, initially wanted to name it *Man*, but the combination of three languages seemed more creative to him as it assumed two meanings based on homonymy: *zaman* as 'era' in Kazakh and *za man* as 'for man' in the mixture of Russian and English. In his choice of the name, the owner initially focused on the English language, since this establishment is a barbershop and specializes in men's haircuts. It is interesting to note that the owner speaks English only fragmentarily, and did not learn it purposefully. According to the respondent, the combination of English, Russian and Kazakh makes the name of the barbershop more attractive to multilingual addresses, emphasizing both their global and local affiliation.



Figure 7. An Example of Hybrid Punning: ZaMan

## V. DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the linguistic landscape of the western region of Kazakhstan exhibits particular features. First of all, to create and understand multilingual messages in the urban space of interest it is not necessary to be fluent in all the languages used. For the most part, it is not the full forms of English, Russian, Kazakh, Uzbek and Arabic that interact in this urban space, but their individual linguistic forms. Accordingly, to successfully understand the multilingual messages of the urban landscape, residents of the cities of the western region of Kazakhstan mostly need a limited, fragmented knowledge of languages (e.g., English, Arabic or Uzbek), which Blommaert (2010) calls "truncated" knowledge (pp. 8-9). In this regard, the linguistic landscape of the region under consideration is characterized by truncated multilingualism.

In the context of translingual practices, of particular interest are the functional features of the local languages and Global English in the linguistic landscape in the western region of Kazakhstan. The results of the study show that Kazakh, Russian, English, Uzbek and Arabic play a significant role in the creation of modern commercial public signs. In the urban landscape of the cities of the western region of Kazakhstan, they perform not only an informative but also a symbolic function. The symbolic use of the English language leads to the fact that messages with English-language components have positively marked connotations of modernity, high quality, innovation, technical progress, prestige, etc. (Gritsenko & Aleshinskaya, 2023). In addition, English, especially in combination with other local languages, is used to attract attention by increasing the memorability of signs and to increase the attractiveness of the message (Scherbakov & Proshina, 2023). Being the main languages functioning in the western region of Kazakhstan, Kazakh and Russian are used in the multilingual urban discourse to express local affiliation and tradition, while Uzbek and Arabic words mostly refer to the Turkic and Islamic cultures. Despite the fact that English, Uzbek or Arabic are not used as an intranational means of communication in the region, and people who do not speak these languages may not understand the actual meaning of texts in these languages, the socio-psychological meanings arising as a result of the additional functions appear to be sufficient for the production and perception of multilingual urban discourse (Rivlina, 2017).

We would also like to share some observations regarding types of translingual practices, which are revealed through the subtypes of complementary multilingualism identified in this study, such as derivative hybridization. In our corpus, the most common pattern of derivative hybridization is hybrid words combining Kazakh roots and Russian affixes. This pattern has been previously described by other researchers as most characteristic of bilingual practices in everyday use in Kazakhstan (Zharkynbekova & Chernyavskaya, 2022). Unlike previous observations in everyday communication between young multilingual speakers in the western region of Kazakhstan (Kurmanova et al., 2023), in our research sample the English language is not witnessed to be used as the basis for further derivation using Kazakh or Russian affixes. On the contrary, English mainly enters the multilingual urban repertoire through such translingual practices as transliteration and linguistic hybridization, especially hybrid punning.

Examples of transliteration of Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek and Arabic languages using the Latin script deserve special attention. These cases are referred to by Proshina and Ustinova (2021) as "pseudo-English in Roman characters" (p. 43). The peculiarity of this translingual practice is that when switching to the English-oriented Latin script through transliteration, there is not necessarily a switch from the local language (Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek or Arabic) to English. According to the researchers, in such examples we observe an incomplete existence of two writing systems, when members of the linguistic community speak a Latinized variant of the Russian or Kazakh language, but at the same time cannot produce detailed texts in this variant. The same can be said about cases where English words are written using the Cyrillic script.

Hybrid puns can be correlated with the concept of such a bilingual strategy as "code ambiguation" as described by Moody and Matsumoto (2003) referring to the deliberate creation of units with an uncertain linguistic status, blurring the boundaries between contacting languages. Thus, in the name of the barbershop *ZaMan*, the graphic manipulation emphasizes the homography of the Kazakh root component *-man* and the English lexeme *man*, due to which an additional positively marked meaning is created. Such a pun is defined by Rivlina (2017) as a "translingual pun" belonging to the type of "translingual play on words", when it is impossible to determine whether the given part of the lexeme belongs to one or another language. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the name of the beauty salon

*ZhasStar*, where it is not obvious which language - English or Kazakh - the component *star* can be attributed to. Consequently, such examples illustrate the deliberate playful use of integrated language resources (Canagarajah, 2013) as a manifestation of translingual creativity. Androutsopoulos (2015) specifies the translingual activity in similar instances of written speech as "trans-scripting".

## VI. CONCLUSION

This article examined the specific features of language interaction in the linguistic landscape of four large cities in the western region of Kazakhstan. As a result of the study, it was shown that the main languages functioning in the urban space of the region are the state Kazakh, interethnic Russian and international English languages. Moreover, these languages interact with other local languages, such as Uzbek and Arabic, to create symbolic and cultural meanings. The mixed method analysis enabled the identification of dynamic and creative forms of hybridization of urban texts in multilingual urban discourse, which contribute to the creation of new meanings and serve as a means of attracting the addressee's attention. In relation to written texts of the linguistic landscape, such creativity is manifested in the deliberate, most often humorous, alternation of different alphabets (Latin and Cyrillic), addition of emotionally charged affixes of another language to the Kazakh stem, transliteration of Kazakh or Russian names, as well as in English - Russian and English - Kazakh puns, when additional meanings are introduced through the identification of homonymous components. Despite the fact that English is not yet an intranational means of communication in the western region of Kazakhstan and its knowledge is often fragmented (or truncated), its ubiquitous and ever-increasing presence in the linguistic landscape of the region leads to the fact that it is no longer perceived exclusively as a foreign language but becomes part of everyday communication in the urban space.

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# Student Performance in Machine Translation Training: Assessment and Exploration

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**Abstract**—The present research aims to conduct a process-oriented analysis to measure whether a group of graduate students enrolled in a translation course made steady progress in their performance of identifying machine translation (MT) errors and post-editing MT drafts of company web texts and news texts. A mixed methods approach consisting of quantitative and qualitative analyses was used. The findings show that there was a steady decline in the average number of MT errors that students could not spot or correctly identify in their three assignments. However, there was no significant improvement in student MTPE performance, with only a slight decrease in errors in the final MTPE assignment, which still remained worse than the first one. Finally, student responses in their reflection essays indicated that their reception of MT and MTPE had shifted from negative denial to positive acceptance. Overall, the findings of the present study reveal the need to extend the period of MTPE training for students. Incorporating MT training into the translation course has proven to be worthwhile for students, as it helps to dispel students' previous misconception about MT and MTPE.

**Index Terms**—MT, MTPE training, a mixed methods approach, assessment of student performance, student reception of MT

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the technological revolution and evolution of machine translation (MT) systems have significantly improved the semantic and grammatical accuracy of MT output. As a result, the public has regained their faith in using MT for information acquisition. Not only professionals in the translation industry but individuals from diverse sectors recognize its effectiveness and use it in their work, studies and other areas. Many translation service providers and companies view MT use, along with post-editing, as an effective way to handle huge amounts of translation work within tight turnaround times and limited budgets. At the university level, the improved quality of MT output has motivated many students to incorporate it into their translation assignments. While some educators consider MT a cheating tool, others view it as a learning tool. However, MT post-editing (MTPE) has become a common practice within companies, and helps boost translation productivity when compared with human translation (Aranberri et al., 2014). Thus, the author of this study believes that university education in translation training should include MT and MTPE, so it can help students to adapt to changes in the translation industry, and prepare them for future professional work. By teaching MT, students can learn to use it smartly and productively.

O'Brien (2002) highlighted the benefits of training in MTPE and stated that it could give translators an advantage when seeking employment opportunities. Many companies in Europe and the United States, including Caterpillar, General Motors, the Pan American Health Organization, and the European Commission Translation Service, have integrated machine translation technology into their daily work and are looking to hire translation graduates who are proficient in post-editing (Allen, 2003; O'Brien, 2002). Somers (2003) recognized post-editing as a skill that needs to be honed. In their study of post-editing, Krings (2001) mentioned that an editor, Geoffrey S. Koby, informed them that "the translator must be trained in post-editing" (p. 12). Despite the importance of MTPE, many educators in Taiwan have not provided MT training, and many translators in Taiwan's localization companies or translation agencies do not use the method when handling their translation tasks. The previous negative impression of MT's poor quality may be one reason for their hesitation to implement MTPE. Some instructors fear that students may lose their translation skills and lower their language proficiency by working with poor MT outputs. However, significant advances in the quality of outputs produced by the NMT system could bring new impacts on student training in MT. The translation world is evolving, and the author has decided to incorporate MTPE into her translation class in Taiwan to write a new chapter in the context of translation teaching.

MTPE requires specialized training because it involves different skills than traditional translation. It is not always accurate to assume that a qualified translator will be a successful post-editor. According to Krings (2001), human cognitive processes related to source-text comprehension are different in translation and MT post-editing. Traditional translation is a less linear process and translators need much effort to interpret the messages of the source text from scratch. In contrast, reading MT outputs reduces their cognitive load, which increases the risk of being misled by MT errors. Therefore, students engaging in MTPE need to be more alert to hunt and correct errors. In traditional translation, trainee translators are taught to be accurate and pay attention to cultural and textual equivalence, while MTPE training

requires more caution due to the changing nature of recurring errors in MT outputs. Moreover, human translation aims for publication, whereas MTPE involves both light rendition, which allows for minor errors and unnatural style, and full rendition, which requires zero errors and natural flow of the edited text. Thus, specialized training is needed for MTPE.

Incorporating MTPE into translation courses raises questions about how well students can perform after receiving training. Can they cope with MT errors shortly after learning MTPE strategies? Do they steadily improve their post-editing skills over time? To answer these questions, the author implemented MTPE in her course and brought up three research questions (RQ) to guide her investigation:

- (1) Does students' ability to identify MT errors improve steadily over several weeks of MT training?
- (2) Does students' MTPE performance improve steadily over several weeks of MT training?
- (3) Does students' perception of MT and MTPE change after receiving the training?

To answer the first research question, the author (instructor) will calculate the number of MT errors that students failed to identify in their assignments over several weeks of MT training. To seek the answer to the second research question, the author will calculate the number of errors that students made in their post-edited MT texts over the same period. In addition, the author will evaluate student reflections in their written reports to determine if they have undergone a conceptual change towards MT and MTPE after receiving the training.

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

As this paper aims to probe student learning by examining their ability to identify MT errors and their performance in MTPE of news texts in a translation course, it is important to define and explain the concepts of MT errors, MTPE, and MTPE strategies in this section.

### A. MT Errors

Despite the technological advancements of neural MT systems, errors are still present in the semantic, grammatical, syntactic, and pragmatic aspects of the automated translation produced. The type and number of errors vary depending on the MT systems and source texts. Shih's (2006) study of errors produced by statistical MT systems identified some recurring types of errors, including mistranslated homonyms and homographs, subject-specific lexical items, proper nouns, idioms, metaphors, and colloquial expressions. The study also found errors in syntactic and grammatical aspects, including mistranslated compound nouns and subjects, relative clauses, prepositional phrases, passive voices, articles, past participles, infinitive-led phrases, negative auxiliaries, and verb phrases. In contrast, Shih's (2001) study of errors in the news MT produced by neural Google Translate found decreasing error types, only divided into language-specific errors of inaccurate translation and pragmatic errors of "incorrect expressions or presentation that do not meet the real circumstance in which the target language is used" (p. 143).

Vilar et al. (2006) studied English-Spanish and En-Ch MTs produced by rule-based and statistical MT systems and found common errors such as missing words, incorrect word order, incorrect-meaning words, unknown words, and incorrect punctuation marks. Niño (2008) investigated some MT errors, including mistranslated proper nouns, different meanings, nonsense, wrong sense, false friends, collocation/idiom, words not interchangeable in context, and incorrect cultural equivalents. Kliffer (2008) examined MT errors in agreement, anaphora, article, literal, mistranslation, omission, preposition, punctuation, spelling, structure, tense, word choice, and word order. Luo (2014) analyzed En-Ch MT errors in noun phrases, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, infinitive phrases, and participle phrases. In the author's class, only linguistic and pragmatic errors extracted from her own study need to be detected by students.

### B. MTPE: Definition and Strategies

Post-editing is an essential aspect of using machine translation (MT) tools, as the raw MT output is not always 100% accurate semantically, syntactically, or pragmatically. Translation scholars have approached MTPE in different ways. Vasconcellos (1987) defined it as "adjusting the machine output so that it reflects the meaning of the original text as accurately as possible, with an emphasis on adjusting relatively predictable difficulties" (p. 41). Veale and Way (1997) defined MTPE as the correction of MT output by human translators. Allen (2003) described it as the task of editing, modifying, and correcting pre-translated text produced by an MT system. Martin-Mor et al. (2016) perceived MTPE as the task of editing and correcting raw MT output. In simple terms, MTPE involves checking and fixing errors in raw MT output.

Some research (Koehn, 2009; Ortiz-Martinez et al., 2016) viewed MTPE as a form of revision because they maintained that the time spent on PE was focused on pauses, such as omitting words and changing the word sequence, not typing on the keyboard. Thus, MTPE is associated with revision. Lommel (2018) declared that MTPE was paid at 60 to 65% of the full word rate, so MTPE was a form of revision, not translation. Due to the lower word rate for MTPE payment, post-editors should use as much of the raw MT output as possible if they are accepted.

To produce high-quality post-editing, editors need to follow MTPE guidelines and be well-versed in MTPE strategies. According to Löffler-Laurian (1994), fast MTPE involves quick correction of basic MT errors, while conventional MTPE requires more time and effort for elaborate correction or fine-tuning (as cited in Doherty & Gaspari, 2013; Shih, 2021). The primary objective of fast MTPE is to enable audiences to grasp the essence of the translation, while conventional MTPE aims to meet the standard of publication. Shofner (2021) argued that light MTPE should be sufficient for information

scanning or obtaining the gist of the text (TAUS, 2016). Conversely, full MTPE must be error-free and of human-translation quality (TAUS, 2016). In Depalma's (2013) report, the principles for light MTPE include the correction of mistranslations, lexical omissions, lexical additions, adherence to domain-specific terminology glossary, correct spelling, and terminological consistency (as cited in Shih, 2021). On the other hand, the principles for full MTPE include accurate cross-referencing, correct headers and footers, accurate grammar, semantics, punctuation, spelling, and a register-specific writing style (as cited in Shih, 2021).

According to Hu and Cadwell (2016), MTPE prioritizes factual accuracy, terminological consistency, correct grammar, correct semantics, rewriting of confusing sentences, and correction of other MT errors, such as machine-generated unnecessary or extra words. Full MTPE, on the other hand, emphasizes accurate messages, terminological consistency, appropriate terminology, correct grammar, semantics, punctuation, spelling, modification of incorrect syntactic structure, correct formatting and correction of other MT errors such as stylistic awkwardness (as cited in Shih, 2021). As the current MTPE guidelines tend to focus on translation within the same linguistic system, the author provided her students with her own MTPE guidelines. She instructed students to identify linguistic and pragmatic MT errors, and taught them the MTPE strategies used to amend the two types of errors. Students could choose from the given list of strategies to edit the MT draft. If students are unable to edit using the recommended strategies, their MTPE assignment is deemed flawed and unsuccessful.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Description of MTPE Training

A model of MTPE training was incorporated into an MA-level translation course that met students for three hours every week. MTPE training was a small part of the course and the author considered the training model a pilot study whose outcome could inform future modifications to the MT class. The course was attended by twelve first-year graduate students who majored in translation and interpretation, all of whom had no prior experience in MTPE. The training ran for five weeks.

The MT/PE training was provided to achieve four objectives: three for the student development of MTPE skills and one for student MTPE concept acquisition or/and adjustment. The three MTPE skills that students needed to develop include (1) the ability to identify common types of MT errors, (2) the ability to choose the right MTPE strategies to fix MT errors, and (3) the ability to self-monitor and improve their MTPE performance. Additionally, students were expected to develop a positive attitude towards MT and MTPE, and maintain a clear and accurate perception of MTPE. To achieve the objectives, the training included theoretical information input on three online MT tools, MT errors, the definition and function of MTPE, and MTPE strategies in the first week as well as regular hands-on practice from the second to the fifth week.

In their assignments, students were asked to identify MT errors and amend them. The instructor graded student assignments and provided feedback. During class, the instructor corrected any errors in student identification and demonstrated appropriate MTPE techniques. All student assignments were shared in class for peer learning. At the end of the five weeks, students were asked to write a short reflective essay. The three major tasks performed inside and outside the class are shown as follows.

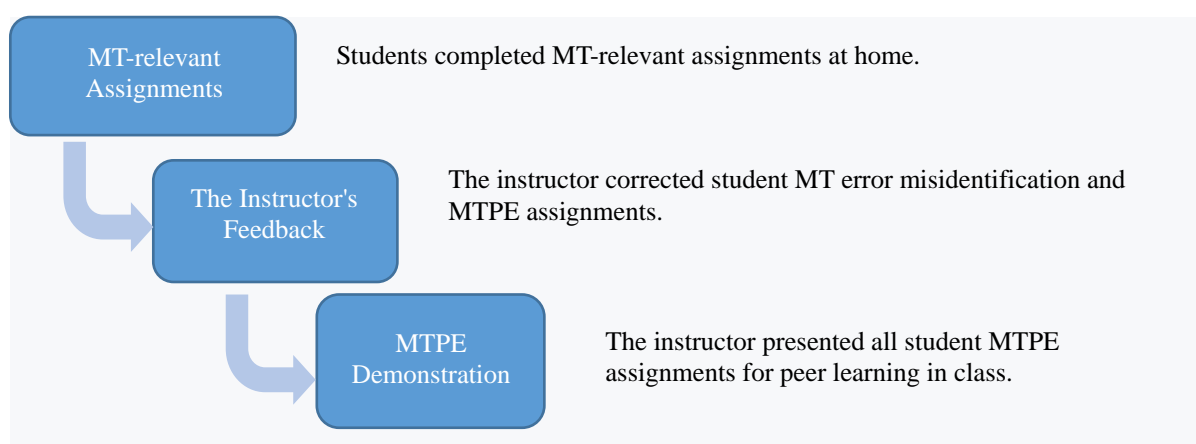


Figure 1. The Major Tasks Performed Inside and Outside the Class

The graduate students taking the course were aged between 24 and 27, and had a high level of English proficiency, so they were considered suitable candidates for MT training.

#### B. Methods

A mixed-methods approach was used to conduct the present research. The quantitative analysis involves calculating the number of misidentified MT errors and mis-corrected MT errors during the period of implementing MT training.

The purpose was to observe if there was a significant decrease in the number of the above two types of errors in student assignments the student performance in their three assignments was assessed and used in the process-based analysis.

Additionally, a qualitative analysis was conducted through reflective essays written by the students. Three questions for students to answer include: (1) What's your experience of learning to identify MT errors? (2) What's your experience of learning to fix MT errors using some MTPE strategies? (3) How do you change your perception of MT and MTPE after receiving the training?

### C. Assignments for Analysis

The prerequisite for successful MTPE is that the raw MT output must have a good enough quality. It has been observed that there are fewer errors in the MT drafts of informative texts as compared to expressive and operative texts. This is because informative texts are content-based and aim to communicate messages clearly, according to Reiss' (2000) text typology theory. In a different manner, expressive texts, such as literary works, are form-oriented and aim to express the author's creative style and format, while operative texts, such as advertisements and speeches, aim to create emotional appeal to audiences. When the latter two types of texts are processed by MT systems, they cannot produce automated translations with a good enough quality, and require more effort of MTPE than human translation from scratch. Therefore, the instructor chose the MT output of informative texts for student practice of MTPE.

The four texts collected for the pilot study are clips extracted from company web texts and journalistic texts on the web. They are of the similar length and students do not need special background knowledge to understand the textual content. The errors in the MT outputs encompass the linguistic and pragmatic errors that need to be fixed through MTPE. By amending the errors through MTPE, the edited texts read with natural flow, semantic accuracy and pragmatic appropriateness.

### D. Criteria for Analysis

Two sets of criteria are utilized to evaluate the performance of students in MTPE. The first set consists of a series of MT errors that students are required to identify and indicate in their assignments. Linguistic errors comprise of incorrect words, incorrect specialized terms, and incorrect word order. On the other hand, pragmatic errors include unlocalized specialized terms, redundant or repeated words, inconsistent terminology, segments that do not comply with the linguistic conventions of the target language, and incomplete linguistic expressions. Table 1 shows the two types of MT errors that students need to scrutinize and indicate in their assignments.

TABLE 1  
MT ERRORS

Linguistic MT Errors	Examples
Use of incorrect specialized terms	ST: The <u>Electrical network</u> is classified as hazardous. MT: 電氣網絡歸類為危險品。
Use of incorrect word order	ST: "We've seen nationalism distorted into nativism, forgotten the dynamism that immigration has always brought to America," Mr. Bush said. MT: "我們已經看到民族主義被扭曲為本土主義，忘記了移民一直給美國帶來的活力" 布什先生說。
Use of words with incorrect meanings	ST: Take <u>Drive</u> even further MT: 更進一步駕駛
Pragmatic MT Errors	Examples
No use of well-established terms for target audiences	ST: Rice Cooker, Drive, Videos MT: 電飯鍋\雲端硬盤\視頻(for China's audiences)
No terminological consistency	ST: Drive...drive...drive MT: Drive...雲端硬盤... 驅動器
No use of segments/clauses that meet the linguistic conventions of target language	ST: Elite benefits reach new heights. MT: 獲得的精英福利達到了新的高度。
No explication of implicit meanings	ST: From weddings to meetings to family reunions. MT: 從婚禮到會議再到家庭聚會。

Students can understand what problems cause current NMT systems to produce mistranslation when identifying MT errors. Students are expected to easily detect MT errors through practice. On the other hand, student MTPE performance is evaluated, so the author/instructor can understand student difficulties in the process of MTPE. The author also wants to discover if students can improve their MTPE in the end. The errors shown in student MTPE assignments are to be calculated, including (1) no change of the incorrect word order, (2) no editing or incorrect editing of the words without correct meanings, (3) no change of passive voice into active voice, (4) no revision of proper nouns and terminology, (5) no correction of incorrect punctuation, (6) no explication of pronouns (e.g., they, he), (7) no explication of implicit meanings and (8) no revision of words/segments that do not meet the linguistic conventions in Taiwan. Examples are shown below.

Students are expected to be able to identify MT errors and understand the problems that cause current NMT systems to produce mistranslations. Through practice, they should be able to easily detect MT errors. However, their MTPE

performance will also be evaluated to help the instructor understand any difficulties students may encounter during the process of MTPE. The author/instructor also wants to find out whether students can improve their MTPE skills through the training. The errors identified in student MTPE assignments will be tallied, including: (1) failure to correct word order errors, (2) no editing or incorrect editing of words with incorrect meanings, (3) failure to change passive voice to active voice, (4) failure to revise proper nouns and specialized terminology, (5) failure to correct punctuation errors, (6) failure to clarify pronouns, (7) failure to explain implicit meanings, and (8) failure to revise words/segments that do not conform to linguistic conventions in Taiwan. Examples of these errors are provided below.

TABLE 2  
MTPE ERRORS

Linguistic MTPE Errors	
(1) No change of the incorrect word order	ST: It's that time of year again, <u>folks</u> . It's time for the War on Christmas. MT: 又到了每年的这个时候, <u>伙计们</u> 。 PE: 又到了每年的這個時候了, <u>夥伴們</u> 。 Feedback: 夥伴們 should be put at the beginning of the translation sentence
(2) No or incorrect editing of the words without correct meaning	ST: Mr. Gibson said the book had <u>taken on a life</u> of its own over the years — and that it had never dwelled on the political implications of “Happy Holidays”. MT: 吉布森先生说, 多年来, 这本书已经有了自己的 <u>生命</u> 。并说它从未纠缠于“节日快乐”的政治含义。 PE: 吉布森先生說, 多年來這本書有了自己的 <u>定義(影響力)</u> 。他從未討論“節日快樂”的政治含意。 Feedback: 定義 should be corrected as 影響力
Pragmatic MTPE Errors	
(3) No change of passive voice into active voice	ST: That culture war issue <u>ignited</u> and we won. MT: 那个文化战争问题被点燃了, 我们赢了。 PE: 那個文化戰爭問題被点燃了, 我們贏了。 Feedback: 被点燃了 should be corrected as 又點燃了
(4) No revision of incorrect proper nouns	ST: Fox News MT: 福克斯新聞 PE: 福克斯 ( 福斯 ) 新聞 Feedback: 福克斯新聞 should be corrected as 福斯新聞
(5) No correction of incorrect punctuation	ST: “We’ve seen nationalism....” Mr. Bush said. MT: “我們看到民族主義....”小布希說。 Feedback: “..... ” should be replaced with 「..... 」
(6) No explication of pronouns (e.g., they, he)	ST: When Bill made it an issue, <u>it</u> went mega. MT: 當比爾把它變成一個問題時, <u>它</u> 就變得巨大了。 PE: 因為當比爾引發聖誕節這個話題時, <u>它(這本書)</u> 就成了大話題。 Feedback: 它 should be corrected as 這本書
(7) No explication of implicit meanings (e.g., the country, this country)	ST: So perhaps there is hope for peace on earth, <u>or at least cable television</u> . MT: 因此, 也許地球上的和平是有希望的, <u>或者至少是有線電視</u> PE: 因此, 也許地球上的和平是有希望的, <u>至少存在有線電視(可以看到)</u> 。 Feedback: 至少存在有線電視 should be corrected as 至少在有線電視可以看到
(8) No revision of words/segments that do not meet the linguistic conventions in Taiwan.	ST: <u>Elite benefits</u> reach new heights. MT: 獲得的 <u>精英福利</u> 達到了新的高度。 PE: 獲得的 <u>精英福利</u> 達到了新的高度。 Feedback: Revise 精英福利 into 尊榮福利。

If the rates of misclassifying and failing to amend MT errors in student assignments gradually decrease, it would demonstrate that the MTPE training had a positive impact on students' abilities.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The author piloted the present study to investigate student performance in the identification of MT errors and the post-editing of English into Chinese MT output produced by DeepL. The results are used to answer the three research questions raised in section one.

##### A. Student Performance in MT Error Identification

In response to RQ1 on the progress of student identification of MT errors during the training process, the statistical results showed that the average number of MT errors that students failed to identify or incorrectly identified in their first assignment was 18. In the second assignment, there was a slight drop to an average of 14 errors, and in the final assignment, the average number further decreased to 10. This trend indicates that the training was effective in helping students improve their ability to identify MT errors, as evidenced by the decreasing number of errors over time.

In the first assignment, the highest number of MT errors that students had failed to identify was pragmatic MT errors, with an average number of 9.5. For example, students failed to spot the errors when "President Trump" was rendered as 「特朗普總統」 [lit: President Trump] and articles were directly rendered as 「一位」 [lit: a] and 「一次」 [lit: one time] that were redundant in Chinese translation. Passive voice was also not detected in the Chinese MT output, which should be changed into active voice. Additionally, students incorrectly marked pragmatic errors as linguistic errors, with an average number of 7.8, ranking second highest. For example, "In separate and unrelated appearances," and "casual cruelty" were translated as 「在單獨的、不相關的露面」 [lit: individual and irrelevant appearance] and 「隨意殘忍」 [lit: casual cruelty], respectively, in the MT output. While these translations do not convey a wrong message, native Chinese speakers would not present the message in that way. Clearer transmission of the message would require modification of the translations as 「在個別與政治不相關的場合露面」 [lit: appeared on separate and politically unrelated occasions] and 「不以為意的殘酷心態」 [lit: a callous attitude of cruelty] by adding words. Table 3 presents the statistical results of MT errors that students failed to identify or incorrectly identified in their first assignment.

TABLE 3  
THE ERRORS OF MIS-IDENTIFICATION OF MT ERRORS IN STUDENT ASSIGNMENT 1

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	13	13	7	7	7	10	9.5
Type 2	3	2	2	3	1	2	2.5
Type 3	3	4	10	10	13	7	7.8
Type 4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.16
Total	19	19	19	20	22	19	18

Note: 1=missing identification of pragmatic errors; 2= missing identification of linguistic errors; 3=mis-identification of pragmatic errors as linguistic errors; 4=mis-identification of linguistic errors as pragmatic errors.

In the second assignment, the highest number of errors that students failed to identify was still pragmatic MT errors, with an average number of 10.5, slightly higher than the first assignment (9.5). This could be attributed to the instructor's unclear and confusing guidance, which advised students to do light post-editing, not elaborate editing after the first assignment. As a result, in the second assignment, some students tried to avoid editing when they thought the MT output was good enough and the meaning was clear, resulting in the tolerance of some errors that should be marked but were skipped. For example, when the proper noun "it" was rendered as 「它」 [lit: it] in the MT output, the translation did not comply with Chinese linguistic conventions, but many students overlooked this pragmatic error.

It is interesting to note that the second most frequent type of error in both the first and second assignments was the same, but the average number of misidentifications decreased from 7.8 to 2.5 in the second assignment. For instance, some students classified the translation of "histrionic yuletide debate"--「激動人心的辯論」 [lit: exciting debate] as a linguistic error, while the MT output only used an inappropriate expression without conveying an incorrect meaning. Therefore, it should be identified as a pragmatic error. Table 4 provides statistical results on the misidentification of MT errors by students in the second assignment.

TABLE 4  
THE ERRORS OF MIS-IDENTIFICATION OF MT ERRORS IN STUDENT ASSIGNMENT 2

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	13	13	10	6	9	12	10.5
Type 2	3	1	2	0	2	2	1.6
Type 3	3	4	0	2	2	2	2.5
Type 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	19	18	12	8	13	16	14.3

In the final assignment, the highest number of errors that students failed to identify was linguistic errors, including incorrect word order and words with incorrect meanings. For example, some students did not mark words like "outspoken", "supplicants", "convincing", "more and more X", and "less and less Christ" as linguistic errors when they were mistranslated as 「直言不諱」 [lit: straightforward], 「請求者」 [lit: people who make a request], 「令人信服」 [lit: convincing], 「越來越多的 X」 [lit: more and more X] and 「越來越少的基督」 [lit: less and less Christ]. The correct translation should be 「能言善道」 [lit: eloquent], 「祈福者」 [lit: supplicants], 「令人信以為真」 [lit: making people believe it to be true], 「越來越多人使用 X'mas」 [lit: more and more people use X'mas] and 「越來越少人使用代表基督的 Christmas」 [lit: less and less people use Christmas to represent Christ]. However, the average number of pragmatic errors that students failed to identify in the third assignment dropped to 3.6. Table 5 shows statistical results of student MT errors misidentification in the final assignment.

TABLE 5  
THE ERRORS OF MIS-IDENTIFICATION OF MT ERRORS IN STUDENT ASSIGNMENT 3

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	5	5	5	2	3	2	3.6
Type 2	7	3	4	4	5	7	5
Type 3	1	3	0	3	1	0	1.3
Type 4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.1
Total	13	11	9	9	10	9	10.1

The technological advances in MT have greatly improved the quality of MT output, making it more difficult for students to detect MT errors. As Yamada (2019) has put it, the neural MT output is more fluent and closer to human translation, which makes it harder for students to correct errors. However, the pilot study showed that students made fewer errors in identifying MT errors in the final assignment. This suggests that with training, students can develop the ability to distinguish between pragmatic and linguistic MT errors, which increases the instructor's confidence in providing MT training.

#### B. Student Performance in MTPE

The initial average number of errors that students made in their first PE assignment was 11.8, which slightly increased to 12.6 in the second assignment. In the final assignment, the average number of errors decreased to 12.1, but the improvement was not significant. When considering the type of errors, the average number of linguistic errors that students failed to correct in the first assignment was 4.3, whereas the average number of pragmatic errors was 9.1. In the second assignment, the average number of linguistic errors that were not addressed was 3.5, while the average number of pragmatic errors remained the same at 9.1. Finally, in the third assignment, the average number of linguistic errors that were not amended increased to 5.6, while the average number of pragmatic errors decreased to 6.5. Figure 2 displays the variation in linguistic and pragmatic MT errors that students failed to correct in their MTPE assignments.

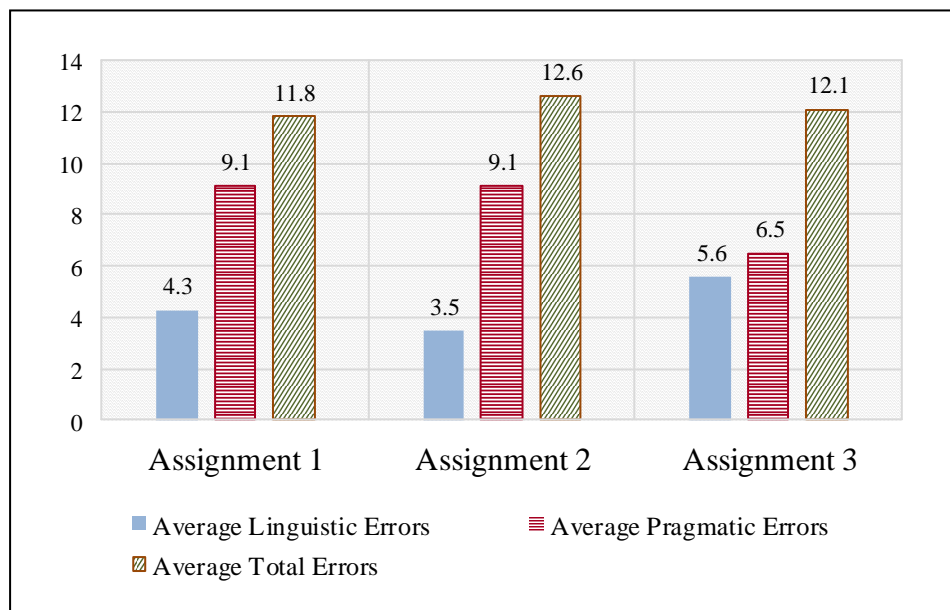


Figure 2. Statistical Results of Errors in Student Three MTPE Assignments

The lowest average number of errors in students' first MTPE assignment could be attributed to the fact that some of them lacked experience in MTPE and thus retranslated the entire sentence instead of editing the MT draft, resulting in fewer errors. However, this approach is time-consuming and not recommended as the correct way of MTPE. In the second assignment, some students were influenced by the instructor's advice to directly amend errors on the MT draft, rather than starting from scratch with human translation. Due to their lack of MTPE experience, students left some MT errors uncorrected, leading to a high number of errors in their output. In the final assignment, although students were more familiar with MTPE, they encountered challenging sentences that they could not fully understand, resulting in incorrect amendments to MT errors. The lack of a significant improvement in MTPE performance suggests that four weeks of hands-on experience with MTPE may not be sufficient for students. More time is needed for students to develop their MTPE skills and use appropriate strategies to amend MT errors effectively.

As mentioned above, many students in the first MTPE assignment did not have a clear concept of MTPE, so they tended to use manual translation to re-translate the source text, not engaging in MTPE. As a result, the average number of errors in Types 3, 5, and 6 was low since students changed the word order, used correct punctuation and pronouns. However, students did not add words to clarify the implicit meanings of expressions, resulting in a high average number



of MTPE errors in Type 7 (3.5). For example, in the MT draft, expressions such as 「他的兩位前任」 [lit: two of his predecessors], 「自己的身份」 [lit: our own identity], 「遠方」 [lit: distant places] and 「基本理想」 [lit: basic ideal] were not clearly rendered in the MT draft, but students did not fix them. To address this, the mistranslations should be amended by supplementing additional information, for example, 「小布希與歐巴馬兩位前任總統」 [lit: the two former presidents, Bush and Obama], 「美國人自己的民主身份」 [lit: the democratic identity of the American people], 「遠方其他國家」 [lit: other countries far away] and 「基本的民主理想」 [lit: basic democratic ideals]. Table 6 shows statistical results of errors in student MTPE assignment 1.

TABLE 6  
ERRORS IN STUDENT MTPE ASSIGNMENT 1

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	4	4	0	1	1	0	1.6
Type 2	8	3	0	4	1	0	2.6
Type 3	1	1	0	0	2	0	0.6
Type 4	3	2	0	1	5	0	1.8
Type 5	0	2	0	0	1	0	0.5
Type 6	1	1	0	1	0	1	0.6
Type 7	3	3	4	4	5	2	3.5
Type 8	4	0	1	2	2	3	2
Total	24	16	5	13	17	6	11.8

Note: Type 1=No change of incorrect word order, Type 2=No correction or mis-correction of incorrect words, Type 3=No change from passive into active voice, Type 4=No revision of proper nouns, Type 5=No revision of inappropriate punctuation, Type 6=No explication of pronouns, Type 7=No explication of implicit meanings of words, Type 8=No revision of words/segments that do not meet the linguistic conventions in Taiwan.

In the second MTPE assignment, the average number of errors in student failure to edit words/segments that do not meet Chinese linguistic conventions (5.3) was higher than in the first assignment (2). One possible reason for this was that students tried their best to retain the MT draft without revision and overlooked some expressions that did not conform to the way Chinese is spoken Taiwan. For instance, 「福克斯新聞」 [lit: Fox News] 「競選路線」 [lit: campaign-trail] 「政治的聲明」 [lit: political statements] in the MT draft were non-standard expressions used in Taiwan, but students did not revise them. These should be edited as 「福斯新聞」 [lit: Fx News], 「競選活動期間」 [lit: campaign period] and 「政治宣傳」 [lit: political propaganda] respectively. In addition, the average number of MTPE errors without changing the language order (2.3) was higher in the second assignment than the first (1.6). Perhaps the MT draft sounded fluent, so students did not revise it. Another reason could be that the second assignment had more phrases that needed a change in the word order than the first assignment. Table 7 shows the statistical results of MTPE errors in the second assignment.

TABLE 7  
ERRORS IN STUDENT MTPE ASSIGNMENT 2

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	2	2	3	0	3	3	2.3
Type 2	1	0	2	3	2	0	1.3
Type 3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.2
Type 4	0	0	1	0	1	0	0.3
Type 5	0	0	0	0	2	0	0.3
Type 6	3	0	1	0	2	0	1
Type 7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Type 8	8	3	5	3	8	5	5.3
Total	16	7	15	8	20	10	12.6

In the final MTPE assignment, there was fewer errors in Type 3 (passive to active), Type 5 (correction of incorrect punctuation), and Type 8 (modification of phrases that do not conform to Chinese usage). In particular, Type 8 showed a significant improvement, decreasing from 5.3 in the second assignment to 2.1 in the final one, indicating that students were more attentive to correcting awkward and non-standard expressions. For example, they revised 「克勞斯先生」 [lit: Mr. Claus] and 「郵政編碼」 [lit: postal code] in the MT draft to 「聖誕老人」 [lit: Santa Claus] and 「郵遞區號」 [lit: zip code]. In contrast, Type 1 (correcting the incorrect word order) and Type 2 (no correction of words with incorrect meanings) showed a regression compared to the second assignment, with more instances that required adjustments to the sentence structure that students failed to notice. Table 8 shows the statistical results of MTPE errors in the final assignment.

TABLE 8  
ERRORS IN STUDENT MTPE ASSIGNMENT 3

	Pair 1	Pair 2	Pair 3	Pair 4	Pair 5	Pair 6	Average
Type 1	4	4	1	4	3	3	3.1
Type 2	3	3	5	2	2	0	2.5
Type 3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Type 4	3	3	1	0	2	0	1.3
Type 5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.2
Type 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Type 7	4	2	2	2	3	3	2.6
Type 8	3	2	2	1	4	1	2.1
Total	17	15	11	9	14	7	12.1

It is true that the types of MTPE errors made by students can vary depending on the content of the assignment. However, if students have a high level of skill in MTPE, they should be able to handle different types of errors effectively. The results of this study suggest that students made more errors in Types 1, 2, and 8 across all three assignments, indicating that these areas may require more attention and training from the instructor. By providing targeted instruction and practice in these areas, students may be better equipped to improve their MTPE skills and produce more accurate translation.

### C. Student Reception of MT Errors and PE

The results of RQ3 indicated that students' understanding of ME errors and MTPE improved after the MT training. The reflections of students can be analyzed in the following three categories.

#### (a). The Learning Process of Identifying MT Errors

The majority of students reported that they were better able to identify different types of MT errors after receiving MTPE training. However, they also acknowledged that they needed more practice to become quicker and more efficient at identifying these errors.

#### (b). The Learning Process of Using MTPE Strategies to Correct MT Errors

Many students claimed that they previously believed that retranslating the entire MT draft was the only way to improve its quality. They had limited expectations and only aimed to understand the overall meaning of the draft. However, after the MTPE training, they learned various strategies to identify and correct different types of MT errors. They realized that it was not necessary to start the translation from scratch, and they could make significant improvements by editing the MT draft using appropriate methods.

#### (c). Differences in Student Concept of MTPE

Many students reported that before the MT/PE training, they held negative views about the usefulness of MTPE. They believed that online MT tools were only good for word look-up and information scanning, and that MT drafts were highly erroneous. Consequently, they saw MTPE as a time-consuming and energy-draining task. However, after they had practiced editing MT drafts of company web texts and news texts, they came to appreciate the benefits of MTPE. They realized that using correct MTPE methods could save them a lot of time and enhance their translation efficiency and productivity. As a result, they began to view MTPE more positively.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate the performance of graduate students in identifying MT errors and conducting MTPE on company web texts and news texts. A process-based analysis was conducted to determine whether the students made a steady progress in their abilities during the translation course. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, comprising both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analysis focused on student learning outcomes, while the qualitative analysis explored changes in student perception of MT and MTPE.

The results of the study showed a steady improvement in the students' ability to identify MT errors, with the average number of errors they could not spot or incorrectly identify decreasing from 18 in the first assignment to 14 in the second and 10 in the final assignment. This indicates that the MT error training had a positive impact. However, the students' performance in MTPE did not show significant improvement, with only a slight decrease in errors in the final assignment, which was still worse than the first one. This can be attributed to the students' lack of sufficient MTPE experience and the need for more practice to develop effective strategies for identifying and correcting MT errors. The students' reflections in their essays revealed a shift in their perception of MT and MTPE, from pessimistic opposition to optimistic acceptance. The study emphasizes the need to extend the period of MTPE training in translation courses and to incorporate MT training to help students learn MTPE skills and overcome their misconceptions about MT and MTPE.

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# The Textual Component Based on Chomsky's Structure and Halliday's Consistency: “The Land” Poem by Mahmoud Darwish as a Model

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**Abstract**—This study aims to explore the elements of consistency and harmony in the poem *The Land* by Mahmoud Darwish. The major components of textual grammar are examined, highlighting the creativity of language in producing endless sentences. It essentially deals with the compositional structures and the elements of their formation at both the surface and deep structures. The descriptive and analytical approach is adopted to achieve the purposes of the study. The results show that the factors of dispersion, discontinuity, and anxiety help to achieve the elements of consistency and harmony. Such factors are shown to generate poetic connotations as well as the textual balance between motives and goals on the one hand and aesthetic meanings on the other.

**Index Terms**—The Land, surface and deep levels, consistency, harmony, stylistics

## I. INTRODUCTION

Linguistic studies (mainly at the level of syntactic formulations) have been concerned with the sentence regardless of the context or the discursive meanings of the text. However, there has recently been a serious consideration of the text beyond the sentence, mainly because the sentence as a unit is inadequate to represent or describe the phenomena that normally arise beyond the sentence. For example, Wardhaugh (1971) provided a theory that intended to analyse the sentence by exploring its major building blocks. He sought access to comprehensive rules that can regulate and account for the sentence structure, which view the language as a creative procedure by virtue of its innovative use and ability of the unlimited production of endless sentences based on the limited number of words and the standard rules. According to Al-Rajehi (1979), language is a system consisting of a specific set of rules that generate infinite sentences. On the other hand, textual linguistics is associated with textual analysis that draws on empirical research and theoretical achievements of cognitive psychology and its association with other components of language use Afifi (2001).

Unlike the sentence, the text has been intensively studied based on lexical and critical frameworks considering the contextual and lexical factors that played a significant role in defining its feature and forming its (meta-) structure. De Saussure, Jakobson, and Blomfield, among many others, addressed various fields that deal with the context. Likewise, Firth presented a new vision that connects the text to its contextual situation.

Hymes (1972) classified the context into eight components: text form and content, the background, the participants, the purposes and the impact, the key, the method, the type, and interactivity. From this point, the text is part of a larger context. Halliday (1976) followed Firth and Hymes' thoughts and vision, particularly concerning the thoughts of the context study depending on the text and the situation. He, particularly, investigates the relationship between the text and its context.

This study addressed the linguistic structures and components depending on surface and deep structures in order to detect the sentence's components and the creative linguistic processes in one literary work *The Land* by Mahmoud Darwish. It mainly shows how a language can be innovative. We explore the artistic creativity, text's forming, coherence and cohesive strategies that contribute to creating the text.

The direct components of the linguistic structure intervene in constructing the components of cohesion and coherence. Since the text draws on sentences, it is impossible to disentangle the surface form, deep structure, or connotations that the text aims to deliver. Therefore, the study dealt with the strategies that construct the linguistic structures on the base of surface and deep structures because they are the first representation of any creative process. Hence, the mental processes regulating sentence construction are united with the creative artistic processes (Abu-Haqqah, 1979).

In this study, we limit ourselves to applying cohesion and coherence components to the poetic example *The Land* by Mahmoud Darwish (2000). This work represents a conflict between reality and fantasy, which produced the components of creative cohesion that dominate it and flow easily and spontaneously from the poem.

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## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Al-Majali (2107) applies theoretical discourse analysis techniques to the poetry of Samih AlQasem in his poem “Heramphrodetous”. He aims to highlight its coherence and consistency, and this is achieved through the strategies of ellipsis, substitution and the employment of cohesion and cohesive devices.

Saadi (2018) aims to examine the five cohesion elements: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion in *Wills in the Ground* by the Omani poet Saeed Al Saqlawi. It also examines the text's inferences to reveal the hidden meanings of the words. The study concludes that repetition is one of the key factors contributing to Saqlawi poem's cohesion.

Al-Amaireh (2018) aims to define the features of textual coherence in *The Last Card – Southern* by the poet Amal Danqal, focusing on the impact of this consistency in shaping the poet's vision. The study concluded that there is consistency between the lexical fields and semantic structure. In addition, it revealed the effectiveness of text construction in shaping the ending images and death through repetition and structural tools.

Nuwar (2018) investigates the cohesion and coherence role in *Piety and Charity* by Ibn Al Taieb. The study aimed to differentiate between the elements of cohesion and coherence. According to some linguists and researchers, it also examined their role in analysing literary texts and removed confusion in their concepts. The study concluded that the elements of cohesion and coherence differ according to the length of the text.

Al-Abd (2019) investigates the cohesion and coherence in Ibn Zaydun's poem which aimed to reveal the cohesion elements in Bin Zaydun's poetry. The study concludes that the context of the poem, especially its events and situations, is completely consistent with the whole cohesion elements.

Many Arab researchers have also investigated darwish poems to examine several literary and linguistic aspects. For instance, Sabahi (2012) explores the strategies of coherence and consistency in Mahmoud Darwish poem “State of Siege”. This study reveals that the poem has clear consistency in which the poet adopted the strategies of deletion and the use of pronouns, demonstratives, coordination, repetitions, and substitution.

Against this background, it is noted that the previous studies ignored the sentence's syntactic structure, especially concerning its important role in constructing the text and its cohesion elements. Therefore, this study intends three things: First, it addresses both the syntactic structure of the sentence and the text by connecting the cohesion elements with the transformative, innovative theory. Second, it brings closer the semantic processes in deep structure and mental processes in the text. Additionally, the study aims to identify the efficiency of cohesion and coherent elements in Mahmoud Darwish's poem by highlighting the most influential elements that make the poem *The Land* a cohesive and coherent whole.

## III. COHESION AND COHERENCE TECHNIQUES

According to Halliday and Hassan (1976), the word text is used in linguistics “to indicate any linguistic syllable, written or spoken and no matter how tall it is to form one unit”. It is a unit of meaning assembled by a set of patterns and relations where the form is not a key element. The syntactic unit of the sentence illustrates the major difference between the text and the sentence. On the other hand, the semantic structure controls the text as there is no consideration of shape and size.

Halliday and Hassan (1976) state that it is possible to differentiate between the text and the sentence for normal people with no experience of doing this distinction. He refers to this by saying “When an English speaker hears a syllable of the language, he will exceed the length of the sentence, and he can ordinarily and easily know if this syllable is a whole unite or just a set of incoherent sentences”. In addition, he confirms that there are features in the text that cannot be found in single sentences but in a set of linguistic features called cohesion and coherence.

### A. Cohesion Techniques

#### (a). Reference Technique

The spoken elements create intended consistency between statements, actions, and situations to open a way for expectation. Therefore, it comes to the readers when they read a speech and their efficiency in interpreting it according to the context through the anaphoric connection between the elements. It includes pre- and post-references (Khatabi, 1991).

#### (b). Substitution Technique

This technique means a process achieved in the text. It is based on the substitution process, so the late element is a substitute for an advanced element, leading to the text's consistency (Khatabi, 1991).

#### (c). Ellipsis Technique

Not everything that is hidden in the mind is fit to reveal. Thus, according to Zayed (2002), ellipsis adds to the text not detracting from it; the reader must complete the missed part by what he or she thinks, believes, or expects.

#### (d). Conjunction Technique

The conjunction parts can be divided into additional conjunction, causal, reverse, and temporal (Koin, 2000). This conjunction is reflected either linguistically through the connection tools or metaphorically through the relations of being near each other.

(e). *Lexical Consistency Technique*

There are two recent techniques that modern poets use, in particular, repetition and joining.

B. *Coherence Techniques*

(a). *Total Structure Technique*

It is all about the text, which is the basis on which the text is built metaphorically and content-wise. The structure reduced the semantic reporting and its systems and classification. So the repetition and the title are the elements that address this issue.

(b). *Knowledge of World Technique*

This world is made up based on the background of our knowledge, understanding, perspective, and recognition. Accordingly, the text could open perspectives for a new understanding different from what we already knew (Qaisar, 2000). Then, the criticism vision comes as a result of what the text is and what we know, so it looks for the essence of the beauty of it.

(c). *Dispersion, Emptiness, and Interruption*

It is a strategy that is based on time's inversion and disturbs the vision to follow its visible sphere between the past and the present. By that, the future remains as a component of complex images competing with the hope to raise the current question and its possibilities to return what has passed back and to determine its relationship to things.

#### IV. "THE LAND" POEM BETWEEN THE TWO STRATEGIES: COHESION AND COHERENCE

In the Darwishian poem, the centre of accumulation and the station of fascination, he moves away from the cliché with free visions on its way to success. He rejects text globalisation, in its informative meaning in order to search deeply into civilisation about the eternal certainty. According to Ismael (1968), this certainty means something that firmly existed and emanated from the depth. Also, the progressive growth in a creative experience refers to creation and reading, which strengthen the meaning of love, perception, and joy. All of this about spontaneity and impulse speech dedicates the creative speech. The word, context, image, rhythm, and music are movable paintings that reduce the past and present contexts in a new cognitive vision that moves by the relation between events, places, and times.

The text is organised in a series of cohesive components that include references, substitutions, techniques, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. In addition to the coherence techniques, other factors are used, including the total structure, the world's vision, and what comes from the factors of dispersion and emptiness (Al-Nabulsi, 1987).

A. *The Cohesion Techniques*

(a). *Text References*

The Land poem has external references (that happened outside the text) that include: pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and comparative tools.

1. *Pronoun References*

We will try to apply what we have received through the models. The poet said:

In March, of the year of Intifada (the uprising), the land told  
 Its bloody secrets, in March five girls, passed in  
 Front of violet and rifle, they stand beside the primary  
 School's door, they burned with the rose and ultimate  
 Za'atar, March comes to the land, from the bottom of the land  
 It comes .....

The references are divided in this board, limiting the scene of Intifada (1976) between the two references: anaphoric and cataphoric. Since the crisis seeks to meet at the vanishing poetic point, leading to viewing the poem as a whole. This makes the event of March as a moment that emerged from the realistic/ the historical (as a narrative principle). The Land said they passed in front of Violet and they burned, so the reference here is anaphoric one that refers to the legend. Then it backs to hope, fertility, and flourishing. The barriers cease to exist voluntarily between the March of Reality/Intifada and the March of the myth. Thus, the poet uses dramatic elements that compose a scene that is loud with its eventual ascent and descent, revealing the hope of returning to Palestine. March comes to the land from the bottom of the land. It comes as a cataphoric reference (comes: it) in monitoring time and place that make the event difficult at the moment of flaring. Then, the complex will untie by the eventual descent by the verb (they open) then the complexity comes again by the advent of march in its journey to embrace the anthem of soil in dual playing on life's

chord: The functional usage composed of verbs of saying is a sufficient tool to serve the narrative purpose (she said) then the passage comes (she passed) to move a static raging inside the ego (the poetic ego).

## 2. *The Exophoric Reference*

It means a reference outside the text or to an unmentioned place. Hassan (1998) mentioned, "a reference to what is not mentioned mainly depends on the context of the situation". So, in this text, the exophoric and textual references permeate more and more.

She said to us.... in an exophoric reference to the plural (the absent, the present), the poet draws a space for two eventual lines through this painting: one of them leads to death while the other to the moment of final/death. So come rebirth, fertility, renewal, hope, and thriving from here. Then, the saying brings back March to witness Darwish's battle against time and a series of extensions to serve the two perspectives and formation.

The one who is in love is fused in vision as nature is not the only source of this energy. Rather, that fertility resides in the hearts of lovers (she said to us....); he didn't identify (to me) but the talking was popular (us). Thus, the source of the saying is specified by a singular pronoun (she), but to whom does the saying go? It is for plural, witnesses, eyewitnesses and lovers. It itself gives the orange the greenness to merge the elements of existence, and the fusion is being as that extension... the self... the human... the universal..., producing life. From that, the word, the line, the poem, the being, Palestine appeared. Accordingly, the climax began with the martyrdom of the five girls.

Then, the situation starts to extend and form in combination with natural elements; therefore, the journey of fertility and rebirth starts, which is the journey of liberation and expulsion of invaders.

Although this part is short, it has a signifier that evokes absent texts with symbolism and intertextuality. Also, inference with present texts with a combination of absent (references.....exophoric, anaphoric) which the present (with its cataphoric reference) so that March becomes the hidden significance in terms of the actual reality that refers to the time of the massacre. Earth Day includes a dimension or an absent symbol, the mythical dimension utilised at the technical and substantive levels. Elsewhere, descriptive and textual references penetrate more and more.

In March we fell in first love

and we enter a first jail

And in the night, memories come out from the Arabic language

love said to me one day: I enter the dream alone and I lost

I said: the river is walking to you and in March the land reveals its rivers

You will say: No. The words and the slow river are torn apart.

You will announce the bad time, disappearing in the shadows, no to linguistic theater, no limits for this dream, no for the future.

The exophoric references are outside the text in a slow time that the river flows: we enter (we), we enter (we) the first jail. From the anaphoric references: he said: (he) the love is mine... (Memories come out, I enter the dream, I lost, increase, reveal, torn, you will say, you will announce, and disappear). The combination of the two poems is necessary to complete the structural pattern between the two pieces so their unity forms a consistent and cohesive structure. By talking about the flowing river, which is besieged as it hides the revolution, it has to tear the time and utterances hidden in women's cloaks that come from the autumn. Autumn symbolises wilt, which is unlimited, as the revolution is hidden in women's wombs, and there should be a spring after autumn ends. Then, the poet/the revolution is close and united, which the revolution hides with his words, and he hides with its glow. For the river/revolution, by its slow walking.

## 3. *Demonstrative and Adverbial Reference*

They are anaphoric and cataphoric cohesive devices (Khatabi, 1991), and because the extension is long-term with a deep notion and packed with demonstratives, we will not consider it much (see many of it). We will mention what we notice with the amount of which conveys the point while referring to the fact that the rarity doesn't affect the quality of the script, whether textual or rhetorical.

Time limitation: thirty-years ago, referring to the year 1948, the time when the occupation's state began to appear. As for the wars' dates are 48, 56, 67, 73, 76. All of this is enveloped with a social time and framing it with references of indicative linguistics: (my mother is growing her braids), (my father is in the grip of English occupation), and here is a peregrination between social /historical, value-based/aesthetical, past/martial.

As for Darwish, his outbreaks are always those of constant worry and heated anxiety due to an external timing dictating plenty of coordinates and an internal timing which is defeated and full of crisis. For the text is born in the hide-out. The Influencing verbs of absence, present in the land of linguistics/script, are a declaration that is relentless for the state of stillness and oblivion.

### (b). *Substitution*

We will notice this nominal substitution in many places between (month/March) as we shall find this (Darwishian/Eliot-ic) overlapping:

In March there is the scent of plants, that's the immersing of elements

March is the cruelest and lustful of months.

My father shall pass through my inhalation and exhalation and will not be broken.

This is my agrarian aim at the peak of love.

This is my outbreak for life.

Oh, plants, intertwine and contribute to the surprise of my body and the retrieval of my dream into my body, the land will burst.

As the nominal substitution comes (April), the overlapping of the two poems also does. As it is a consensus on the necessity of returning to the land. Eliot demonstrates the cycle of human life from childhood to adolescence, then old age or even death than life all over again. This temporal pursuit of minds is the same of which Darwish is occupied with where the land lives and resuscitates through spring; it is a wedding where the scent of plants diffuses to let the legend rise again, July, Ishtar and Adonis, Al-Zo'abi (1995).

Openings all over again, so Darwish takes the same opening; there it is, April, and there in March. It is noted that March is between brackets to demonstrate the importance of poetry in the realm of the poem and to refer to the absent text. We are in the behold of a dramatic conduction of a restless case rich with intertwining landmarks. Thus, Darwish has to contain these elements and procedures, curing a homeland that is occupied and unproductive in life in front of unlimited arrogance. He also has to contain the oppression that stands in the way of the immersion of elements & plants, mentioned in the same poem:

Oh land, my lady please hide my staggering age.

between two questions, How & When?

and this is my Taa'ie spring, and this my final spring

and in March, the land wedded its trees.

Playing the same melody for it is the lady/land is the one and March in these verses is the bloody-March, the revolution and the wedding of the flaming and quavering land. Meanwhile, March, July, Ishtar and Adonis are the absence of the fertilising elements at present and a resurrection that brings life back into the body of the land. Also, a celebration of existence quality for the creatures and beings from personification to embodiment into Fragmentation is based on an expression that says time is not an external frame that runs through the human age. Rather, it is the fabric of the limited human life with births and death, Alhadj (1980).

March of the sensible, the erotic, the cruellest of the months is the being of majesty, presence, and majesty of the greats. Then, the poem returns back to the sentence and text as usual. (The martyrs of the five girls) as they are in a strange situation in front of their present to enter into the consideration of the stage. As the mental state of the poet searches for a moment of serenity in the midst of a roaring, terrifying surrounding and an anxious present.

### (c). *Ellipsis*

The critics divided the ellipsis technique into nominal, verbal, and rhetorical, and we often find a dervish devoting a poetic form. This may be affected when he represents the absent texts; the poetic breath needs more vast spaces which are narrowed by the limited frames. So, the connotations, meanings, and physical, psychological, historical, religious and mythological signs are all linked to absent times that are evoked in the present. Accordingly, there is a great charge for memory, a great mission and a heavy burden that the poem bears the time through which the way to the memory and the sadness becomes associated with it. Then, the land of Darwish becomes a language, an epic, a case, and then a conscience. Thus, Gilgamesh's language and dream don't follow the same path. The Darwishian land is an absent reality, while the Gilgamesh dream is stuck in the imagination as a prisoner. Now let us take a look at what we have said as an inference:

March comes to the land, it comes from ... The bottom of land.

Here, he actually uses (comes) and deletes a text related to what was before it that related to land, fertilisation, revolution and wishes. Then, march comes with a heavy burden and a promised and expected hope. All of this gives rise to a reader responsible for getting the text back as an objective value, and he repeats that many times:

Ma father was in the grip of English occupation

And my mother is growing her braids

And my extension is the people.

In front of us, real and imaginary circles consist of English people, my mother, the braids, the people, and the extension. He found the circle of English close to the social time where the mother is an image of the stolen homeland, and the braids are symbols of beauty. Chastity is also reflected in an increase of the illumination and dramatic support in front of the image of confiscation to narrow the circle that dedicates reality. The extension does not extend to the English people rather, it colluded with them, so the extension is on the people. He lifted a void in a roaring and loud voice as if he was crying out the old meanings: resurrection, celebration, and revolution.

### (d). *The Conjunction Techniques*

#### 1. *The Reversal Conjunction*

The striking tool was probably the most suitable in such a personification. For Darwish, he has another point of view, i.e., why not while he is the son of the land and language, as he used the last to serve the first. When the language announces that the land of languages is the land of the lady:

They searched his chest



They found nothing but his heart  
 They searched his heart  
 They found nothing but his people  
 And they searched his voice  
 They searched his voice  
 They found nothing but its part  
 They found nothing but his imprisonment  
 So, they searched his imprisonment  
 They found nothing but themselves in chains  
 Beyond the hills  
 The sense of sleep alone  
 And in March  
 The shadows are missed

We notice that the negative tool (nothing) was the opposite of what they wanted or expected. In addition, another artistic technique, which is the repetition that gives the sentences a musical bell, greatly intensifies the significance and implication of the image.

## 2. *The Additional Conjunction*

“and/then” are conjunctive words filled with the poem as they increase its glow. Also, they charged its connotations with a rhythm derived from a tightly chosen and employed musical bell. Here are some examples:

Neither the check room remain  
 Nor the choke of the Chinese  
 Niron died, but Roma not  
 This is my agrian hug in the peak of love,  
 This is my starting to the moon  
 Oh, plants, intertwine and contribute to the surprise of my body and the retrieval of my dream into my body,  
 the land will burst.

## 3. *The Causal Conjunction*

Darwish used such expressions as so that, in order to, in limited use. However, they are efficient in the context if we consider that each word is a sign that its roots and relationship go deep. Here are some examples:

This is the possibility of going to a lifetime behind Khadija, they did not  
 plant me, in order to harvest me  
 The glorious air wants to talk about me but he falls asleep near Khadijah  
 The glorious deer want to crush my jail today but he guards the shadow  
 of Khadijah when she leans on her fire

## (e). *The Lexical Cohesion*

### 1. *The Repetition*

It is the repetition of a tool, a name, a verb, or a sentence. In other words, it is a repetition of one of the lexical elements either by the name itself or its synonym or close to it in the text. The poet says:

Before thirty years ago, I saw a girl on the beach  
 They said: I am the wave so be away, in the erosion I saw  
 Two martyrs listening to the sea: Acre comes with wave  
 Acre goes with the wave, go away in the erosion

In front of the Palestinian wound, a levity irks the memory, and Darwish finds no escape other than that distant memory. He is gathering what was left of his blood, dressing his wound with a mythic tendency linked to a reciprocal relationship based on the present and to a dream of rebuilding and restructuring it. That's to gain a moment of attendance and renew in a way that helps to face the repercussions of many of the aesthetics of language and its extensions. Thus, acre goes with the wave and returns also with it:

Did they chain you: with our dreams you descended to our wound in winter, and did they know you to kill you?  
 Did they chain you with their dreams?  
 So, you ascend to our dream in spring

The restored memories are a strip that is not entirely white and not completely black, despite the atrocity of the enemy. In addition, the restored case engraves its light, old and new. Then, it is a reality despite what feeling tries to present prominent vocabularies to avoid defeat and falling into the trap of fate despite its crossing through time:

As if I go back to the past  
 As if like I'm walking in front of me, I am the child  
 of simple words and the martyr of the map  
 O you, who hold on to the edge of the impossible

From the beginning till AlJaleel  
 give me back my hand  
 give me back the identity

## 2. *The Unit*

The relationship arising from the contradiction and antagonism, in its entirety, constitutes a linguistic system due to the link, which is governed by a relationship (Khatabi, 1991).

We are in a poetic state surrounded by sadness, despair, misery, the settlement of pain and the absence of hope. Then obviously, we are in front of a constant fear and anxiety that is matched by ecstasy, longing and a possible and imaginary victory that is evoked by way of discourse to extend a bridge to cross and ensure survival:

As if I go back to the past  
 As if like I'm walking in front of me

So, returning back to the past is a journey that helps him survive. Also, this return carries him with a heavy heritage that leads him forward:

I am the child  
 of simple words and the martyr of the map  
 O you, who hold on to the edge of the impossible  
 From the beginning till AlJaleel  
 give me back my hand  
 give me back the identity

The memories are present, vivid and piercing together like a pharaonic inscription so that the memory of the evening when he left his village remains present in his imagination. He also remembers with that memory the bullets, shells and the sound of explosions. After thirty years of the series of displacement, there must be an end, and there must be a birth from the womb of suffering and the waist of pain as well: the death of the wheat stalk is a symbol of rich significance that leads us to the scene of explosion if not voluntarily then forcefully by the authority of language.

I am the land  
 And the land is me  
 Khadijah Do not close the door  
 Don't go into absence

Here, the time is the ally of the right, which hides the wheat stalk and fruits for resistance and struggle despite the fact that the body is in the open and who fights is the world's sword. The power of poetry is in the heart of the equation of reality when martyrdom shakes off the dust of death to resurrect again and give birth to hope from the womb of suffering, Abu-Haqqa (1997).

## B. *The Coherence*

The Darwishian text generally consists of multiple lines, directions, and extensions, just as its land and language are. Also, it is about his cause and revolution, and it is renewed and just-given in writing, which expresses pain to emerge from a siege and enter into another one (Sabahi, 2012). Here, the importance of the mechanisms used in the search for the consistency of the text emerges. These elements include the overall structure (the subject of the discourse), awareness of the world, dispersion, emptiness and discontinuity.

### (a). *The Overall Structure*

#### 1. *The Title*

The interaction between the poet and the world is continuous, active and present. Thus, the idea is stored, fermented, reduced, and presented with a linguistic template that accommodates all contradictions and inconsistencies. In bringing productivity back to the world through private, which is the text - the language, as it is the tool of communicating with the poet's language who sailed deeply until arriving at the deepest point and flew far away until arriving at the majestic high peaks. The idea comes from an inner world in which visions ripple, converge and move away despite the internal/external blockade in a discourse characterised by humanity and fluidity. However, he has nothing but escape to the realms of the individual and collective unconscious, for today (Earth Day) has its impact and its effects. It also has its motives, causes, temporality, tenses and extensions so that the poet finds himself planted in the land of poem, identity and language, exhausting all his capabilities in flight: mythical, historical, and religious (Al-Rawashdeh, 2006).

Perhaps the addition of (day) to (the land) opens the text to countless fields and connotations, both individual and collective. So then, the expectation widens, and the distance increases when the poet breaks this expectation and sends the text a vitality of great influence by describing the title as a parallel text (Al-Ghathami, 1994).

The time of the topic, which is the month of March, has its extensions that lead to mythological dimensions far-reaching for the current situation in an ontological access reality. It is noted that time passes and crouches at the action indicating its kinetic quest, which grows and expands if it is saturated with the emotions of that action. This verb goes beyond borders, even the narrow framework of the concept of social time to align with the cognitive/mythical/historical time in a new vision that contains most of the times fused within the entity/homeland/bag, bag/homeland, and the

poet/Palestinian. As the homeland becomes knowledge composed of bridges of the past, present, and future and place/homeland. Not in its content and the limits of topographical engineering knowledge, rather it is a system consisting of those and a great addition poetically and emotionally based on mental abstraction and psychological fragmentation of assets in a link between language and its sensory origins. Then, imagination enters its metaphorical space using language, transcending those crusts, and interrupting all distances to the point of contradiction with reality.

## 2. Repetition

It is an element of cohesion with its rhythm, affirmation and stabilisation of meaning with the textual parts of the text. On the other hand, it is an element of coherence with the filling of blanks by leaving the textual inconsistency. Since the month of March becomes a recurring and necessary meaning which can't be achieved without it.

In March in intifada's year, the land told us it is the bloody March, the march of the intifada, the march that is the land wedding, the birth, and liberation, so the poem celebrates it intensely. Also, it is the fertility's journey, the absent/present text, and what is inferred and evoked. Additionally, it is an absent sign, lives in myths, and is interrogated to denote the present, which is the initiation.

In March we fell in first love  
and we enter a first jail  
And in the night, memories come out from the Arabic language

## (b). Dispersion, Emptiness and Interruption

For Darwish, the coming time turns into a painful past in a blur that hinders the vision, hinders consideration from following its perspectives, and obstructs vision when he delivers accumulations and frustrations. As the past of the Nakba is connected to the presence of injustice and tyranny, the future remains composed of intertwined images. The past and the present are a built-in picture of expressions of pain and sadness in the emergence of the philosophy of alienation. This eventually leads to a dismal reality surrounded by barbed wire, such as those that surround parents, hopes, and ambitions, and even bury their dreams to raise the question of the present and its fates. The Palestinian question is to restore what has been missed while he focuses on his relationship to things with a tense and often abhorrent reproduction because of the lack of concept of a homeland at the waiting table. The citizen is divided between the national authority and the Israeli occupation. The confusion and suspicion of the moment require asking questions, and the act and the actor are far away from the land of return and the language of poems. Thus, the whole scene becomes a moment of human confusion and inertia except for the act of waiting, which is a form of pushing death amid the stalemate, attrition and fatalism to relax its emptiness over the near and distant present.

The invisible emptiness in the Darwishian text is that identical extension. Because of that identification, the colours are absent at the edges of the sentences; therefore, everyone passes through words to break the bonds of the text in order to reach the desired meanings. It is a path towards the innermost part of the text in an attempt to illuminate the new product and the new form of a marriage that is millions of years old; it is also a path of combination. The closely observing poet leaves enough distance to see the scene in all of its details. These details inevitably get with him, the conscious reader as the target for Darwish is those who have: awareness and will.

With a survey, horizontal and vertical vision, Darwish draws his painting, all of which is accompanied by assistance and contact with the heritage through the bridge of language/March. Also, what is in common with the human/existential experience from a divisive philosophical perspective which says that we are generally behind an ancestor to embody the dimensions of absence? This appears through the vocabulary of the presence summoned from the human/mythical, religious/historical heritage, and remarkable images of nature: with its stone, human, mud and all its assets:

I am the child  
of simple words and the martyr of the map  
O you, who hold on to the edge of the impossible  
From the beginning till AlJaleel  
give me back my hand  
give me back the identity

## V. CONCLUSION

After this investigation, it can be proposed that this poem is a creative text that leads to pursuing the semantic connotations. What we are looking for is not accessible to pass or exceed without discussing each lounge in it. That is why the study came up with a set of results, the most important of which are:

- A. The conversion elements become active in their performance representations in conjunction with the creative artistic process. It also forms a tributary of sentence components employed in creative works.
- B. The mental activity was mostly achieved in creative artistic growth, as the creative process is strongly connected to the internal mental processes. In addition, the efficiency of employing imagination and metaphors in the creative process can be attributed to the activity of meaning and connotations in the profound structure.

- C. Despite the destruction, interruption, and the fact that there are many cases of ellipsis in the poem, the text was consistent and cohesive in an artistic way, considering the other side of the text, which is coherence.
- D. The text, i.e., the largest functional unit of any language, becomes a hotbed for cross-fertilisation that leads to expanded and not narrowed circles through a set of linguistic means that contribute to the total text's unity that creates its textuality.
- E. Darwish was able to achieve that hopeful balance in linking motives, tendencies, and affiliations between the aesthetic messages. Within that are in-depth dialogues that are rooted in depth that go back to distant sediments. So, through his poetic experience, he has succeeded in staying away from directness and employing it simultaneously. This needs artistic work that is incapable of those of short stature.

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# State-of-the-Art Review of the Corpus Linguistics Field From the Beginning Until the Development of ChatGPT

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**Abstract**—The present paper highlights the recent state of and development in the corpus linguistics (CL) field. Although several reviews have been conducted on CL, these reviews have focused on specific areas, such as education, or did not provide an overall clear overview of the future implications of the field (Baker et al., 2008; Biber & Reppen, 2020; Biber et al., 1998; G. N. Leech, 1991; Mcenery et al., 2019; McEnery & Hardie, 2012). The author begins this paper with providing an overview that can guide new researchers in this field as well as postgraduates who require a general historical and thematic map of CL. The general overview discusses the publications of scholars who have participated in this field as well as the central tools that have been applied in CL. For specific details regarding the development of the field, the author analysed 217 articles from the 3 highest-impact factor journals according to the Web of Science over the last four years (2019–2022). The findings reveal a rapid development of the field in terms of practical and methodological perspectives, specifically regarding the investigations of language uses in different contexts. Thus, this paper indicates a significantly strong correlation between CL and technological development, such as natural language processing (NLP), and how this approach could fill the research gap of utilising CL in other areas of linguistics.

**Index Terms**—corpus linguistics, ChatGPT, systematic review, natural language processing, corpus linguistics journals

## I. INTRODUCTION

Corpus linguistics (CL) is a field of linguistics that involves the analysis of large collections of texts which are known as corpora. Over the last few decades, there has been an increased use of CL in linguistic research to facilitate the collection and analysis of large amounts of texts. A key advantage in CL is that it studies broader representative samples and linguistic instances than the traditional method—that is, manual analysis of texts. CL enables analysts to notice findings of language that are not apparent in the analysis of small-scale discourse. Further, CL assists linguists in investigating changes in language patterns over different phases of time or regions. These perspectives could enable researchers to analyse the use of language in various contexts using authentic samples of language use. However, CL has a few limitations. Two main challenges that CL faces will be introduced. The first one is defining the appropriate corpora for analysis. The second is that CL requires specialised software and researchers should be aware of utilising and processing the data using a CL software tool. These key advantages and disadvantages are the central aspects of discussion in this paper.

The current paper aims to review the field of CL by exploring its methodological developments and current applications. I first present an overview of the field, including scholars in the field, areas of focus (e.g., English grammar and vocabulary), and salient tools. Then, the methodology adopted in this article will be provided. Thereafter, I discuss the analysed articles and the development in the field over the last four years (2019–2022). To conclude, I discuss a few challenges and limitations that CL faces and recommend future directions for research in this field.

## II. BACKGROUND OF CL

Numerous studies have provided practical, theoretical, and methodological viewpoints of investigations as well as discussed tools that have been used in CL (Ali et al., 2011; Baker et al., 2008; Biber & Reppen, 2020; Biber et al., 1998; G. N. Leech, 1991; Mcenery et al., 2019; McEnery & Hardie, 2012; Nartey & Mwinlaaru, 2019; Nurdyani & Nadra, 2021). However, CL has become messy and connected to other fields such as computer science without robust connection between the basis of the various fields. In this section, I highlight the major developments of CL by presenting the linguistic areas and related figures in CL. Then, I briefly discuss the salient tools that were employed by several studies and the features of these tools.

### A. Overview of Linguistics Areas and Related Figures in CL

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Various areas of linguistics have extensively employed CL, such as discourse analysis, computational linguistics, language teaching and learning, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics. These linguistic areas have developed the use of CL with the following considerations. First, the creation of large corpora like the British National Corpus (BNC), which contains millions of words. This type of corpora has enabled the study of different uses of language in unprecedented linguistic features. Second, advances in CL tools (e.g. collocation analysis tools) have enhanced the efficiency of processes and analyses of a large volume of linguistic data. Third, interdisciplinary collaboration between CL and other fields, such as natural language processing (NLP), has led to meaningful insights into language use. Fourth, methodological innovations through the development of new methods of analysing linguistic data, such as corpus-based discourse analysis, keyword analysis, and multi-dimensional analysis. Finally, CL has been applied to practical problems, such as common and frequent issues that relate to language learning and machine translation. Thus, CL has enabled researchers to explore new ways of investigating language uses.

Table 1 below presents the prominent scholars in the field of CL. The table presents the name of scholar, the area in which he/she focused on, and his/her area of interest. The last column includes the well-known published works of the scholars.

TABLE 1  
PROMINENT SCHOLARS IN THE FIELD OF CL<sup>1</sup>

Name of scholar	Area of focus	Salient works
John Sinclair	Considered as the founder of the field	(Sinclair, 1991; McH. & Sinclair, 1975)
Michael Halliday	Uses CL to analyse the use of language in context (i.e. his work on systemic functional linguistics)	(Halliday, 1985a, 1985b; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; M. Halliday & Hasan, 1989)
Douglas Biber	Contributes to analysing differences in the use of language across various registers and genres	(Biber, 1993, 1991; Biber & Reppen, 2020; Biber et al., 1998)
Geoffrey Leech	Corpus-based approach to English grammar and vocabulary	(Leech, 2009; Leech, 1991; Leech & Paul, 2014)
Susan Conrad	Uses CL in language teaching	(Biber et al., 1998; Conrad, 2005)
Tony McEnery	Analyses large dataset by considering a wide range of topics (e.g. discourse analysis and computational methods).	(Baker et al., 2008; McEnery, 2019; McEnery et al., 2006; Mcenery et al., 2019; McEnery & Hardie, 2012)
Mark Davies	Creates corpora such as the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA)	(Davies, 2010, 2012)
Antoinette Renouf	Different topics in CL (e.g. discourse analysis, genre studies, and multimodal communication).	(Baker & Renouf, 2005; Renouf & Sinclair, 1991)
Paul Baker	Gender and sexuality in language use	(Baker, 2006a, 2006b; Baker et al., 2008; McEnery et al., 2019)
Stefan Th. Gries	Topics and methods in CL, such as collocation analysis and construction grammar	(Gries, 2003, 2016, 2013)

Table 1 above indicates that the scholars have considered practical methods and applications that can facilitate the efficiency of analysing linguistic patterns as well as theoretical bases.

Thus, it is indicated that CL has been utilised to fix issues faced by linguists who employ traditional methods in various areas as mentioned in the second column. One of the salient fields in which CL has been applied in descriptive linguistics is in the analysis of a large corpus of texts. Analysing a large corpus of texts enables linguists to observe and identify patterns in language use and structure. Second, CL has been applied in language teaching, particularly materials that are used to develop a corpus for teaching English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL). Learners are aided in identifying useful and common patterns of language to familiarize them with the most frequent linguistic patterns in a specific genre. Another area is lexicography. Lexicographers have applied CL to analyse a large number of texts to identify uses of words, their meanings, and changes in the use of words based on language. Discourse analysis has also employed CL to investigate meaning in a representative sample of texts with different contexts. The last remarkable field is computational linguistics that examines how computer software deals with languages. By applying CL, computational linguists aim to enhance the efficiency of the programmes to recognize linguistic patterns and language use through the development of algorithms. Taking these general areas into account, CL varies from descriptive studies to computational modelling, and this has enhanced the approaches utilised in linguistics, specifically those related to

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the related texts are referenced as in the text citation, and the complete references are included in the references section.

language use.

### B. Review of the Salient Corpus Tools

An important aspect that CL should consider is focusing on which tool facilitates answering the research question(s). In this section, I provide a general overview of CL software tools. Table 2 presents the general features of salient CL software tools as well as the common advantages and disadvantages of these tools with their extra resources (if more information is required).

TABLE 2  
OVERVIEW OF SALIENT CL SOFTWARE TOOLS WITH THEIR FEATURES<sup>2</sup>

CTool	Advantages	Disadvantages	Related references
AntConc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User-friendly interface that has clear functions for users.</li> <li>- It is a free tool.</li> <li>- Open source</li> <li>- Multiple functions (e.g. analysis of word frequency, collocation, and cluster analysis).</li> <li>- Fast and efficient tool processing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only processes plain text files.</li> <li>- No specific technical support is provided.</li> <li>- Not compatible with other CL programmes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smith (2021)</li> <li>- Anthony and Young-Scholten (2014)</li> </ul>
Sketch Engine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Valuable resource, as it has over four billion words</li> <li>- It is user-friendly.</li> <li>- Queries can be customised by using parameters such as frequency, lemma, and parts of speech.</li> <li>- It has multiple languages.</li> <li>- It has advanced tools, such as concordance analysis, keywords, and collocation analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is a paid service.</li> <li>- Slow loading in the process.</li> <li>- Types of queries are limited.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kilgariff et al. (2004)</li> <li>2. McEnery and Wilson (2017)</li> </ol>
WordSmith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Easy to navigate and use the software.</li> <li>- Powerful tool that quickly operates processes.</li> <li>- Multiple tools (e.g., collocation and keyword lists).</li> <li>- It supports various languages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Paid and expensive tool.</li> <li>- It has almost the same functions that are available in free tools.</li> <li>- As it is a paid tool, there are a few issues reported by users regarding customer support.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Golinkoff and Kathy (2006)</li> <li>2. Reppen (2001)</li> <li>3. Scott (2001)</li> </ol>
Voyant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- User-friendly and enables text visualisation.</li> <li>- It allows sharing the work and projects with others in real-time.</li> <li>- It is a web-based tool and no need for installation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It has limited features in comparison to other tools (e.g., LancsBox).</li> <li>- Limited data size.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Graham and Milligan (2015)</li> <li>2. Terras (2017)</li> </ol>
LancsBox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multiple tools (e.g. collocation and keyword lists).</li> <li>- It visualizes the findings that enable finding the relationship between collocates through collocation network.</li> <li>- It supports advanced queries according to the purpose of the analysis, such as Delta P.</li> <li>- It supports multiple languages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited size of corpus up to fifty million words.</li> <li>- As it is a free source, it has limited technical support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brezina et al. (2015)</li> <li>- Gablasova et al. (2017)</li> </ul>

The above table presents the general differences between various well-known CL tools. All the tools have been developed over time and have various versions. Numerous corpus tools require subscription and are expensive, and this has been an obstacle for many researchers. For example, as a feature, Sketch Engine attempts to provide analysts with the data that already existed in the tool to enable analysts access the required data for research with multi-languages. Nowadays, it is evident that the tools do not focus much on providing data, as many types of data are available using different sources, such as downloading data from social media. In contrast, the features of the tools are focused upon more than actually building the data these days. For example, certain tools focus on simplicity, such as AntConc which provides a user-friendly interface; his tool can be used by both beginners and professionals. Other tools such as Voyant and LancsBox do not only work on the efficiency of processing analytical tools, such as collocation, but they also provide a nice visualization for the findings to facilitate the mapping of the relationship between collocates/concepts.

### III. STEPS TO ANALYSE THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN CL JOURNALS

This paper provides a detailed review of the recent development in the field by examining recently published articles in the field of CL. Various journals specialize in CL.

First, we review articles in the highest impact factor journals that are indexed in Web of Science and Scopus. These two indexes classify the journals according to most popular articles by considering the citation and the impact factor. The two indexes have been selected in this research, as numerous studies use them as central sources for reviewing

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the related texts are referenced as in the text citation, and the complete references are included in the references section.

high-impact articles in a specific field (e.g. Ali et al., 2011; Alkhalil et al., 2021; Ma & Mei, 2021; Nurdyani & Nadra, 2021). For this study, the researcher selected the following high-impact journals: Corpus Linguistics and Linguistics Theory, International Journal of Corpus Linguistics, and Journal of Corpus Pragmatics. These journals are highly indexed in major databases, such as Web of Science and Scopus. All these journals are peer-reviewed academic journals.

Corpus Linguistics and Linguistics Theory has an impact factor of 2.3. This journal publishes articles that discuss theoretical issues, methodological issues, and applications. The International Journal of Corpus Linguistics encompasses various domains such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics, syntax, and discourse analysis. The impact factor of this journal is 1.5. The Journal of Corpus Pragmatics is more specific than the first two journals with regard to the application of CL. It focuses on researching issues in pragmatics, such as discourse markers, speech acts, implicatures, and politeness strategies. It has an impact factor of 1.3. The contributions of articles in this journal are centralized around the importance of considering the various contexts in which linguistic patterns are utilised.

The researcher applied the following steps to analyse the articles in the three journals:

1. All the articles that were published in the period 2019–2022 were analysed.
2. All the types of information were entered manually into an excel sheet. Two-hundred-and-seventeen articles were analysed from the three journals.
3. Articles were ranked chronologically according to the volumes and issues.
4. The researcher considered the following central points for each article: name of the journal, publication date, volume, issue, author(s), abstract, keywords.
5. The articles have been categorized according to the applied methodology, tools of the analysis, area of research, research question(s), and main findings.

#### IV. REVIEWING THE ARTICLES

The analysed articles were generally classified into two main areas. First, numerous studies investigate the language used in different contexts, such as in political discourse, academic writing, education, or media communication. This type of studies often investigates patterns of grammatical structures, vocabulary use, and discourse markers within specific contexts. Other studies focus on methodological issues, including building a corpus, processing the data, and analysis of the data (e.g., Egbert et al., 2020; Larsson et al., 2020). This type of studies focuses on building corpora, annotating corpora, and establishing/developing software tools. In this section, I classify the articles into 10 additional categories based on a conductive approach. Table 3 presents the themes and areas of the overall classification across the three journals.

TABLE 3  
THEMES OF ARTICLES

Row Labels	Article count
CL and Discourse Studies	59
CL and Pure linguistics	49
CL and Education	28
CL and Methodological Perspectives	24
CL and Language Use in Context	21
CL and Methodological perspectives and Discourse Studies	15
CL, Pragmatics, and Discourse Studies	10
CL and Translation	5
CL, Cognitive Linguistics, and Discourse Studies	4
CL and Phonological Studies	2
Grand Total	217

In the table above, it is evident that the areas which were most commonly represented by the articles include CL and Discourse Studies and CL and Pure Linguistics. The analysis of the articles suggests that a central overarching area utilised by the journals is CL and discourse. This fundamental coexistence between CL and Discourse Studies can be linked to the number of scholars in CL who specialize in discourse studies. Moreover, this reason might be the same for the second most frequent area, which is CL and pure linguistics (e.g., Hundt et al., 2021; Sanders et al., 2021; Schneider, 2022). CL and Discourse Studies have a positive correlation as they share the idea of investigating the various uses of language in different occasions as well as analysing representative data that enable analysts to better discuss a social phenomenon.

Further, the articles in the CL and Pure Linguistics theme discuss the use of language, but with a focus on a linguistic structure such as syntax. The third most commonly discussed area is CL and Education. In this area, the articles apply CL to investigate issues that are specifically related to language learning. The articles in this area investigate linguistic errors of learners and consider the possible causes of these errors. Other articles in this area investigate the application of CL in the educational process and how this tool might be useful for learning a foreign language. For example, CL has been applied to help learners to master the target language through the phrases and collocations in the corpora.



The fourth most common theme is CL and Methodological Perspectives in which the articles contribute to fill in gaps that are related to the steps and methods of applying CL. A very close area to this one is CL and Methodological Perspectives and Discourse Studies (i.e., the sixth most common theme). However, the articles in this theme aim to achieve both practical and methodological contributions. In the fifth most common theme, we have language use in context, with 21 articles. This theme has a connection to the seventh theme of Pragmatics and Discourse Studies (10 articles). The articles in the fifth most common theme include topics of language use in context that relate more to discourse studies than being specific to pragmatics.

The last three domains are Translation, Cognitive Studies (Mehl, 2021), and CL and Phonological Studies (Brand & Ernestus, 2021). Translation has developed from the perspective of machine translation, but few articles have been published in the three leading corpus journals. A possible reason for this is that the field of translation has its journals that focus on translation. With regard to cognitive and phonological studies, it might be difficult to interpret these findings in relation to the various contexts. Therefore, this issue is debatable in the field with regard to the extent to which numbers are used as facts and can lead to interpreting abstract phenomena (e.g., emotions and motivations). The overall distribution of the themes is presented in Figure 1 below to present the overall picture.

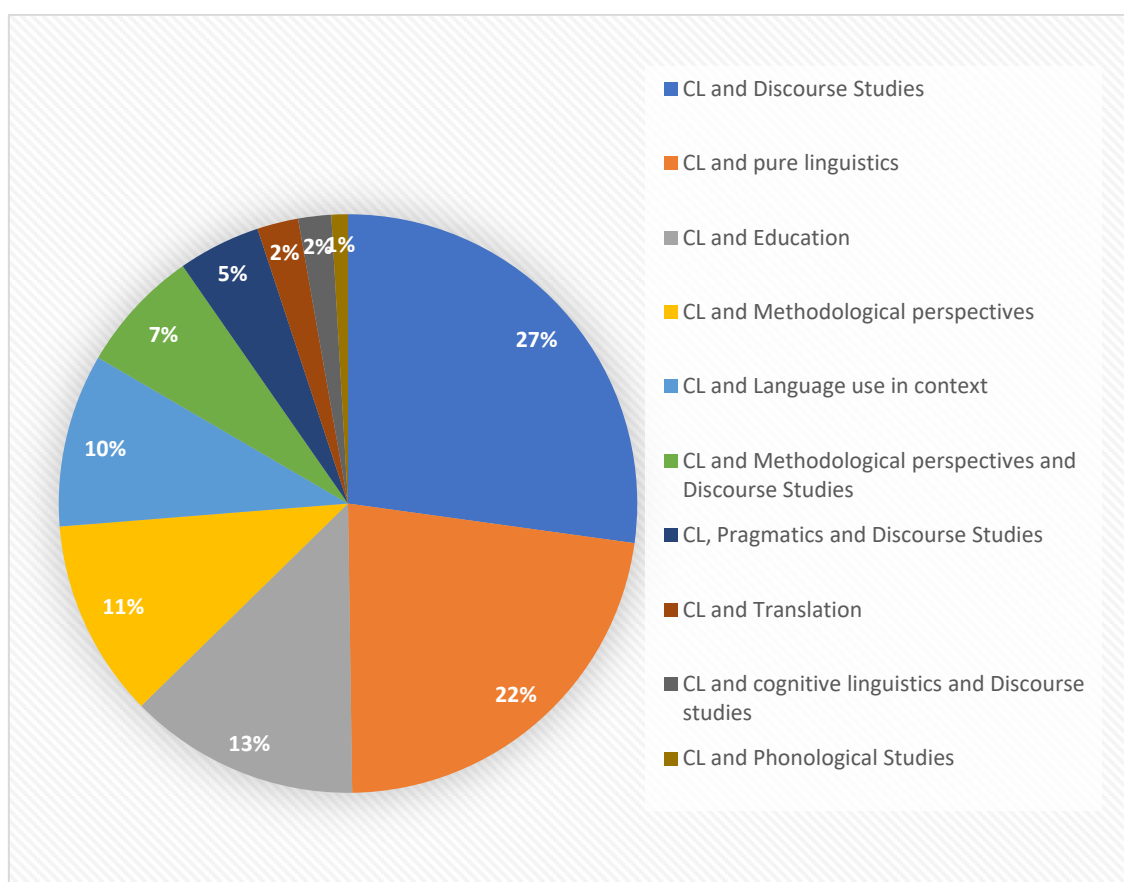


Figure 1. Distribution of Articles Based on the Areas of CL

Table 4 is a more detailed table than the previous one, as it presents the distribution of areas according to the selected journals.

TABLE 4  
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THEMES ACCORDING TO THE SELECTED JOURNALS

Row Labels	Count of Areas and their themes
<b>CL and Discourse Studies</b>	<b>59</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	9
Corpus Pragmatics	27
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	23
<b>CL and Pure Linguistics</b>	<b>49</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	30
Corpus Pragmatics	5
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	14
<b>CL and Education</b>	<b>28</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	8
Corpus Pragmatics	12
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	8
<b>CL and Methodological perspectives</b>	<b>24</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	8
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	16
<b>CL and Language Use in Context</b>	<b>21</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	10
Corpus Pragmatics	4
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	7
<b>CL and Methodological Perspectives and Discourse Studies</b>	<b>15</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	10
Corpus Pragmatics	1
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	4
<b>CL, Pragmatics and Discourse Studies</b>	<b>10</b>
Corpus Pragmatics	10
<b>CL and Translation</b>	<b>5</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	1
Corpus Pragmatics	2
International Journal of Corpus Linguistics	2
<b>CL and Cognitive Linguistics and Discourse Studies</b>	<b>4</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	1
Corpus Pragmatics	3
<b>CL and Phonological Studies</b>	<b>2</b>
Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>217</b>

The above table presents the distribution of the three investigated journals in terms of the areas that emerged in the analysis of the articles. In general, most of the articles in the International Journal of Corpus Linguistics investigate both practical aspects of language use and methodological aspects in the field. In contrast, the articles in Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory focus mainly on investigating theoretical linguistics and how the applications of CL enhance the efficiency of analysing linguistic patterns. Lastly, the articles in Corpus Pragmatics investigate the uses of language in different contexts (Hanks & Egbert, 2022), although the focus of Corpus Pragmatics is on how to integrate pragmatics using computer-assisted methods (Groom, 2019; Yaylali, 2020).

Based on the analysis of the articles, it is evident that applying CL is centralized on decreasing subjectivity and bias, representativeness of the data that enable analysts to make judgments, contextualization, and levels of contexts. For example, numerous studies in the cognitive area apply manual analyses for the sake of having a fuller understanding of a socio-linguistic phenomenon. Other studies may require less context in the analysis, such as the smaller grammatical elements of linguistic patterns like spelling errors and grammar mistakes, as well as the learning of a second/foreign language. These are considered to focus mainly on the writing skills of students and the use of collocation. Overall, both practical findings and methodological perspectives are important areas in CL. While certain studies may prioritize one over the other, many researchers strive to strike a balance between exploring new insights into language use and advancing the research methods in the field.

#### V. THE FUTURE OF CORPUS LINGUISTICS WITH THE EXISTENCE OF CHATGPT

Since CL is dependent on the application of technological tools, it is important to discuss how the rapid development of technology influences the field of CL. Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT) is a search engine that

utilises NLP. ChatGPT was selected for this research because it shares the notion with CL of focusing on applying the practical use of language in various contexts. Further, ChatGPT is more advanced than other CL tools by utilizing features such as summarizing large texts and thematic analysis of corpora (Altameemi & Altamimi, 2023). These features can be applied by any user by asking the tool in the chat box without much effort. However, these features still need development in ChatGPT, specifically with regard to the accuracy of the results. In this section, I highlight the importance of applying such ChatGPT in linguistics. Then, I discuss the potential methods of being up to date with NLP.

First, I examine the significance of the collaboration between CL and NLP, specifically with the rapid development of technology and the services it can provide for linguists. Although there might be risks of applying ChatGPT without knowing how it processes language, many linguists need to change the manner in which they think of applying technology. In other words, instead of being cautious in applying ChatGPT, linguists should examine the importance of merging CL and ChatGPT. Even linguistic academic programmes should consider the importance of applying technology in the study plan of their degrees. Moreover, it is not only linguists who must take this point into account, but scholars in other fields who should consider these aspects and think about the effective utilisation of technology in studying fields of human knowledge.

The second aspect that needs to be mentioned is how linguists benefit from NLP such as ChatGPT. This is a critical question that may expand the field of research. However, I the following possible practices that may assist linguists in benefitting from this technology. One, linguists may investigate the linguistic structure of ChatGPT and they may find issues in the language use; simultaneously, they may collaborate with developers to work on these issues. They may look at the reasons that allowed ChatGPT to produce such linguistic structures and how these structures could be further developed. Further, ChatGPT might be developed to participate in providing data and larger corpora than the specialized corpora that were manually built. This aspect would also decrease the bias of the selected corpus, as ChatGPT may help in the automatic building and annotating of a corpus. Moreover, ChatGPT might be developed from a theoretical linguistic structure to analyse, classify, and discuss the salient linguistic findings of a corpus/corpora. For example, ChatGPT now is able to edit and find errors in a written text, and in the future, it might be able to identify the reasons for errors and provide steps to overcome issues in writing.

Overall, CL has proven to be a significant area of studying various language uses. As knowledge has been distributed in different means and huge data has become available to researchers, it is likely that CL will develop and have more sophisticated uses in linguistic research. Simultaneously, the changes in the field of CL should be considered with the rapid development of ChatGPT.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the field of CL has revolutionised the methods utilised in investigating language and the insightful results of linguistic phenomena. By analysing large collections of data, corpus linguists are able to uncover linguistic findings that were previously inaccessible through traditional methods. A major strength of applying CL is providing empirical evidence for linguistic theories through real-life examples. The findings of this approach have challenged a few traditional assumptions and spotlighted unexplored areas of language use. However, CL also faces certain challenges, such as building and maintaining large corpora, representativeness, and bias. Looking ahead, CL is likely to continue developing as technology advances further. With the evolvement of more sophisticated linguistic tools, researchers can delve even deeper into new research questions to investigate unexplored linguistic phenomena. Additionally, the integration of CL with ChatGPT holds great potential for the understanding of language in the digital age. In conclusion, the development of CL will continue to enhance our understanding of language uses in real-life contexts as well as the manner in which we understand human communication.

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# Delineation of Male Characters: A Meninism Perspective in Kiran Nagarkar's *Jasoda*

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**Abstract**—Gender norms have been examined as a women's issue in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While the position of men is always problematic, they appear to be the cause of the protagonist's hardships in fiction. The intersection of patriarchy in fiction demeans mature male characters and asserts that males are the source of oppressive hegemonic masculinity. The modern society must recognise neglected masculine characters in literature. The primary objective of this paper is to highlight the neglected gender in society and literature. Meninism is underrepresented and functions in isolation, even in literature, and this must be acknowledged. The female characters in *Jasoda* by Kiran Nagarkar are powerful, independent, and supportive, but the male characters are hegemonic and dominant. In novels that focus on women, the male position of privilege is emphasised while the expectations he carries go unacknowledged. Despite increased freedom in society, gender equality is affected by societal misunderstandings about meninism. Gender equality focuses on the oppression of women, while society ignores the suffering of the other gender. This study is an attempt to express the unspoken grief of masculine identity in women-centric literature.

**Index Terms**—gender studies, meninism, gender inequality, feminism, modern society

## I. INTRODUCTION

The men's movement emerged as a social movement in 1960s and 1970s, particularly in Western countries, and is made up of men and their supporters who focus on gender issues and engage in activities ranging from self-help and support to lobbying and activism. The men's movement is made up of a number of movements with diverse and generally conflicting ideals. Important aspects of the men's movement include masculinism, the pro-feminist men's movement, the mythopoetic men's movement, the men's rights movement, and the Christian men's movement, most notably exemplified by the Promise Keepers. Many men's organizations, such as the National Coalition for Men, were founded in response to second-wave feminism beginning in the 1970s. Although the term meninism is relatively new, many of the beliefs it represents are old. Meninism as a term is a twitter originated movement, initially began with sharing jokes that feminists found insulting. Supporters, though, argue that it has evolved into a platform for men to voice their struggles with masculinity. Meninism is an aspect of identity both psychologically critical and socially essential. It examines what it means to be a man in contemporary society. According to urban dictionary, "Meninism is a belief or ideology that men in society are in some cases oppressed and it is focusing on the discrimination of men in the 21<sup>st</sup> century".

Meninism is not modern society demonstrates in literature whereas the realm of narrative is imaginary. It is always misrepresented. The society has created boundaries, not only for women but also for men under gender norms which cannot be ignored. Gender norms are structured and it is sensible for women in the society. There are stories in literature which reflects the sufferings of women in the gender identity crisis. When it comes to male identity, the images and characters portray the patriarchal hegemony as their rooted form of meninism. But men are also marginalized and that should be noted. Meninism is not monolithic, it is diverse. It is impossible to address male identity within the framework of patriarchal hegemony. The rise of the feminist movement led to improve the status of women. Indian constitution offered equal rights which changed the attitude of women in the family as well as in the society. Women writers in pre-independence had portrayed poverty and hunger whereas women centric novels exposed the position of women in the society. On the other side, men are the forgotten gender and their sufferings go unnoticed. The representation of men in literature is not touched even in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. This article decenters male characters in women centric novel.

Sahithya Akademi winner Kiran Nagarkar was one of the prolific Indian writers, novelist and playwright. He was one of the significant writers of postcolonial India and his works target the political criticism which involves irreverence alongside seriousness. Kiran Nagarkar illuminates various problems of postcolonial India in humanitarian language. His novels pay tribute to Indian tradition, religion, styles, and issues. Kiran Nagarkar was a bilingual writer of English and Marathi. His writings were brilliant and thought-provoking. He speaks nationalism and mainly focuses on Indian culture. His work describes the crushing realities of downtrodden and deprived people. Kiran Nagarkar wrote his first novel in

Marathi *Saat Sakkam Trechalis* in 1974 and later it was translated into English by Shubha Slee as *Seven sixes are forty-three*, in this novel he cleverly portrait the identity crisis of the protagonist Kushank Purandare. In 1994 he wrote *Ravan and Eddie* his first novel in English. This work earned him fame and attention among the writers and readers. In 1997 *Cuckold* was published. It is a historical novel, narrating the life of Maharaj Kumar, based on the real-life Prince Bhoj Raj. This novel received Sahitya Akademi Award in the year 2001. His novel *Jasoda* was published in the year 2017 and long-listed for JCB prize for the literature. It is a story of a rural woman battling in the patriarchal society. Nayantra Sahgal states that “*Jasoda* is as compelling and powerful as Nagarkar’s other novels but uniquely itself in the gut-wrenching story it tells of the sordid uses of power, the suffering it causes, and the human spirit that rises about it” (Nagarkar, 2017, Cover copy). The author took two decades to complete the novel.

Women centric novels in Indian literature have widespread assumptions that men are the conspiracy keepers of the patriarchal order. Whereas their own image has been fashioned by patriarchal mechanism, in which men find their way out in the form of suicide. This paper argues that women centric novels portray the hegemonic male characters which decenter the psychological and sociological problems of being a man in this twenty-first century.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Latha Anantharaman’s article “She who shrug and carries on: *Jasoda*” in a popular newspaper *The Hindu* says, it is a story of every woman who are struggling in a rock and finds a way to blossom. It gives a transformation of *Jasoda* and her surge from patriarchal society. The path travelled by the character, *Jasoda* and her children to survive in the face of oppression and excruciating poverty is described in the novel.

A research paper titled, ‘Animalising and Mechanising Self-Determined Women Characters Regardless of their Class structure in *Jasoda*- A Feministic Perspective’ studies *Jasoda* under a broad light of social discourse that represent social reality and oppression. This paper focuses on animalisation and mechanisation of female body and states patriarchal domination take control over women. Even though women are resilient nowadays, regardless of their class and caste, female characters are still oppressed and treated as objects. This research exemplifies the life struggles of every female character regardless of social class and caste in this novel.

## III. REPRESENTATION OF HEGEMONIC MALE CHARACTERS

The novel *Jasoda* is a journey of a rural women battling in the patriarchal society. *Jasoda* is the story of a rural woman battling for patriarchy. She lives in a fictional village called Kantagiri, the capital of the state of Paar. Sangram Singh, *Jasoda*’s husband, is employed in Paar’s royal palace. Sangram Singh is a greedy, rude, and selfish person who doesn’t care about his family but is aware of his rights as a man of the house and knows when to exercise them. He naturally takes advantage of the ladies, and his only goal is to gain the favor of the Prince of Paar. *Jasoda* and her family are among the remaining few to leave the drought-stricken town of Paar in search of a better life somewhere else. The story progresses with *Jasoda* having children, bearing all the hardships to raise them, and switching between Mumbai and Paar to ensure their survival.

“*Jasoda* tightened her anal muscles. She squeezed her thighs together hard till her face swelled and the veins in her temples bulged out. She did not let go till the girl was still” (p. 3).

The birth rate of female children was inversely proportional to the birth rate of male children. When girl child born in society, they are not welcomed even by their mothers. When *Jasoda* gives birth to a girl child, she strangles the child to death without any misery for the dead child. This shows that gender rules are framed by the society in order to maintain the patriarchal structure. In many Indian communities, female infanticide was widespread. The sad part is that even women in the patriarchal society promote hegemonic masculinism which has been inherited to their son right from childhood. Society plays a major role in developing patriarchy. The novel captures the dark side of globalized Indian village which is subjugated by caste and patriarchy. Kiran Nagarkar incorporated the gender inequalities of being a woman in his character *Jasoda*. He offers profound insights into the arena of the exploited domination. His male characters are created with flaws and they are the one who create problems to the women protagonist.

The antagonist of this novel is Sangram Singh, husband of *Jasoda*. Sangram Singh’s character set an example of toxic meninism. When *Jasoda* fails to complete the domestic chores, she was beaten and battered by her husband daily.

After becoming the lord of Alakanda Palace, Sangram Singh marries Madhurima Devi to compensate his position and status. He desperately wants a male heir to inherit his name and Wealth. When the princess gives birth to a girl child, he kills the child. He refuses to accompany *Jasoda* and his family when they migrated to Mumbai due to drought. Sangram Singh is an epitome of dominance and power.

King Parbat Singh is the Prince of Kantagiri. Prince and Princess Sunanda Devi were happy in their marriage life. But it was wearing off in the couple of years. When princess was unable to perform her prime duty as a woman even though she fasted and visited temples but it all became futile. Kiran Nagarkar visualized the patriarchal superiority through the character Sangram Singh and Parbat Singh. Both the characters are driven by a deep desire for power and dominance. The prince murders his brother to become a prince of Alakanda palace. Similarly, when Parbat Singh is paralyzed, Sangram Singh attempted to murder the prince. Due to starvation and a terrible drought, all the other servants were forced to leave the area, leaving the prince alone and dependent on Sangram Singh. By coercing and blackmailing

the prince, Sangram Singh takes advantage of the situation to fake and transfer the king's possessions into his name. Due to poor health and his desire to see Raat Rani, Prince Parbat Singh later passes away. When it comes to the king's possessions and the queen's beauty, Sangram Singh has a wicked mentality. The beauty of the queen attracts him. As she learns that the prince was the target of Sangram Singh, he kidnaps her and imprisons her underground. He "locked her up in one of the rooms in the cellar. The rooms had no window and no light and it was always locked" (pp. 194-196). He manipulates her and demands payment in the form of her body and treats her like an object. So, she hangs herself from the ceiling fan after being subjected to a number of tortures and struggles.

"Please don't do this to me. I can't take it anymore ... I'll do anything you want... But I can't live another day without the sun and fresh air and the sky and the moon" (pp. 196-198).

In addition to Sangram Singh, the Prince also humiliates Raat Rani. She signs a secret contract at the prince's pleading, and when the prince intervenes in her affairs, she always refuses. She fights against Parbat Singh stating "You begged and pleaded, cajoled and coaxed me from your hospital bed to give up my cushy life with a leading industrialist to come to this godforsaken hellhole." This incident provides a detailed picture of how the characters, Sangram Singh and Parbat Singh in the novel create and maintain patriarchal system and how this impacts the other female characters.

It is naturalized and antagonistic male voices are over heard in women centric novel. Patriarchal meninism has binary characteristics in which society plays major role in developing power and dominance. It is also clear at the ways in which Sangram Singh uses power and privilege to his own advantage. "The dominant people will do every tactic including violence and abuse to make their labors work effectively and efficiently" mentioned in the book *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (Scott, 1990). To prove the above-mentioned statement, Sangram Singh uses his patriarchal power over Jasoda, Prince Parbat Singh, Savitri, Raat Rani and finally pushes his dominance over his daughter Janhavi.

#### IV. DELINEATING MARGINALIZED MALE CHARACTERS

"Gender studies is an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to analyzing gender identity and gendered representation". Meninism is not widely known because gender studies emerged after the second wave of feminism and mostly addressed women's issues. Meninism focuses on the difficulties men face in this contemporary world. It is plural and diverse form of gender identity in which men's issues are negotiated in many contexts. "Hegemonic masculinity" is a concept popularized by Raewyn Connell, as an ideal form of masculinity which remains unattainable for most men. Men are the victims of their patriarchal stereotype and they are marginalized as well. Literature promotes patriarchal heroism and the lack of importance towards men's issue contradicts social world. In those days women were worshipped as deities but in recent days crime against women was increasing day by day. In Patriarchal society men hold the power in the family. For many centuries women were deliberately denied the opportunities of growth in the name of religion and traditional customs. They restricted women's freedom of expression and freedom of movement. An Indian woman right from their birth is expected to obey men's rule and serve them without question. There is violence in our society because people are taught to value dominance and power regardless of self-identity and humanity. Society indirectly encourages men to behave rude by expecting them to adhere strictly to gender traits. The character study on meninism will help men and women to understand gender performances and problems of gender norms.

Kiran Nagarkar tries to delineate the hegemonic part of male identity, but literature fails to notice the mature masculine character in every women-centric novel. In women-centric novel, one can often find a dominant male character who ill-treats his wife and support polygamy. There are other types of prejudice that result in similar oppression. The character Dulare suffered from caste discrimination as well as from patriarchal stereotype. Dulare is an untouchable, who borrowed Sangram Singh's goat, Lakhan. When Dulare borrows an ox from Sangram Singh to plough his land, things get difficult for him. Sadly, a tragic outcome results from the old, frail bull lying dead on the ground. Dulare feeds his neighborhood and distributes the meat with them owing to his poverty. Sangram Singh, to his regret, learned about this and plans to assassinate Dulare. Dulare hides in a well in order to run for his life. Sangram Singh hires a guard beside the well since he knows where Dulare is hiding. Sangram Singh had a physical relationship with Dulare's wife Savitri. On the other hand, he had no interest in the relationship with the woman of a lower caste. Even though Dulare is aware of their physical relationship, his inferiority complex keeps him in the dark chambers of uncharted fears.

"How come we are untouchables and you are not? How come it's the rainy season and there's not been a drop? How come, how come? Because nobody expects God to be just or reasonable" (p. 41).

Women-centric plays aim to understand the social situation of women in the cultural sphere by putting this comparable combination of women, violence, and patriarchy on stage. The theory of Feminism should not exclusively apply for the factor which focusses mainly on the sufferings of women rather should concentrate on the marginalization based on sexuality, caste and class. Fiction, especially women centric novels, have a tendency to portray men by characterizing them uniformly as patriarchy's representatives, without acknowledging that meninism as a gender in India also needs to shed the rigid, iron-cast image that hegemonic patriarchal practices have created for masculinity in India over the years. Thus, the matter remains unresolved because men themselves fit into the category of gender stereotypes.



At the end, Dulare's wife Savitri killed him in order to save her life. Dulare's character is an epitome and example of untouchable men in the society which clearly depicts those men are also the victims of the patriarchal stereotypes. Society not only makes women inferior but also some men from inescapable discrimination. He is a character that embodies many of the ideals of meninism. He is a man who is struggling to break free of the traditional gender roles that have been imposed on him by society. The full story of Dulare's life emphasizes the existence of a poor, defenseless farmer who was forced to death.

The novel revolves around the two male characters, Sangram Singh and Himmat respectively. The beginning of the novel takes place in Kantagiri where domestic violence and marital rape were common to the women in the rural village. The protagonist Jasoda is an everyday heroine and a dutiful wife. Sangram Singh is very abusive and cunning man who never takes responsibility of his family. He promotes female infanticide. Sangram Singh is an epitome of immature masculinity. Himmat is an epitome of mature meninism. Himmat, the eldest son of Jasoda was studious and acts out domineering towards women. He watched the cycle of birth and death of a girl child, which created an impact within him. He is the only person who protects his sister from female infanticide and he insists on educating Janhavi so she was sent to school. So Himmat is matured enough to not promote female infanticide and he hates domestic violence.

"Himmat was holding Janhavi in one arm and a large knife from his mother's collection in the other when Jasoda and the man came in again" (p. 205).

When Jasoda gives birth to a girl child, she tries to kill her but it was forbidden by Himmat because he watched the birth and death of a girl child so he never promotes female infanticide. In the beginning of the novel, patriarchy is the predominant social concept which supported men and suppressed women. Gender roles are constructed to protect men so Sangram Singh wanted a male heir. In Mumbai, he got two patrons Cawas Batliwala and Suyog Gadgil. Cawas Batliwala is a Lawyer. With their help he resumes his school and started working in the office for part time. After their return to Kantagiri, Himmat joined English medium school in Sharana. He assures that Janhavi's education is important and taught arithmetic, algebra, geometry and English.

"Himmat played chess with Janhavi and taught her that arithmetic was nothing but games and riddles. She was fluent in English since it was the only language in which her eldest brother conversed with her" (p. 210).

"Please don't ask me to elaborate on the subject but Janhavi's education will suffer or perhaps even be halted if I am not here" (p. 223).

Later, Himmat becomes a renowned young Mathematician in Stanford University. In this novel, Himmat's character is marginalized and unrecognized. Character like Himmat and Dulare has had a profound impact in the society of male oppression. It illustrates how meninism can be used in a right way to challenge oppressive gender roles and expectations. These two characters are capable of making their own choices and does not fall into the hegemonic character despite, the appearance of toxic meninism fashioned the minds of the society. Himmat, Dulare, Cawas Batliwala and Suyog Gadgil are the mature male characters mostly focused in this paper. These male characters are not affected by the values that the patriarchal culture has created. Despite all the unexpected tragedies, these men with strong personalities continue to be a nice people. It proves, with these characters, the patriarchal ideals and standards seem unworthy.

## V. CONCLUSION

The portrayal of women in literature is not biased nowadays. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, women were given equal opportunity in many fields which cannot be denied. Fiction is actively decentering male characters whereas gender studies excluded and ignored men's issue. The beginning of the story *Jasoda* and its ending is separated by two-decade-long gap so the changes in human lifestyle, gender equality, women empowerment and evolution of Indian society were clearly brought out in the novel. It clearly reiterates that the ideology of gender stereotypes created catalytic impact on contemporary men so the patriarchal hegemony is replaced by mature meninism. Gendered shelves are shaped right from their birth. Since childhood, everyone is imposed with lot of gender stereotypes. In order to project patriarchy, men are not allowed to cry, because it questions his masculinity. Men and women in the society are forced to carry the burden of oppression. Gender inequality is one among them and every gender has to face discrimination in different ways. Because of the nonsensical stereotypes, both men and women are facing oppression. Meninism is often represented as an unsympathetic identity in contrast, contemporary men are victims of their own patriarchal stereotype. It is impossible to understand meninism within the framework of literary text, because they are often one sided. It is an early modern ideology which cannot be found in just literary texts. Literature never made serious discussion on the topic of male identity and their sufferings in the contemporary society. Mostly women-centric novels focus on the negative traits of male character and female characters are victimized. So, women-centric novels should come up with more mature and supportive male characters. Society should understand that men also suffer both psychologically and sociologically from gender norms. Though men try to understand the reality of the modern consumer world, the society threatens them with exclusion for failing to follow the gender norms.

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# Creating the Imagined in al-Qartajanni's *Minhajul Bulagha' wa Sirajul 'Udaba'*: Response to Schoeler

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**Abstract**—This research aims at refuting Schoeler's claim that Hazim al-Qartajanni's critical ideas were merely a repetition of Avicenna's perspective on poetry. We attempt to shed light on al-Qartajanni contribution to the concept of poetry, which was not mentioned in a frank manner by Aristotle or his interpreters; al-Farabi, Avicenna, and Averroes. This study aims at providing adequate evidence that al-Qartajanni's concept of imagery has traversed the critical perspectives of Aristotle and his interpreters about the reality of imagery and its role in the creation of poetry.

**Index Terms**—Theory of Poetry, criticism, poetry, imagery Hazim al-Qartajanni, Aristotle

## I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, researchers in literary theory reflect on what has been accomplished by philosophers and critics since Plato. It is a reflection that invites scholars and researchers in Arabic heritage and literature to question what Arab philosophers and critics have accomplished in this regard. Therefore, the scientific research must be aware of many areas before making a general ruling which leads to hasty generalized fallacy.

We cite here Abu Amr bin Alala'a who said: "What ended up to you about what the Arabs said is only the minimum; but if there were plenty of what they produced in literature and criticism to reach us, we would have more science and poetry" (al-Jumahi, 2019, p. 12). In this context, we say "what ended up to us today from the Arabic literature and its critical and philosophical achievements are the least, and if it came abundantly we would have much knowledge". As a general fact, the Arabic books, which are indicative of their authors' efforts in theorizing literature and poetry in particular, are too many, and we regret to say that the Arabic library has only preserved many of its titles in the bibliography books (Abbas, 1971, p. 28).

The purpose of this research is to shed light on the features of the theory of literature in Arabic heritage; it charts a way to reveal all these features, based on investigating the research in the concept to its end, rather than making inferences that are not delivered by induction rules and, thus, refuting the claim of Gregor Schoeler (2008) that Hazim al-Qartajanni's theoretical production was merely a repetition of the perspectives of Aristotle and his interpreters on poetry; Avicenna in particular (p. 27).

As a matter of fact, al-Qartajanni's book *Minhajul Bulagha' wa Sirajul 'Udaba'* [Method of Rhetoricians and Lamp of Literarians] is considered one of the most mature and most complete attempts of Arab critics and philosophers in the field of theorizing about Arabic poetry. This is apparent in the big number of books and researches that reference al-Qartajanni's ideas and views on criticism and literature (al-Khatib, 1986, pp. k-n).

This study takes the concept of creating the imagined for al-Qartajanni as a base; it considers creating the imagined as one of the most important concepts in the theory of Arabic literature. We intend to clarify this concept as a pre-condition to clarify the concept of poetry according to al-Qartajanni. Furthermore, the focus on linking this concept with the definition of poetry according to al-Qartajanni is what grants the research its importance and novelty in dealing with this concept, establishing any statement related to the critical and literary theoretical perspectives concerning al-Qartajanni's concept of poetry.

Contrary to Schoeler's (2008) belief that al-Qartajanni considered Avicenna as his main source for forming his literary theory and poetic theory (p. 91), a careful study of al-Qartajanni's *Minhajul Bulagha' wa Sirajul 'Udaba'* reveals that this claim is inaccurate. Apparently, al-Qartajanni benefited from and agreed with the literary theories of his predecessors such as; Al-Jahiz, Abu Al-Qasim Al-Amidi, Ibn Rasheeq Al-Qayrawani, and Ibn Sinan Al-Khafaji (al-Qartajanni, 1966, p. 100). Of course, one cannot ignore the influence of Qudama Bin Jaafar on al-Qartajanni.

al-Qarajanni's agreement with his predecessors does not undermine his contribution to literary and poetic theory, simply, because this is the nature of scientific research; researchers and scholars benefit from each other's ideas and they develop some of them. al-Qartajanni was not a mere imitator of the aforementioned theorists. In fact, he possessed an original view in dealing with issues in Arabic poetry and its concept as he rejected his predecessors' classification of the functions of Arabic poetry. al-Qartajanni refuted and amended the ideas of al-Farabi whose poetic theory was dominantly influenced by Plato and Aristotle. al-Farabi (1953), for example, classified the functions of poetry into seven forms; satire, eulogy, boast, riddle, spinning, comedy, and description (p. 152). And also, al-Qartajanni amended the ideas of some of his predecessors who believed that the theory of Arabic poetry is detached from the influence of Greek and Roman philosophers. To mention one example, he rejected Ibn Rasheeq Al-Qayrawani's (1972) classification of the functions of Arabic poetry into nine forms; kinship, praise, pride, lamentation, admonition, threat, warning, satire, and apology (p. 161).

al-Qaratajanni, on the other hand, provided eight functions of poetry; congratulation, sympathy, regret, condolence, bereavement, praise, satire, and lamentation (1966, p. 337). He also mentioned "four main methods of poetry; congratulation and what accompanies it, condolence and what accompanies it, praise and what accompanies it, and satire and what accompanies it" (1966, p. 341). Prior to al-Qartajanni, none of the classical Arab critics and rhetoricians has ever considered congratulations as a function of poetry.

As for Avicenna, whom Schoeler considered the base on which al-Qartajanni formed his critical ideas, continued to interpret the types of Arabic and Greek poetry by comparing these forms. He reached an erroneous conclusion that the function of praise and satire in Arabic poetry are imitations of Greek tragedy and comedy (2008, p. 35). This erroneous assumption is what al-Qartajanni attempted to refute in his poetic theory. In the following section, this study attempts to discuss al-Qartajanni's perception of the imagined in Arabic poetry.

## II. CREATING THE IMAGINED ACCORDING TO AL-QARTAJANNI

The first thing that we discuss here is the concept of creating the imagined according to al-Qartajanni. He says: "creating the imagined is to represent for the person who hears the words of the poet or its sense, style and system, thus creating in his mind an image or images that will provoke his reaction to that particular imagine, or leading him to imagine something else via the image immediately siding with extroversion or to constriction" (1966, p. 89).

It is no secret that al-Qartajanni was influenced by the Arabic interpretations of Aristotle (Asfour, 1983, p. 57). We can see in his book *Minhajul Bulagha' wa Sirajul 'Udaba* that he borrowed from al-Farabi and the interpretation of Avicenna, and that he was influenced by the commentaries of Averroes (Maslouh, 1980, p. 52; Badawi, 1962, p. 87). However, the contemplator of al-Qartajanni's intension realizes that it goes beyond the Aristotelian view of the reality of imagery and its role in the creation of poetry, and it traverses decidedly the philosophical interpretations of that view; al-Qartajanni uses the accusative infinitive "to represent" to prove that creating the imagined is an occurrence, then it is implied or estimated to occur, but we do not know the physiognomy of its appearance, which is the image that is observed in the imagery of the Hearer.

Perhaps this is confirming according to al-Qartajanni that "the image does not refer to the mere shape or drafting only, and no longer hovers over the concept of concrete presentation, but becomes determined in a specific psychological significance that could be a synonym of the mental restoration of a concrete perceived missing the field of direct perception" (Asfour, 1983, pp. 298-299).

We must pause here to indicate the status of creating the imagined and its importance concerning al-Qartajanni's concept of poetry, and then it must be noted that the vision, which eliminates the stature of imagery in poetry, referring to al-Qartajanni's concept of poetry, remains a limited vision unless it accommodates all the attentions included in al-Qartajanni's book, otherwise we would not understand his conception and interpretation of poetry.

Poetry, according to al-Qartajanni (1966), is "rhymed metrical words in order to endear something to oneself or make him hateful to it, so as to long for it or repel it, including the goodness of both creating the imagined and simulating" (p. 71).

Perhaps a quick glance at this definition does not find a preference for it over the definitions of al-Qartajanni's predecessors who determined what exactly poetry is. al-Qartajanni, who lived in a rigor society would not stun the common sense of the interpretative community with a new concept shaking the old one which had been rooted in the collective awareness.

Despite that, al-Qartajanni made a great stride in poetry when he correlated the object of poetry with goodness of both creating the imagined and simulation; he said: "to endear something to oneself, or make him hateful to it, so as to long for it or repel, including the goodness of both creating the imagined and simulating" (1966, p. 71). Both rhyme and meter are in one part which is the nominal constituent of poetry, whereas poetry has an essential constituent which is imagery. In *Theory of Literature*, Wellek and Warren (1985) say: "Like meter, imagery is one component structure of a poem" (p. 220). al-Qartajanni's vision of poetry has traversed his era when making inequality between meter and imagery concerning the conception of poetry; he said about the poetry which is bad in simulating, obviously lying, and free from bizarreness: "it has no capacity to be called poetry, though it is metric and rhymed, because the essence of poetry is non – existent" (1966, p. 72). If the meter and rhyme are present and the essence of poetry is not achieved then

what will achieve it? It is creating the imagined; the component of poetry that al-Qartajanni has mentioned in his definition.

We find another citation confirming this understanding; wherein al-Qartajanni (1966) said: "poetry is not acknowledged owing to the truth or falsity; but its imaginary words" (p. 63). It is remarkable that al-Qartajanni combines between simulation and imagery in his definition of poetry "including the goodness of both creating the imagined and simulating (1966, p. 71).

Aristotle states that the poet had to be a simulator "before being a meters-maker, he is a poet because of the simulation that he makes" (Ayyad, 1967, p. 66). Accordingly, we find the claim that the work of al-Qartajanni has just been adding a word to another, and then replacing 'creating the imagined' with the wording of Aristotle 'simulation'. This unacceptable claim could be refuted depending on negating the equality. The claim is groundless because creating the imagined and simulation are completely different; creating the imagined is general while simulation is included in it; simulation is a method of creating the imagined (al-Khatib, 1986, p. 119).

Unless al-Qartajanni was an expert on the definitions of Islamic jurisprudence and branches of language, it would be possible to get such a pitfall of repetition in his formulation (Suyuti, 1964, pp. 491-492). We think that the mention of simulating came after imagery by way of mentioning the particular word after the general one; and that was rife among the scholars on his time.

al-Qartajanni, the Arabic linguist, critic, and poet recognized that Arabic poetry has ways which differ from the Greek verse, and fully comprehended that simulation is merely a kind of imagery and metaphor (1966, pp. 94-95).

But there is a wide range of imagery methods that does not include simulation, perhaps the widest areas in the Arab poetry is euphemism. Jakobson (1988) said: "It is not by chance at all that the euphemistic structures are less fortunate in studies compared to the domain of metaphor" (p. 57), and we find that Arabic critics have made many analyses and researches for these euphemistic structures. al-Qartajanni comprised a deep Arabic poetic culture, and was able to correlate it with the heritage of Aristotle via the Arabic interpretations.

It was clear that we totally disagree with those who say that the exact critical understanding of al-Qartajanni is confined to the philosophers' books (Maslouh, 1980, p. 50). Indeed, al-Qartajanni realized that Greek poetry has "limited objects by specific meters" (1966, p. 29). He disagrees with Avicenna and Averroes who supported the notion that the poetic meter expresses a particular object (Avicenna, 1966, p. 33; Averroes, 1971, p. 83). He believes that every meter demonstrates one differential object, because that characteristic of Greek poetry is absent from Arabic verse.

al-Qartajanni is superior to Aristotle's elucidators, by discussing the theory of poetry with the insight of the critic, poet, and then the mind of philosophers. Creating the imagined in poetry was the most important feature that al-Qartajanni was able to traverse Aristotle and the three aforementioned interpretations. And also, he divided cognition into two parts; the first was called sensory perception, and the second is mental perception.

Poetry is related to the former and has no relation with latter. It is an exquisite token said by Croce (2009) on his definition of art, when he differentiates "between the intuitive or sensory knowledge, and the conceptual or mental knowledge" (p. 37). Poetry is imagery that conjures up the image, composes and invents it. al-Qartajanni (1966) says: "The intentions of poetry revolve around the meanings that relate to sensory perception which are mentioned for itself, while these intentions do not turn around the meanings regarding the perception of mind" (p. 29).

Thus, al-Qartajanni's doctrine is consistent with the sense that any discourse "is not regarded as poetry in terms of truth, nor in terms of being false, but in terms of imaginative speech" (1966, p. 63). When poets address imagery it is no longer attached to righteousness or corruption; those are the judgments of mental logic, and the mind is unconscious during the imagery work.

Creating the imagined according to al-Qartajanni is a holistic occurrence in which the poem is depicted in the imagery "immediately" (1966, p. 89); with reference to the work of imagery in the subconscious throughout the poem, forming the imaginary unity. He says about the poet: "He should observe what deserves to be in the beginning or exordium of speech, and might note in this case the fountainhead of accessing and digression" (1966, pp. 109-110).

Since the imagery of poetry is one of the ways that leads to knowledge, and its way does not attach to the mind and logic, this vision does not give permission to knowledge to be tested by reason, and does not derive from it in the status of probability nor in the status of acknowledgment, and that is what al-Qartajanni (1966) realized by saying: "Creating the imagined is not contrary to certainty, as denied by suspicion" (p. 62).

So, what is this knowledge that contradicts certainty? It is not suspicion, because suspicion is the contrary to certainty. It is the imaginary poetic knowledge, which in this concept of al-Qartajanni, is a knowledge of a particular type; is not scientific as al-Qartajanni said, because the scientific meanings are "the antithesis of poetry" (1966, p. 30).

Accordingly, imagery unfolds in front of ambiguity to present itself as an aesthetic and palatable presentation as long as it falls in the space of this kind of imaginary poetic knowledge to make ambiguity in poetry intentional for itself. al-Qartajanni (1966) says about the meanings: "although most intentions and fountainheads of speech demand to articulate the meanings, we could go ahead without it inclining to ambiguity in many situation" (p. 172).

Thus, we can accept the inference that while Aristotle did not "mention a word denotes the imagery" (al-Qalamawi, 1973, p. 106), and he "found the first foundations of thinking about this faculty" (al-Qalamawi, 1973, p. 106). al-Qartajanni was the first one who talked about creating the imagined with that virtue which gives imagery its true value

as a component of the poetic essence. al-Qartajanni dealt with the term that was not circulated before and was creative in moving it into the literary criticism.

### III. THE DEFINITION OF IMAGERY BY AL-QARTAJANNI AND AVICENNA

A mere glance at the definition of imagery is not enough to comprehend its meaning, especially for the writing approach of al-Qartajanni's 'Minhajul Bulagha' wa Sirajul 'Udaba' that was consistent with the approach of the ancient Arabic critics in formulating definitions. Therefore, it is unfair to consider al-Qartajanni's definition of imagery as equal to Avicenna's definition just because of the similarities between some of the vocabulary used by both (Schoeler, 2008, p. 27). Avicenna said: "Creating the imagined is the speech that the psyche complies with, making the psyche constricted or extroverted" (Avicenna, 1966, p. 161; Schoeler, 2008, p. 27). But al-Qartajanni said that "creating the imagined is to represent for the person who hears the words of the poet, or its sense, style and system, thus playing in his imagery an image or images that he reacts to imagine, or imagine something else" (1966, p. 98).

So, how could we accept Schoeler's (2008) judgment when he said: "al-Qartajanni has quoted this term from al-Farabi and Avicenna literally" (p. 27).

Al-Qartajanni intended to clarify the confusion caused by Avicenna about 'simulation and wonder' and 'the imagined and strangeness' without revealing his attempt to amend the latter's understanding of Aristotle, nor has he explained to what extent he benefited from Aristotle's ideas in forming a special theory concerning Arabic Poetry.

The claims that al-Qartajanni was inspired by Avicenna's interpretations of Aristotle's *Poetics* are unacceptable and simplistic. Unlike Avicenna who adopted Aristotle's poetic ideas, al-Qartajanni's ideas were genuinely and strictly relevant to Arabic traditions in literature and rhetoric. Without doubt, Avicenna's understanding of Aristotle's concept of imitation is inaccurate. The reason of this misunderstanding is due to Avicenna's attempt to explain the form and function of Arabic poetry by adopting Aristotle's definition of tragedy and comedy. Mistakenly, Avicenna interpreted imitation as a visual concept and as a metaphor. Thus, Avicenna provided an inaccurate explanation of the concept of imitation in his summary of Aristotle's *Poetics* when he equated 'metaphor' to 'imitation' in poetry (Al-Farabi, 1953, p. 170). And he also equated the concept of 'strangeness' to the concept of 'wonder' (Al-Farabi, 1953, p. 193).

As for he was so precise in differentiating between the concepts of imitation and metaphor and between 'strangeness' and 'wonder' as he expressed his dissatisfaction with equating 'metaphor' to 'imitation' and 'strangeness' to the concept of 'wonder'. In his discussion of the imagined and wonder, al-Qartajanni (1966) says:

An imagined expression is rarely excluded from wonder; they often coexist. 'Wonder' in 'the imagined' occurs either in creating imitation and imaging it, or takes place in the imitated object and its relevance to the wonderful object. (p. 127)

Commenting on the above statement, Schoeler (2008) claims that "the only difference between what al-Qartajanni's idea and Avicenna's is al-Qartajanni's smooth linguistic expression and simple structure; which is barely considered a difference" (p. 105).

This, of course, is a judgment that we cannot concur with. al-Qartajanni's statement is clear example that he does not equate between imitation and metaphor as Avicenna does. As a matter of fact, al-Qartajanni (1966) contends that he did not equate imitation to metaphor as he says:

It is not the purpose of imitation to reach the maximum level of moving people's emotions; it only has the proper degree of excitement equal to creativity that is created by the form of expression and the readability of people's emotions to react to this excitement. (p. 121)

Furthermore, al-Qartajanni's idea surpassed the concept of 'wonder' as a form of linguistic expression to a different form of art, which is strangeness.

We, hereby, confirm Schoeler's realization that "al-Qartajanni diligently sought to create a criterion for the concept of 'strangeness' in Arabic poetry" (2008, p. 138); a method that was not Avicenna's least concern. Therefore, we need to bring the reader's attention that al-Qartajanni's main concern was to prove that it would be difficult to comprehend these poetic concepts without relating them to each other.

Apparently, speech is equivalent to the occurrence of images in the imagery. And from the perspective of pure syntactic analysis: as long as the accusative infinitive is not equal to the gerund, then we do we accept the equivalence between the noun and the gerund.

We think that making inferences that are not delivered by Induction rules led Schoeler to claim that al-Qartajanni was repeating the perspectives of Aristotle and his interpreters on poetry; Avicenna in particular (2008, p. 27).

### IV. CONCLUSION

This research has discussed al-Qartajanni's concept of creating the imagined and revealed the coherent vision of imagery in different axes that al-Qartajanni showed, indicating his cohesive ideas about the concept of imagery in the light of his concept of poetry.

The research has also presented adequate evidence that al-Qartajanni's concept of imagery has traversed the perspectives of both Aristotle and his interpreters about the reality of imagery and its role in the creation of poetry. al-



Qartajanni has dealt with the term 'imagery' that was not circulated before, except by philosophers and was creative in moving it into the literary criticism.

The research has accepted the inference that while Aristotle did not "mention a word denotes the imagery" (al-Qalamawi, 1973, p. 106), and he "found the first foundations of thinking about this faculty" (al-Qalamawi, 1973, p. 106), al-Qartajanni was the first one who talked about creating the imagined with that virtue, which gives the imagery its true value as a component of the poetic essence.

Moreover the research concluded that al-Qartajanni has fully comprehended that imitation is merely a kind of imagery and metaphor (1966, p. 95), and therefore we have refuted Schoeler's claim that al-Qartajanni was repeating Avicenna's perspective on poetry.

This study confirms that al-Qartajanni was exposed to Greek culture and was familiar with Aristotle's *Poetics*, and he also studied Arabic rhetoric and the poetic theories of his predecessors. This knowledge enabled him to form a mixture of genuine Arabic rhetorical and critical theory and Greek culture. With this interesting blend of knowledge, al-Qartajanni managed to form his unique theory of Arabic poetry; a theory with new methodology. It is true that he agreed with some of Avicenna's and other Arab theorist, but he was in not in any form an imitator of these philosophers. His uniqueness is shown in his rejection of his predecessor's classification of the functions and forms of Arabic poetry as he added the function of 'congratulation' for the first time in the history of Arabic literature. He also criticized the confusion that Avicenna created in his discussion of the concepts of 'metaphor,' 'imitation,' 'strangeness,' and 'wonder' and their relation to the concept of 'the imagined' in poetry.

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# Translating Noncanonical Ancillary Qur'anic Oppositions Into English: An Etiotypological Analysis

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**Abstract**—Translating the sacred in a so-called divine language has been shown to be so difficult and challenging a task for translators of the Bible or the Qur'an. The human reproduction of the divine product(ion) has biblically and qur'anically been found to raise (in)soluble challenges and (in)surmountable hurdles in bicultural and cross-cultural communication and transfer in translation. One great challenge or big obstacle thereof is the (un)transferability of noncanonical ancillary oppositions from SL (QA) to TL (E) which is sought to be explored and investigated by the current study from a linguistic-translational perspective. Based on corpus data across several languages, noncanonical ancillary opposition has been shown to co-occur in preponderant syntactic frames loaned from fellow categories, such as coordination, subordination, transition, and so forth, to perform cross-categorial discourse functions in canonical, semicanonical, and noncanonical configurations, and to entertain a propensity and penchant for special multi-principled and rule-governed sequences based on morphology, gender, agency, and so on. The specific objectives of this study are to compare and contrast SL and TL frequent frameworks and ordering sequences in the process and product of translation. It was found that a number of these frames and functions have gone untended and unrendered by the two Qur'an translators under scrutiny due to their incognizance of colligational forms and discursive functions as translation units of functional sentence perspective contributing to the semantic ends of intraversially sentential structures. It was also revealed that SL paradigmatic lexical choices were too semantically distinct and complex to lexicalize into TL.

**Index Terms**—noncanonical, ancillary opposition, frames, sequences, Qur'an

## I. INTRODUCTION

Religion and translation studies stick together because translation theories and practices have originated in the imperative context of translating religion (Judaic, Biblical, and Islamic) and as religion has historically been the strongest stimulus and highest impulse for translational enterprises (see DeJonge & Tietz, 2015). Problematics and polemics of translating religion from the so-called divine language into human languages have ever been the major preoccupations of scholars, e.g., linguists and translators, over the ages at both linguistic and nonlinguistic levels. The most prominent linguist and translation theorist and practitioner is indeed Eugene Nida who initiated work on religious translation with special reference to Bible translating. Nida (1947, p. ix) introduced his earliest practical handbook "Bible Translating" on translating the Bible with a "rule-of-thumb orientation", i.e., a methodical procedure based upon experiential and commonsensical principles that are roughly correct but not scientifically accurate. This might be the reason why Nida (1964) introduced his scientifically oriented book "Toward a Science of Translating" with special reference to the principles and procedures of Bible translating. Therein Nida presents his dyadic model of equivalence: one is *formal* and the other *dynamic*. Nida (1964, p. 159) calls formal equivalence, which is structural in nature, a "gloss translation". In this type of translation, the translator tries to literally and meaningfully restructure forms and contents of the source text. This scholarly endeavor has been paid more attention by Nida and Taber (1982) in their take on the grammatical analyses of SL structures and their formally correspondent transfers into TL. That "grammar has meaning" (Nida & Taber, 1982, p. 34) is an explicit reference to how meaning consists in surface and deep structures whose transposition into TL is occasionally inevitable.

On translating religious texts, the Qur'anic text is no exception, Jasper (1993) expounds that the entire process of translation requires an acknowledgment that French can never be English, so can English never be Arabic, especially the Qur'anic. (Qur'an) translators themselves are aware of their inability to interpret and transpose the prosaic-poetic subtleties and idiosyncrasies of the Qur'an. On religious translation and strictly Qur'an translation, Naudé (2010) ascribes the majestic and esthetic appeal of the Qur'an to its oral recitation and hence no translation thereof would be

able to reproduce its peculiar language and style. It is its inimitably miraculous composition which imposes restrictions on its translatability across languages. On limits to Qur'anic translatability, Abdul-Raof (2004) presents a variety of structural voids in translation of the Qur'an owing to its language-specific syntactic patterns and lexical orders. These grammar patterns and word sequences are semantically and stylistically oriented. Therefore, grammar and meaning, or form and function, stand together for communicative purposes in the Qur'an. Hassanein (2023a) stresses the interlinks between such dyads and recommends reuse of the grammar-translation method in the Qur'anic transposition, particularly when form and function are in tandem not in conflict. One typical case of forms performing functions is the noncanonical ancillary opposition whose syntactic frames are said to perform discourse functions in the Qur'an.

'Noncanonical ancillary opposition' is a discursive function created by Hassanein (2023b) but credited to Jones's (2002) 'ancillary antonymy'. Both terms, however, are lexicosyntactically and lexicosemantically so distinct that they should not be confused together. By 'ancillary antonymy' Jones (2002) denotes a pair of canonical opposites labeled as 'A-pair' and 'B-pair' wherein the members of the former pair, necessarily opposite ones, serves auxiliary roles in signaling conventional, sharpening less conventional, or triggering nonconventional contrast between those of the latter. For example, بارد 'cold' is a conventional opposite of حار/ساخن 'hot', بارد 'cold' a less conventional opposite of دافئ 'warm', and بارد 'cold' a nonconventional opposite of فاتر 'cool'. By 'noncanonical ancillary opposition' Hassanein (2023b) denotes a couple of trios: a canonically, less canonically, or noncanonically opposite A-pair signaling, honing, or generating contrasts in another canonically, less canonically, or noncanonically opposite B-pair. A litanic, formulaic collocation such as يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ (Q. 5:55) 'performing prayers and giving alms' is a prototypical instance of noncanonical ancillary opposition.

The main aim of the present study is to conduct a comparative translational analysis of noncanonical ancillary oppositions from Qur'anic Arabic into English to investigate whether the Qur'an translators have managed to transpose the translational units of noncanonical ancillary oppositional frames and sequences from the source language (Arabic) to the target one (English). Specific objectives include:

1. to compare the syntactic frames and discursual functions of noncanonical ancillary opposition in the SL against their counterparts in the TL; and
2. to compare the sequential orders of noncanonical ancillary opposition in the SL with their counterparts in the TL.

The two specific objectives above are set to be realized through the earnest quest for putting answers to two basic questions:

1. How have syntagmatic patterns and pertinent functions of noncanonical ancillary opposition in SL been restructured into TL?
2. How have syntagmatic sequences and paradigmatic choices of noncanonical ancillary opposition in SL been reproduced in TL?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Past linguistic literature on الطباق 'antonymy' and المقابلة 'opposition', always confusable concomitants, in Qur'anic Arabic (QA) is fairly sparse (e.g., Al-Jammās, 2002; Hassanein, 2013, 2020a, 2020b, 2023a, 2023b). Deplorably, previous translational research on both phenomena is rather scant. Only a handful of previous studies were conducted upon the bicultural and cross-cultural transfer of these two into English. Probably telepathically, الطباق 'antonymy' in its canonical configuration (i.e., conventional opposites like النهار/الليل 'day/night') was examined through the prism of translation. One study, a semantically oriented one, was undertaken by Al-Kharabsheh and Al-Jdayeh (2017) who examined two types of meaning duplicity at two linguistic levels: literally overt and metaphorically covert. Their generalizable and replicable conclusion is that the semantic duplicity of antonymy can be rendered with resort to literal-and-exegetical approaches. There is then an explicit emphasis by them on the literal and formal aspects of antonymy in the Qur'anic discourse. The other study, a lexicosemantically oriented one, was conducted by Hassanein (2017) on the transposition of lexical-semantic facets of conventional ('systemic', see Mettinger, 1994). Focus was laid on the translatability of source text grammar and meaning via canonically opposite lexical items into English in comparison with their target lexical choices. The main conclusion thereof consists in revealing a number of voids and losses in translating canonical Qur'anic opposition grammatically, lexically, semantically, and hermeneutically.

Translationally speaking, just one single study on ancillary antonymy was initiated by Hassanein and Moustafa (2024) who sought to explore the transferability of ancillary antonym frames and functions from Qur'anic Arabic into English. He conducted his analysis thereof by comparing and contrasting the syntactic patterns and discursive functions of the A-pair members serving an ancillary role in designating, elevating, or generating more significant oppositions between members of the B-pairs. He revealed that ancillary antonymy causes some problematic issues: mutation of its pattern grammars and discourse functions, and voids of semantic roles and relations borne by ancillary antonymous pairs between source and target texts. To generalize and replicate such findings regarding translatability of canonical ancillary antonym frames and functions, the need for the current study on noncanonical ancillary opposition arises. This study is intended to make the following contributions. First, it explores a general phenomenon known as 'noncanonical opposition' which includes pairs of unconventional opposites. Second, it examines anew the orders favored by paired opposites in terms of sequence rules amalgamated from previous studies. Last, it serves as a combinatory inquiry complementary to canonical ancillary antonymy by Hassanein and Moustafa (2024).

### III. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This skeletal section is devoted to provision of a methodological framework and commences with data collections, then synergic methods, and analytical procedures.

#### A. Data(set) Collection

The present study gathers its data(set) from the Qur'an, Muslims' first canonical source of Islamic thought, and two English translations thereof, one by Abdel Haleem (2004) and the other by Yüksel et al. (2015). It must be noticed that these are two of the linguistically and translationally understudied renderings of the Arabic Qur'an. The two translators have noticeably distinct sociocultural and theodoctrinal backgrounds. The former seems to have adopted a communicative, target-oriented approach to translation said to have rendered the Qur'an into a more comprehensible and fluent target language (see Hassanein, 2017, 2020a). This translation is claimed to have targeted both fluency and readability at the expense of accuracy and fidelity. The other, as its name suggests, is a reformed translation with many annotations and paratexts. Both translations bring into question an everlasting clash between naturalness and accuracy.

#### B. Synergic Model

The current study develops a synergy of two analytic(al) models of ancillary opposition frames, functions, and sequences. The typological model of ancillary opposition frames and functions draws mainly upon Jones's (2002) tripartite classification of ancillary antonymy: (a) if the B-pair members are innately not opposites, the A-pair members trigger opposition between them; (b) if they are innately less conventional opposites, the A-pair members sharpen their opposition; and (c) if they are innately conventional opposites, the A-pair members assert their opposition up the scale of antonymity. The model builds on Hassanein's (2020a) development of ten paradigms, as Table 1 shows.

TABLE 1  
TEN PARADIGMS OF ANCILLARY ANTONYMY (HASSANEIN, 2020A)

Ancillary paradigms	Canonical	Semicanonical	Noncanonical	Analogs   Duplicates
Canonical	+	+	+	+
Semicanonical	+	+	+	+
Noncanonical	+	+	+	+
Analogs   Duplicates	+	+	+	+

In Table 1 each of the horizontal categories co-occurs interchangeably with each of the vertical ones. Ancillary antonymy is said to be not restricted to a particular syntactic frame which it borrows from other discourse functions and categories (see Jones, 2002; Hassanein, 2020a), as Table 2 demonstrates.

TABLE 2<sup>1</sup>  
SYNTAGMS OF ANCILLARY ANTONYMY ACROSS OTHER DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS (HASSANEIN, 2020A)

S/P	C/C	C/S	C/N	C/AD	S/C	S/S	S/N	S/AD	N/C	N/S	N/N	N/AD
COO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
NEG	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
INT	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
SUB	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
COM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IDI	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
REP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2 illustrates that ancillary antonymy engages the ten paradigms in opposition across the first four as marked by the (+) sign. Paradigms I, II, III show canonical A-pairs, whose function is to signal, sharpen, or trigger oppositions between canonical, semicanonical, or noncanonical B-pairs, respectively. Paradigms IV, V, VI include less canonical A-pairs, the functions of which are to signal, sharpen, or trigger oppositions between (non)canonical or semicanonical B-pairs. Paradigms VII, VIII, IX comprise noncanonically opposite A-pairs to signal, sharpen, or generate oppositions between canonical, semicanonical, or noncanonical B-ones. Paradigm X interchanges analogs or duplicates in A-pairs and B-pairs. Combined with the typological model of paradigms and syntagms (Table 1 & Table 2) is the typological model of noncanonical ancillary oppositional sequences as shown in Table 3.

<sup>1</sup> Key. S = syntagm, P = paradigm, C = canonical, S = semicanonical, N = noncanonical, AD = analog & duplicate, COO = coordinated, NEG = negated, INT = interrogative, SUB = subordinated, COM = comparative, IDI = idiomatic, REP = replacive, CAS = case

TABLE 3  
PRINCIPLES OF NONCANONICAL ANCILLARY OPPOSITION SEQUENCES

Principle	Definition	Example
Morphology	Root opposites before derived ones	<i>correct/incorrect</i>
Positivity	(More) positive opposites before less (positive) or negative ones	<i>well/badly</i>
Magnitude	High-caliber opposites before low-caliber ones	<i>high/low</i>
Chronology	Precedent opposites before subsequent ones	<i>begin/end</i>
Gender	Masculine opposites before feminine ones	<i>him/her</i>
Phonology	Short opposites before long ones	<i>boom/recession</i>
Idiomatity	Noncompositional opposites before compositional ones	<i>war/peace</i>
Frequency	More frequent opposites before less frequent ones	<i>rich/poor</i>
Markedness	Unmarked opposites before marked ones	<i>true/false</i>
Iconicity	Culturally and historically dominant opposites before less dominant ones	<i>up/down</i>
Viewpoint	Closer opposites to before farther ones from speaker(s)	<i>big/small</i>
Neutrality	Neutralized opposites before biased ones	<i>long/short</i>
Context	Contextualized opposites before decontextualized ones	<i>ladies/gentlemen</i>
Hierarchical superiority	Opposites higher in a hierarchy before those lower therein	<i>employer/employee</i>
Spatial superiority	Opposites superior in space before those inferior therein	<i>right/left</i>
Perceptual accessibility	(More) accessible opposites before less (in)accessible ones	<i>friend/enemy</i>
Age	Old opposites before young ones	<i>old/young</i>
Agency	Agentive opposites before patientive ones	<i>lesser/lessee</i>
End-rhyme	More assonantal or consonantal opposites before less ones	<i>fire/mire</i>

### C. Analytical Approach

The current study seeks to conduct a qualitative data analysis based on a grounded theory approach (see Glaser & Strauss, 1999) in which focus in this methodological approach is laid on the development of a theory grounded in the data(set). The data collected for analysis through a grounded-theory approach are to be gathered until a saturation point (see Dawson, 2009) is reached, i.e., until no further representative examples and information are needed. The qualitative approach adopted here is viable enough to explore the tabulated paradigms and syntagms of noncanonical ancillary oppositions from (Qur'anic) Arabic into English by drawing both comparisons (similarities) and contrasts (dissimilarities) between SLT and TLT. The approach is aimed to investigate whether the grammar-translation method recommended by Hassanein (2023c) is viable for rendering orders and sequences of noncanonical ancillary opposition from the original language to the receptor language. The procedure of analysis is planned to start from a source text analysis of noncanonical ancillary opposition functions and sequences to that of their target text counterpart(s).

## IV. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

This section conducts a qualitative analysis of a representative convenience sample from the Qur'anic text (ST) by comparing and contrasting the functions and sequences of noncanonical ancillary opposition in ST with their translated counterparts in TT. To maintain space and word limits, we denote the comparison and contrast with STA (Source Text Analysis) and TTA (Target Text Analysis). The A-pair members are in underlines whereas the B-pair ones are in bold, as quoted from the Qur'an (chapter/verse numbers) and the two English translations in comparison.

### A. Noncanonical A-Pair vs. Noncanonical B-Pair in Coordination

A: (43:2- قرآن: ٢-٤٣) وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَتُوا الزَّكَاةَ.

E: Keep up the prayer, **pay the prescribed alms**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 8)

E: Observe the Contact prayer, and **contribute** towards **betterment**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 58)

STA. Verse (2:43) enshrines noncanonical ancillary oppositions between members of the A-pair and those of B-pair, *aqīmū/ātū* 'perform/give' and *al-salāh/al-zakāh* 'prayers/alms', respectively. The imperative verb *aqīmū* stands in noncanonical opposition to its counterpart *ātū* whereas the commanded *salāh* stands in noncanonical opposition to its counterpart *zakāh*. The ancillary A-pair serves to lay more contrastive focus on the noncanonically opposed B-pair items in a highly profiled collocational and recurrent manner. Prayer-performing gains superiority over almsgiving as the former is hierarchically superior to the latter from the divine viewpoint and vantage point and in prescription. The former is the cornerstone of Islamic faith and cannot by any means forsaken. Hence chronology and viewpoint are the rules of such a favored sequence of both pairs of opposition. Prayer occurs prior to alms because the former is given more precedence and prominence than the latter in the Islamic faith.

TTA. At first sight and search, consistency in the recurrence of the afore-mentioned pairs is a marked pattern in ST in contrast to an inconsistency in their co-occurrences in TTs, with variations in the target lexical equivalents chosen as 'keep up', 'perform', and 'observe' for *aqīmū*, 'pay', 'give', and 'contribute' for *ātū*, and 'alms' and 'betterment' for *zakāh*. The collocational restrictions which are imposed upon the consistently used source items have been violated with inconsistently and markedly used collocations. It is indeed usual for 'perform' and 'say' to collocate with 'prayers' and for 'give' to collocate with 'alms'. The lexical choices 'keep up' and 'observe' and 'betterment' result in marked

collocations quite awkward in TL. The favorite sequence of the source opposites has been observed by both translators and both chronology and viewpoint have been maintained in TT. Likewise, coordination has been observed by Yüksel et al. who are source-text oriented but not by Abdel Haleem who is target-text oriented.

#### B. Duplicate A-Pair vs. Analogous B-Pair in Correlation

A: فَلَنْ نَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا وَلَنْ نَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَحْوِيلًا. (قرآن: 43-35)

E: You will never find any **change** in God's practice; you will never find any **deviation** there. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 280)

E: You will not find any **change** in God's *sunna*. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 372)

STA. Verse (35:43) shows a noncanonical ancillary opposition between duplicate opposites of an A-pair, *tajid/tajid* 'find/find', and a noncanonical pair of plesionymous opposites, *tabdīl/tahwīl* 'change/diversion'. The function of the A-pair is to sharpen the noncanonical contrast between the B-pair items. It is exegetically broached that God's normal practice of punishing bygone nations for their faithlessness would neither change nor divert in respect of the current nation, the Qurayshites (Alzamakhsharī, 1998, p. 163). The ancillary opposition borrows its correlative frame *lan-walan* 'neither-nor' from the coordinated category to negate the two B-pair members. The speaker viewpoint and vantage point prioritizes *tabdīl* 'change' over *tahwīl* 'diversion' since the nation destined by the Divine incurred His wrath and hence His irrevocable and indivertible punishment.

TTA. By comparing both English translations, one would evidently notice a partial negligence of the syntactic frame and its syndeton ('neither XX nor YY') by Abdel Haleem who rendered it asyndetically (not XX; not YY) and total negligence of the entire syntactic frame and discourse function of ancillarity by Yüksel et al. We would soundly claim that both the frame and function are source grammatical and discursive units that should have been rendered as such by the two translators in focus. The recommendation of reviving and reusing the grammar-translation method at this juncture by Hassanein (2023c) is absolutely viable without any prejudice to the ST fidelity and TT legibility. Abdel Haleem caused injury in translation units marked by easily transferable grammatical patterns whereas Yüksel et al. added insult to injury by way of implication: deframing the pattern grammar, defunctioning the discourse category, considering the pair items as being utterly not nearly synonymous, and by flouting the sequence principle of viewpoint.

#### C. Canonical A-Pair vs. Noncanonical B-Pair in Negation

A: وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا. (قرآن: 102-2)

E: Not that **Solomon** himself was a disbeliever; it was **the evil ones** who were disbelievers. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 12)

E: **Solomon** did not **reject**, but it was **the devils** that rejected. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 61)

STA. Verse (2:102) features canonical and noncanonical facets of opposition between members of the A-pair and B-pair, *kafar/kafarū* 'disbelieve/disbelieve' and *Sulaymān/al-shayātīn* 'Solomon/devils'. The noncanonical ancillary opposition herein accommodates a highly frequent syntactic frame, 'not X but Y', from negated opposition in which the X-member is categorically negated in favor of the Y-counterpart. The A-paired lexical choices have been duplicated in opposition by fronting the first duplicate with the negative marker *mā* 'not/never'. Two central stylistic features mark the verse under scrutiny. One is lexicogrammatical parallelism in which the opposed members in both pairs are phrasally and sententially parallel in structure and are lexically and semantically parallel in form and function (two verbs and two nouns in a negated frame). The other is the linguistic co(n)text, preceding and following items, as a sequential rule for foregrounding Solomon and backgrounding the Devils owing to acquitting the former of unbelief and charging the latter with disbelief. The 'not X but Y' framework necessitates the hysteron proteron and anastrophe of the structure at hand, which would not read as such if it were an 'X but not Y' framework.

TTA. There is a clear infringement on the syntactic framework of ST due to Abdel Haleem's rendering that has kept the negative marker *mā* 'not' but has lost the functionally concessive and contrastive marker *lākin* 'but'. The source marker *lākin* serves several different functions whose negligence in cross-cultural transfer is a translation loss in dire need of a compensation strategy (Hussein, 2008; Alhuqbani, 2013; Alsager et al., 2020). Both *lākin* and *but* are too concessive, contrastive, and corrective to go untranslated into TT. The source frame in focus has roughly been retained by Yüksel et al. but at the expense of lexical and structural parallelisms because of nominalization and relativization. An alternative translation would be "It was not Solomon who disbelieved but it was the devils (~~who disbelieved~~)"; "Solomon never disbelieved but the Devils disbelieved". Culling from Alzamakhsharī (1998, p. 305), we tend to argue against Abdel Haleem's referential expression 'the evil ones' as a target equivalent of *al-shayātīn*. The devils, a perfect equivalent indeed, is more referentially expressive and inclusive of Satan, *Iblīs* the archangel and archfiend, and the evil jinn who work black magic on humans. However, the ordering principle of the linguistic context has been retained and maintained by both translators, who kept the sequential opposition intact.

#### D. Canonical A-Pair vs. Noncanonical B-Pair in Interrogation

A: أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَى تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَمْ مَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ. (قرآن: 109-9)

E: Which is better, the person who founds his building on **consciousness of God and desire for His good pleasure**, or the person who founds his building on **the brink of a crumbling precipice**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 12)

E: Is one who lays his foundation on **obtaining awareness from God and His acceptance** better, or one who lays his foundation on **the edge of a cliff which is about to crumble**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 211)

STA. Verse (9:109) builds a noncanonical opposition between a duplicate pair *assass bunyānah/assass bunyānah* ‘lay a foundation for one’s building/ lay a foundation for one’s building’ and between a noncanonical pair of opposites (one abstract; the other concrete) *taqwā/shafā jurf hār* ‘piety/brink of a crumbling precipice’. The abstract is compared and measured against the concrete with a rhetorical and tropological conceptual metaphor used to instantiate an abstract target domain by mapping it onto a concrete source domain (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), as in FAITH IS BUILDING, PIETY IS STRUCTURE, PIETY IS SOLID, SATISFACTION IS STRUCTURE, SATISFACTION IS SOLID, and hence FAITH IS SOLID. Figure 1 provides a graphical representation hereof.

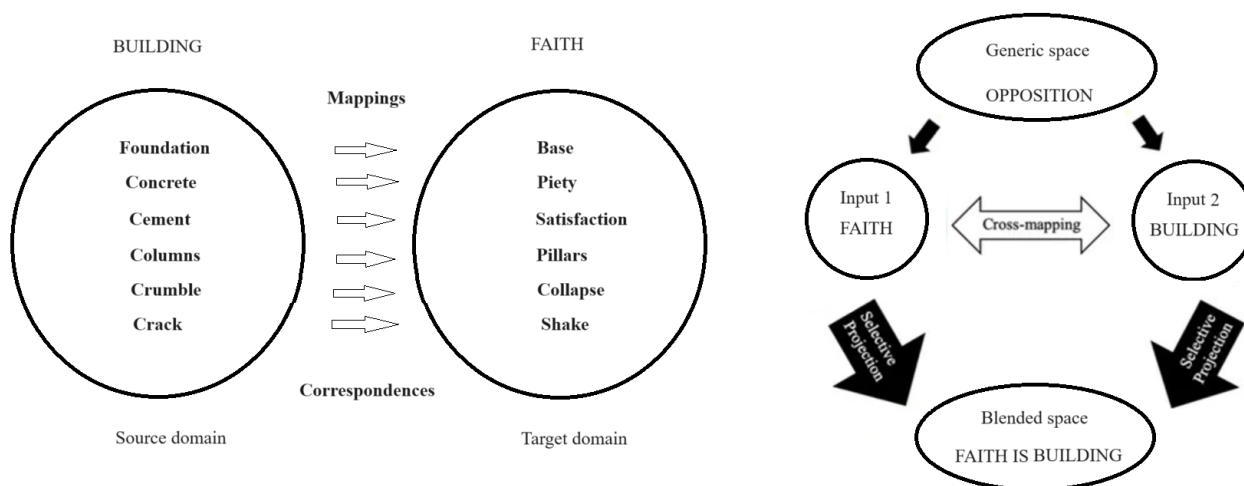


Figure 1. Conceptual Metaphor and Blending of Verse (9:109)

As illustrated in Figure 1 and explicated in Verse (9:109), the founding of faith on a solid base of piety and divine satisfaction is far better than the founding of a building on the brink of a collapsing cliff verging and tending to crumble and fall with its founder into hellfire. Using an interrogatively comparative frame (‘Which of the two is the better: XX or YY?’ or Is XX better or YY? in a need-no-answer rhetorical question, the noncanonical ancillary opposition bases its substance upon a comparative interrogation premising and concluding that whoever base their belief and structure their religion on right are matchlessly better than whoever base them on wrong—a conceptual metaphor and blending in which solid piety is instantiatively opposed to a collapsing brink. The instantiation is that the wrongdoers build their faith on the edge of a cracking and collapsing cliff verging to crumble into water (Alzamakhsharī, 1998, pp. 94-95). Positivity is the sequential principle that governs the order that the (more) positive item tends to precede (less) positive or negative counterpart.

TTA. The source frame ‘X more adj. or Y?’ has formally been mutated by Abdel Haleem whose target-oriented approach to translation prioritizes TT legibility over ST fidelity, unlike Yüksel et al. whose source-oriented approach prefers the latter to the former. The source frame has been rendered as ‘Which is better: X or Y?’ by Abdel Haleem and as ‘Is X better or Y?’ by Yüksel et al. What is common between the two target frames is their transference of the noncanonical ancillary opposition in the comparative frame borrowed from the interrogative category of opposition. Both translators are at great variance in their lexical choices which seem to be at odds with each other: consciousness vs. awareness for *taqwā* which has an indexical relationship with firm faith, pleasure vs. acceptance for *riḍwān*, brink vs. edge for *shafā*, and precipice vs. cliff for *jurf*. We consider ‘piety’, being biblical and generic, a dynamic equivalent for the generic and qur’anic *taqwā*, ‘satisfaction’ for *riḍwān*, brink or verge for *shafā*, and ‘cliff’ for *jurf*. The two translators somehow managed to render the structural-ontological metaphor in ST by representing an abstract concept in terms of a concrete one. Abdel Haleem maintained the structural and ontological aspects of the conceptual metaphor, contrary to Yüksel et al. who hit the structural but missed the ontological by including the structure but excluding the building. Both translators transposed the order rule of positivity in their renderings wherein the positive term precedes the negative one: a piety-based building prior to a cliff-based building.

#### E. Canonical A-Pair vs. Duplicate B-Pair in Subordination

A: (66-9: قرآن: ٩-٦٦) **إِنْ نَعَفَ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَائِفَةً**

E: We may forgive **some** of you, but We will punish **others**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 122)

E: Even if We pardon one **group** from you, We will punish another **group**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 208)

STA. Verse (9:66) comprises a noncanonical ancillary opposition whose syntactic framework is borrowed from the subordinated category, ‘if X then Y’, whose hypotactic structure conditionally appends an apodosis to a protasis. The A-pair *na’fu/nu’addib* ‘forgive/punish’ serves to trigger an opposition between the B-pair duplicates *tā’ifah/tā’ifah* ‘party/party’. God positions his forgiveness prior to his punishment, which attests to the viability of positivity principle

of ordering oppositions in discourse. That more positive or positive terms tend to precede the less positive or negative ones in most cases is patently typical of the above-mentioned case. Reward is given priority over punishment, and just so is forgiveness prioritized over torture. In tandem with positivity, speaker viewpoint is at play here, too. The divine vantage point or stance gives precedence and prominence to forgiveness against punishment and chastisement—a fact reported by Abūhurayrah on the authority of the prophet Muhammad who said: “When Allah completed his creation, he wrote ‘My mercy precedes My wrath’ on his throne (Albukhārī, 1981, p. 73; Alnaysabūrī, n.d., p. 95).

TTA. Grammatically and syntactically at surface structure, it is evident that Abdel Haleem has not attended to the construal of the source syntactic frame whose main function is to subordinate a protatic clause to an apodotic one. He misframed and defunctioned the verse in focus by transposing a hypotactic source structure to a paratactic target one and by rendering a subordinate frame and function into coordinate and concessive counterparts. The clause structure in parataxis and hypotaxis is formally and functionally distinct and should not be mutated. Parataxis juxtaposes ideas while hypotaxis appends one idea to another causally, conditionally, chronologically, transitionally, and relationally. Lexicosemantically, the ancillary opposition between the two duplicates, *tā' ifah/tā' ifah* figuring so prominently and frequently as a stylistic feature of ST, has not been tended, either. However, he tended to the religious register of his target A-pair members, ‘forgive/punish’. Oppositely, Yüksel et al. tended to the duplication of the B-pair members rendered as ‘group/group’ but did not attend to the registerial use of the religious item ‘forgive’ (“to err is human, to forgive divine”) rather than the modern French synonym ‘pardon’. They also achieved formal correspondence and equivalence in their transposition of the syntactic frame (‘if X (then) Y’).<sup>2</sup> Their lexical choices of ‘forgive/pardon’ and ‘punish’ can be condoned but not the pitfall of phraseological inconsistency they present in regard of the duplicates *tā' ifah/tā' ifah* rendered variedly as ‘some’, ‘others’, ‘group’, to name but a few. A more appropriate equivalent thereof would be ‘party’ being selectionally restricted to people rather than ‘group’ which unmarkedly includes things.<sup>3</sup>

#### F. Noncanonical A-Pair vs. Semicanonical B-Pair in Comparison

A: (263-2: قرآن: 263-2) قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَدَى.

E: A **kind word** and **forgiveness** is better than **a charitable deed followed by hurtful [words]**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 30)

E: **Kind words** and **forgiveness** are far better than **charity that is followed by harm**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 74)

STA. Verse (2:263) employs noncanonical ancillary A-pair members, *qawl/sadaqah* ‘word /charity’, for sharpening a semicanonical opposition between the B-pair members, *ma'rūf/yaṭba'uhā 'adā* ‘kind/followed by hurt’. The frame ‘X (more) adj. (-er) than Y’ has been borrowed from the comparative category to pinpoint that a sweet reply is better than a charity-induced hurt. Immediately in the next verse (2:264) appears the reason why a nice word is better than a favor done to a person who is frequently then reminded of it by the doer and hence is hurt (Alzamakhsharī, 1998, p. 496). The divine speaker’s viewpoint renders a good word better than a hurting charity because the former is deemed far more positive than the latter which is rendered negative out of the recurrent reminder of a favor done to others and the feeling of hurt stimulated in response. Positivity guides the vantage point expounded by the speaker and governs the order of oppositions in the verse. Charity must be given without any detriment to mental hygiene and psychological health.

TTA. This is the first time both translators coincidentally and unknowingly agree in forming the syntactic framework, serving the textual function of ancillary opposition, and opting for lexicogrammatical choices: ‘kind word/ kind word’, ‘charitable deed/charity’, and ‘hurt/harm’—all in one identical syntactic pattern, ‘X is better than Y’. Two criticisms may be levied here against Yüksel et al.’s lexical choices of ‘far better’ and ‘harm’ rather than ‘better’ and ‘hurt’ opted for by Abdel Haleem. One is the overstatement in using an unnecessary intensifier ‘far’ which tells more than the truth spoken in the verse. No exaggerative or hyperbolic expression is relayed herein. The other is the use of ‘harm’ that is less frequent than ‘hurt’ when feelings are concerned. Baker (2018) posits that frequency of occurrence is a criterion for choosing one lexeme over another in the target language. Hence, we argue that ‘hurt’ is significantly more frequent and more natural in the description of feelings. The former is more mental whereas the latter is more physical. Consider the collocational restrictions imposed by the propensity of certain words like ‘hurt’ and ‘feelings’ to usually co-occur in the target language, however semantically arbitrary their selectional restrictions seem.

#### G. Duplicate A-Pair vs. Semicanonical B-Pair in Idiomaticity

A: (23-33: قرآن: 23-33) فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَنْتَظِرُ.

E: **Some** of them have **fulfilled it by death**, and **some** are still **waiting**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 268)

E: Thus, **some** of them **died**, while **some** are still **waiting**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 359)

STA. Verse (33:23) sheds light on a prototypical case of noncanonical ancillary opposition whose A-pair members are same duplicates, *minhum/minhum* ‘some/some’, and whose B-pair counterparts, *qadā nahbah/yantazir* ‘die/wait’ are truly semicanonical if interpreted literally but canonical if interpreted conceptually idiomatically. The A-pair ones help to draw attention to a literally less conventional opposition between achieving a *nahb* ‘aim’ and waiting to achieve it—namely, to fight and die for the sake of God. According to Alzamakhsharī (1998, p. 59), a party of companions, during the lifetime of the Prophet of Islam, vowed to fight and die in the course of God. Some fulfilled the vow while some

<sup>2</sup> See a consensus on this frame by seven translators: <https://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=9&verse=66>.

<sup>3</sup> See a majority on this choice by six translators: <https://corpus.quran.com/translation.jsp?chapter=49&verse=9>.

others did not yet but were waiting to fulfil it. The B-pair member *qadā nahbah* is an idiomatic expression whose noncompositional meaning is ‘to die in martyrdom for God’s sake’. On this meaning, Alzamakhsharī expounds that *qadā’ al-nahb* is idiomatically representative of death since every human being is doomed to die like a vow committing one to it: ‘Martyrdom is the eventual result of the vow made’ (p. 59). What is robustly good about the intensionally specific reference made in the verse to exact human referents like ‘Uthmān, Talha, and Hamza is the fact that the reference is also extensionally generic, i.e., the extension of the believers who made an honest vow to God includes the set of all faithfully vowing individuals to whom the reference can be applied from the time of the Prophet to the Resurrection Day (on ‘extension and intension’, see Hurford et al., 2007, p. 110). Chronology is at work to arrange oppositions by setting those who are dead first and those who are still waiting to die next. It is just a matter of time.

TTA. Although Baker (2018) states that translators’ competence in using an idiom hardly ever matches that of the source text’s native speakers (and writers), the idiomatic expression in hand is transparent enough for both translators to be alerted to its noncompositional and compositional natures, being amenable to a transparent literal interpretation and hence translation and also to an opaque nonliteral interpretation and hence translation. The two translators could easily understand both interpretations and therefore opted for death as the idiomatic meaning and pledge as the literal. The idiom *qadā nahbah* is noncompositional because it carries the meaning of death that cannot be deduced from the meanings of its constituents *qadā* and *nahb* particularly with the truth that *qadā* co-occurs preponderantly with other Qur’anic expressions to communicate collocational and idiomatic meanings. For the first time herein, we come across a surprising agreement between both translators in rendering the noncanonical ancillary oppositional A- and B- pairs. However, both translators fell into the pitfall of rendering a euphemistic source idiom dysphemistically, thus infringing on the registerial parameters of SLT (mode, field, and tenor) by supplanting the roundabout expression of death, *qadā nahbah*, with a topically sensitive and culturally tabooed cacophemism ‘death’ and ‘die’. A more appropriate idiomatic TL equivalent may be ‘fulfil the vow’ or ‘pass away’. Chronology, the time order of the oppositions in focus, has been maintained and retained into the TT.

#### H. Duplicate A-Pair vs. Semicanonical B-Pair in Idiomaticity

A: (61-2: قرآن: 61-2) أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ.

E: Would you exchange **better** for **worse**? (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 9)

E: Would you trade what is **lowly** with what is **good**? (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 59)

STA. Verse (2:61) constructs a noncanonical ancillary opposition between a couple of duplicates, a pair of relative pronouns, *al-ladī/al-ladī* ‘what/what’ (alternatively, ‘that which/that which’) to oppose less conventionally contrastive B-pair members, *‘adnā/khayr* ‘lower/better’ whose conventional and canonical opposites are *a’lā/sharr*, respectively. Children of Israel (lexically, ‘Israelites’) grew impatient with having the same dish of the heavenly foods, *al-mann/al-salwā* ‘manna/quail’, and requested Moses to ask his Lord to make the land grow earthly foods like lentils and onions. The request drew strong denunciation from Moses who compared both foods and rendered the heavenly one as better and the earthy one as lower on a quality-valuing continuum. The prophetic gist is that the pronounced earthly food is lower in value and quality than the denounced heavenly food—a gist framed within a ‘Would you substitute X for Y?’ pattern which is a formally and dynamically equivalent TT frame for the ST counterpart (Alzamakhsharī, 1998, p. 275). It is the (linguistic) co(n)text of the verb *tastabdilūn* ‘substitute’ and the preposition *bi* ‘for’ that dictates how both opposites must be arranged in discourse: first the substitute, then the substituted.

TTA. The ST syntactic frame *tastabdilūn sīn bi sād* ‘substitute X for Y’ or inversely ‘replace Y with X’ is properly tended to and rendered by Abdel Haleem who, unfortunately, defunctioned the ancillary role of the relativized A-pair members (i.e., ‘what/that which with what/that which’). The syntactic frame has been transposed as ‘exchange X for Y’ but the ancillary function has been deformed. Oppositely, Yüksel et al. transferred the ancillary role appropriately (‘XX vs. YY’) but misrendered the ST framework as ‘trade X with Y’ rather than ‘trade X for Y’, the former of which relates to a commercial transaction while the latter relates to a processual replacement. Both frames, however, would read as a mistranslation thereof, because the ST framework foregrounds the substitute and backgrounds the substituted. A final pitfall concerns Abdel Haleem’s misinterpretation and in turn mistranslation of *‘adnā* as ‘worse’ because the wished foods are not worse but of lower value than the relinquished ones in the sense that X is better than Y does not mean Y is worse than X. Both are good not bad, but one is better not worse in value than the other. Abdel Haleem did reverse the linguistically contextualized order by using “Exchange better for worse”, unlike Yüksel et al. who retained the order but in a misframed pattern as explicated above.

#### I. Canonical A-Pair vs. Duplicate B-Pair in Case-Marking

A: (233-2: قرآن: 233-2) لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةُ بَوْلِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودُهَا بِوَلَدِهِ.

E: No mother shall be made to suffer harm on account of **her child**, nor any father on account of **his**. (Abdel Haleem, 2004, p. 27)

E: No mother shall be harmed because of **her child**, nor shall a father be harmed because of **his child**. (Yüksel et al., 2015, p. 71)

STA. Verse (2:233) would be considered by any competent reader to be a prototypical example of a noncanonical ancillary opposition in a coordinate frame, ‘neither XX nor YY’. However, case-marking is too overriding in the verse above to go unnoticed and unmentioned, just as Jones’s (2002) idiomaticity in idiomatic antonymy is overriding. In the



same manner, the decision to isolate case-marking examples rather than include them under other major or minor categories is because the semantic and participant roles of such cases override the original textual function of ancillary opposition (cf. Jones, 2002, p. 94). The ancillary ST frame *lā sīn wa-lā gād* ('neither XX nor YY') hosts a canonically opposed A-pair, *wālida/mawlūd lah* 'who gives birth/whom childbirth is given to', and a B-pair of opposed duplicates, *walad/walad* 'child/child'. The propositional point of the verse is that the child(ren) shall not be used by either parent to cause harm to the other (Alzamakhsharī, 1998, pp. 456-457). The salient rule of sequencing the ancillary pairs above is agency ('agent', Wu & Zhang, 2022) whereby the agent(ive) participant *wālida* precedes the other participant, i.e., the beneficiary *mawlūd lah* in the verse under scrutiny.

TTA. Both translators managed to transpose the ST framework *lā sīn wa-lā gād* into the TT as 'no X nor Y', which is an appropriate variant of 'neither X nor Y'. More problematic in the given translations is the lexical choices opted for identically by both translators. Hassanein (2022) provides a rigorous analysis of the (un)translatability of semantic cases from Qur'anic Arabic into English and highlights some cases of nonequivalence in translation, one of which is the verse under analysis here. His analysis is retrievable and replicable here, too. Following Baker (2018), we tend to consider the ST lexical items *wālida/mawlūd lah* as prototypical cases of nonequivalence between languages since English has no direct equivalents for these ST items but provides only non-dynamic equivalents, 'mother' and 'father', only for which the two translators opted. The case at hand is indeed representative of some of Baker's (2018) problems of nonequivalence: (a) the SL concept of the trivalent verb *w-l-d* is not lexicalized in the TL, (b) semantically complex, and (c) both SL and TL make different semantic distinctions. English provides the neuter lexeme parent(s) whose sex-biased masculine form is 'father' and feminine form is 'mother' while Arabic draws significant semantic distinctions between *wālida/umm* and *wālid/abb*. The former *wālida/wālid* are necessarily related to the parturition, childbearing, and childbirth; the latter are not necessarily so. More semantically distinctive is the difference between *wālid(a)* and */mawlūd (lah)* entailing a distinction in participant roles, 'agent', 'experiencer', and 'beneficiary', respectively—roles hardly translatable through 'mother, child, and father'. Agency has been maintained in the TTs, nonetheless.

## V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Just as canonical ancillary antonymy was proven to co-occur in preponderant syntactic frames borrowed from other fellow categories like coordination, subordination, transition, etc., and serve frequent textual functions whose translation into TLs is deemed very problematic (Hassanein & Moustafa, 2024), so are noncanonical ancillary oppositions, too. Noncanonical oppositions including the ancillary ones have been found to be greater and wider than canonical counterparts (Hassanein, 2023a). In concomitance with their syntagmatic co-occurrences in patterns, they were also shown to have a tendency for a particular order in texts and corpora. This constitutes the reason why we set to tackle them from a translation perspective in the current inquiry. Torn between Scylla (the Devil) and Charybdis (the Deep Blue Sea), translators are found to oscillate between fidelity and fluency, loyalty and legibility, and sincerity and readability in their transposition of noncanonical ancillary oppositional syntagms and paradigms in tandem and parallel with their orders in TT. Source-text fidelity figures prominently in the translatorial ordering and sequencing of noncanonical ancillary oppositions with no prejudice against target-language fluency and readability since both translators have followed the source-text ordering sequence without reversals. Polemical issues are more evident and prominent in syntagmatic combinations and paradigmatic selections, briefly in syntactic frames (XX and YY, neither XX nor YY, if XX then YY, etc.) considered as must-see and must-be translation units and in lexical choices regarded as building blocks and bricks for information structures. In some cases of translations, colligational patterns and discoursal functions therewith went untended and unrendered into TL and TTs due to translatorial inattention to their presence as part of functional sentence perspective (FSP, see Firbas, 1992). Syntactic patterns and sequential orders of noncanonical ancillary opposition play a crucial role that contributes to the semantic ends of the structures. The contribution of this study might be generalized and replicated with Qur'an translations across other languages.

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# Building a Parallel Corpus for Chinese Folk Songs Translation Studies: A Case Study of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er Folk Songs

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**Abstract**—Folk songs, collaboratively created by the public and transmitted orally, have gained widespread popularity. The translation of folk songs primarily centers on lyrics translation, a subset of literary translation. Recent advancements in corpus technology have highlighted the significance of corpus-based research approaches for the analysis of literary translation. The corpus method, now employed as a hybrid research approach, enables the generation of quantitative data for descriptive translation studies. Scholars are increasingly using parallel corpora containing both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) to explore translation universals across diverse texts. Despite the growing body of literature on the translation of Chinese folk songs, most studies have involved straightforward analyses of a limited number of translated texts without the utilization of quantitative approaches. This article aims to bridge this gap by presenting a prospective study on the creation of the Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er Folk Songs (CEPCNSHFS). The study covers essential aspects such as sampling, corpus structure, corpora selection, and corpora processing. Moreover, to assess the practical utility of the CEPCNSHFS, a pilot study was conducted. The primary contributions of this article reside in the potential of the CEPCNSHFS to support diverse research topics, including the exploration of translation language characteristics, styles, and methods employed in translating Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs, both of which hold significant positions within Chinese folk song traditions.

**Index Terms**—parallel corpus, Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs, translation of Chinese folk songs into English, translation studies

## I. INTRODUCTION

The 1960s marked a significant development in the adoption of the corpus methodology, a research approach involving the compilation of extensive text collections based on predetermined selection criteria. The evolution of computer and network technologies ultimately resulted in the emergence of corpus linguistics as a distinct field of linguistic inquiry. A corpus-based approach offers the advantage of providing both quantitative data and qualitative insights for linguistic studies.

As of now, numerous well-established corpora are widely employed in linguistics research. These include the British National Corpus (BNC), Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), Corpus of Global Web-based English (GloWbE), iWeb Corpus, News on the Web (NOW) Corpus, Wikipedia Corpus, Hansard Corpus (representing the British Parliament's proceedings), and the Coronavirus Corpus.

In China, notable corpora comprise the Peking University Centre for Chinese Linguistics (CCL), the Tsinghua University THCHS-30 (a freely accessible database of Chinese speech invaluable for building comprehensive Chinese speech recognition systems), and the ICSA (Institute of Corpus Studies and Applications) Platform for Corpus Search and Applications, developed by Shanghai International Studies University (SISU).

In 1993, Mona Baker's seminal article titled "Corpus linguistics and Translation Studies: Implications and Applications" marked the beginning of corpus-based translation studies. The application of corpus methodology within translation studies has given rise to the field of corpus translatology and has generated a sustained demand for

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translation corpora (Hu & Tao, 2009). Translation corpora can be categorized into three main types: translation corpora, analogy corpora, and comparable or parallel corpora (Wang, 2004). Among these, a parallel corpus is the most commonly utilized, as it allows for the comparative analysis of original and translated texts through retrieval statistics.

In the realm of Chinese folk song research, scholars have undertaken efforts to establish monolingual corpora for various research purposes, including the study of musical communication, cultural introduction, and the preservation of this intangible cultural heritage. However, in the domain of Chinese folk song translation research, there is a notable gap that necessitates the creation of a parallel corpus to address this deficiency.

Known as “the king of songs” in the northwest region of China, Northern Shaanxi folk songs specifically pertain to those originating from Northern Shaanxi, as well as the broader regions of Yulin and Yan’an. In June 2008, the State Council of China officially designated Northern Shaanxi folk songs as a second-category national intangible cultural treasure. Among the diverse ethnic groups in China, Hua’er is a renowned folk song that resonates among the Hui, Tibetan, Yugu, Sala, Tu, Dongxiang, Han, Baoan, and Mongolian communities. Hua’er, often treated as “the soul of northwest China”, possesses distinctive regional and ethnic characteristics. It was among the pioneering initiatives recognized as part of China’s efforts to preserve intangible cultural assets. In 2009, Hua’er was also included in the list of intangible cultural heritages requiring international preservation efforts.

This article will focus on the construction of the Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er Folk Songs (CEPCNSHFS) with the overarching aim of creating a substantial parallel corpus for translation studies. Such a corpus will serve as a valuable resource for investigating a wide array of topics, including but not limited to translation methods, translator profiles, translation universals, and more. The resulting findings are expected to foster the adoption of the parallel corpus approach within the field of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk song translation research. Additionally, the corpus is poised to become a valuable reference tool for Chinese folk song translators and researchers, enriching their endeavors in this vibrant domain.

## II. RELATED WORK

The development and utilization of corpora, the majority of which encompass texts from diverse genres, often enriched with handwritten or manually validated annotations, stand as pivotal advancements in the realm of linguistic research methodologies and tools (Wang et al., 2021). Notably, the introduction of corpora such as the Brown Corpus and the Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen (LOB) Corpus has provided numerous corpus linguists with a straightforward means to delve into authentic texts through the use of corpus software. These accessible corpora and the methodologies grounded in corpus linguistics have undeniably yielded invaluable data for the field of translation studies.

The impact of corpus-based research became evident long before it significantly influenced the theoretical and descriptive aspects of translation studies, as emphasized by Baker (1993). A significant development in this context is the Translational English Corpus (TEC), located at the Centre for Translation and Intercultural Studies. TEC is a novel corpus designed specifically for translation studies, consisting of written texts translated into English from a wide range of source languages.

Baker (1995, p. 230) categorized three primary types of corpora within the field of translation studies: comparable, multilingual, and parallel corpora. These corpus types are classified as follows:

- **Comparable Corpora:** These are composed of two or more monolingual corpora that are not translations of each other and are not synchronized, but they share a common subject or topic. Comparable corpora allow for cross-linguistic comparison and analysis of texts on a similar theme or subject matter.
- **Multilingual Corpora:** These corpora consist of texts that have been translated into multiple languages and are structured similarly to parallel corpora. The key distinction is that multilingual corpora focus on texts translated into several languages, enabling the examination of translation variations across multiple target languages.
- **Parallel Corpora:** Parallel corpora encompass translated language equivalents of texts in the source language (language A) and their corresponding translations in the target language (language B). These corpora facilitate the direct alignment of original and translated texts, enabling detailed contrastive analysis.

Additionally, in the domain of translation research, bilingual parallel corpora are often developed or studied for various research objectives. These corpora contain both the source language texts and their translated counterparts, all centered around a common subject or theme. This configuration allows researchers to explore translation phenomena and language contrasts within a controlled and aligned context.

Koehn (2005) played a pivotal role in building a corpus of parallel texts sourced from European Parliament proceedings across 11 languages. This corpus was made accessible online and served as invaluable training material for the development of statistical machine translation (SMT) systems. Lapshinova-Koltunski et al. (2018) undertook the creation of a parallel corpus that featured comprehensive coreference chain annotations. This innovative approach addressed a significant challenge associated with coreference translation across languages, a problem that has implications for machine translation and other multilingual natural language processing (NLP) technologies. Yuan (2020) made significant contributions by developing a parallel corpus containing Russian and Chinese languages, comprising 27,664 sentence pairs and a staggering 2,010,632 words. This corpus was instrumental in the extraction of phrases relevant to the context of political diplomacy. In a similar vein, Wang (2021) capitalized on machine translation

software to establish a parallel corpus tailored for teaching English translation, facilitating language learning and translation instruction. Guo and Zhou (2019) played a crucial role in the creation of a substantial English-Chinese parallel corpus, which was specifically geared towards popular science content. This corpus spans both sides of the Taiwan Strait and serves as a valuable resource for linguistic and cross-cultural studies in the realm of popular science communication.

The predominant corpus resources employed for the investigation of Chinese folk songs have primarily originated from music research (Guo, 2020), literary research (Zhou, 2017), and retrieval research (Zhang, 2010), and are mostly monolingual. One notable example is the ACCESS database, recognized as the first Chinese folk song corpus. Comprising over 2,000 samples of Northern Shaanxi folk songs, ACCESS serves as a valuable resource of extensive firsthand information pertaining to Northern Shaanxi folk songs. However, the availability of untagged raw texts and the fact that it is monolingual restrict its applicability in the context of translation research.

Beyond its designation as a category in Chinese literature, Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs occupy a special role as means of disseminating Chinese culture. Given the wide-ranging significance, it becomes essential to create a Chinese-English parallel corpus that includes both the source texts (ST) and target texts (TT) of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs. Such a corpus has the potential to yield illustrative and quantitative data crucial for the advancement of translation studies within this domain.

### III. CORPUS CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURE

Corpus construction represents the initial and key phase in any corpus investigation, as the components of the corpus and the selection procedures employed have far-reaching implications for all subsequent research processes (Sinclair, 1999). It is imperative to ascertain whether existing corpora are available for your research, as building a corpus demands significant time and effort. Throughout this research, it has been revealed that there is currently no existing parallel corpus specifically dedicated to Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs for the purpose of translation studies.

Furthermore, it is essential to construct a corpus with a clear understanding of its intended purpose, construction methodology, and theoretical as well as practical relevance (Zhang, 2020). These considerations directly influence whether the corpus can effectively address the research objectives. This article undertakes the creation of the Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er Folk Songs (CEPCNSHFS) with the specific aim of providing valuable corpus data for the study of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs translation.

The CEPCNSHFS will take the form of a parallel corpus covering both the Chinese texts of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs and their corresponding English translations. In this section, we will explore the detailed construction process of the CEPCNSHFS.

#### A. *Sampling & Corpus Structure*

According to Baker (2010), sampling, balancing, and representativeness are the three key theoretical principles that support corpus linguistics. Since it is difficult to determine the makeup of the complete linguistic community from a sample of isolated linguistic units, conventional statistical sampling procedures are inadequate for building a language corpus (Atkins et al., 1992). However, the corpus methodology offers the flexibility to sample specific words, sentences, paragraphs, or even entire texts, depending on the research objectives. The goals of the study must be taken into consideration while choosing the sampling scope, which may include words, phrases, paragraphs, or entire texts. Additionally, in instances where the text's length exceeds the requirements of the research goals, it may become necessary to extract text fragments from the entirety of the text during the corpus selection process.

Due to the fact that Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs frequently follow a concise and clear pattern resembling Chinese ancient poetry (Wang, 2014), which is distinguished by brevity and few lines, the CEPCNSHFS will adopt a sampling approach that requires choosing the full length of each song's text as a sample. This method aligns with the inherent structure of these folk songs, ensuring comprehensive coverage in the corpus for this study.

To maintain balance and prevent any individual texts from disproportionately influencing the corpus as a whole, the selection of texts for inclusion in a corpus must be conducted with careful consideration. A corpus should aim to be representative of a certain language, language variety, or topic, therefore maintaining a balance is crucial. In the case of Chinese folk songs, which can be categorized into different types based on geographical regions, it is important to mention that Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs, chosen as the focus for the CEPCNSHFS, represent the musical traditions of northwest China. Candidate texts for the CEPCNSHFS are carefully chosen to cover a diverse range of subjects and to maintain an equitable distribution across the same time span. This method prevents any undue skewing of the corpus's overall composition and guarantees that the corpus remains representative of the vast and varied terrain of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs. As a result, once the sampling is complete, the CEPCNSHFS structure, which is indicated in Figure 1, will consist of two parts.

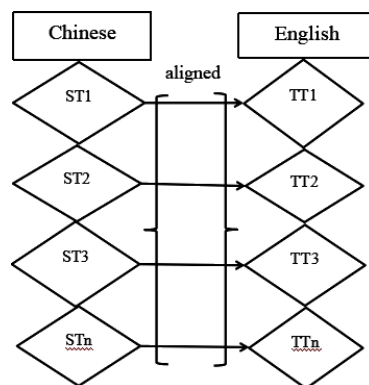


Figure 1. The Mapping Structure of Texts in the CEPCNSHFS

The CEPCNSHFS comprises a significant body of texts (ST1~STn), each thoughtfully matched with its corresponding English translations (TT1~TTn). This alignment occurs at the sentence level, a structural choice aligned with the specific research objectives.

### B. Corpora Selection

Texts, comprising coherent sentences and paragraphs, serve as the fundamental building blocks of corpora in the realm of translation studies. Hence, the selection of suitable texts from printed books holds significant value. These texts, which consist of an essential component of the CEPCNSHFS, were carefully selected from four published books. Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of book titles, the names of translators, publication years, publisher, and the total count of songs featured in these books.

TABLE 1  
CORPORA RESOURCE FOR THE CEPCNSHFS

Folk song	Book Title	Translator	Songs	Publishing Year	Publisher
Northern Shaanxi folk song	Voice from the Northwest-Folk Songs of Northern Shaanxi	Wang Hongyin	105	2009	Culture and Art Publishing House
	Lyrics of Northern Shaanxi Folk Songs: Translation and Exegesis	Wang Zhanbin	88	2021	Nankai University Press
Hua'er	Hua'er-Folk Songs from the Silk Road	Yang Xiaoli & Caroline Elizabeth Kano	88	2016	The Commercial Press
	Voice from the Silk Road-Hua'er of Northwest China	Yang Xiaoli et al.	105	2022	The Commercial Press

The CEPCNSHFS covers two sub-corpora: Northern Shaanxi folk songs and Hua'er folk songs, each totaling 193 songs, respectively. As shown in Table 1, "Voice from the Northwest-Folk Songs of Northern Shaanxi", consisting of 105 folk songs, was published by the Culture and Art Publishing House in 2009. This collection represents a nine-year translation endeavor by Wang Hongyin, a professor at Nankai University (Li, 2009). Wang Zhanbin, a Professor of Commerce at Tianjin University, translated 90 songs featured in the book "Lyrics of Northern Shaanxi Folk Songs: Translation and Exegesis", which was released in 2021 by Nankai University Press.

A condensed translation of "Comprehensive Discussion on Chinese Hua'er Songs" by Wu (2008) resulted in the book "Hua'er-Folk Songs from the Silk Road", published by the Commercial Press in 2016. This publication contains approximately 240 songs and provides an overview of Hua'er, a distinctive type of folk song found exclusively in northwest China. Following six years of preparation, in June 2022, the Commercial Press released "Voice from the Silk Road-Hua'er of Northwest China", a book containing 105 songs. This book serves as a companion to "Hua'er-Folk Songs from the Silk Road". To better align the CEPCNSHFS with our research objectives, we chose to select only 88 songs from two books: "Lyrics of Northern Shaanxi Folk Songs: Translation and Exegesis" and "Hua'er-Folk Songs from the Silk Road", in the corpus.

The translators of these four books are all Chinese university teachers with extensive expertise in both translation practice and academic research. This background assures the quality of their translation versions. Additionally, their English translations are currently the most widely recognized and representative in the field of translating Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs.

### C. Corpora Processing

With the growth of the Internet and personal computer usage, an increasing number of corpora are becoming accessible in the form of digitized texts that are machine-readable. Corpora processing indeed involves the conversion of candidate corpora into machine-readable files. The processing of corpora for the CEPCNSHFS was conducted through a five-stage approach, which included raw data acquisition, noise filtering, metadata markup, segmentation & POS tagging, and parallel alignment.

#### (a). Raw Data Acquisition



Raw data can be acquired through various means, including scanning paper books, gathering information online, or manual typing. One of the most prevalent methods for digitizing content is scanning, which transforms physical books into editable digital texts suitable for computer use. Books can undergo scanning processes and be converted into editable file formats like Word, Excel, or plain text with the assistance of optical character recognition (OCR) software or programs such as OneNote, ABBYY FineReader, and others.

When scanning paper volumes to obtain raw texts for the CEPNSHFS, it is essential to remove the table of contents, prologue, images, footnotes, references, and any other materials not required for the corpus. After this editing process to ensure accuracy, the raw corpora are saved as plain text files in UTF-8 format for the subsequent stage. Each Chinese file may be labeled with the title “cn\_00x” (x=1~n), which corresponds to “en\_00x” (x=1~n) for the English version. Each file should go through a comprehensive review and revision process to ensure the utmost accuracy of the texts.

#### (b). Noise Filtering

Standardizing the text format is crucial to make corpora more readable and compatible with computers. Once the key texts have been extracted from the original paper books or Portable Document Format (PDF) files, the raw data should be improved and cleaned through noise filtering. Noise filtering entails removing extra spaces from the obtained texts. Consequently, it's important to avoid using white spaces and tab spaces for Chinese characters, whereas for English and closely related languages, only one space should be used between two words. In this study, unnecessary spaces can be eliminated using text editors like EditPlus or the “search-replace” feature in a WORD document. For instance, if the command “^p” is used to replace “^p^p”, it will reduce the text to only one space instead of two. In addition, spaces between paragraphs and at the beginning of each paragraph are also removed in this stage.

#### (c). Metadata Markup

Annotation involves the use of tags to mark various text features in a corpus to serve research objectives. Common types of annotation include voice and speech mistake tagging, POS tagging, syntactic tagging, semantic tagging, pragmatic tagging, and metadata markup. In the context of this work, metadata markup involves applying a standardized set of readable labels or tags to annotate detailed information in the text.

For the CEPNSHFS, metadata annotations were performed using the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) annotation system. This system is characterized by enclosing annotation symbols and contents within “< >” brackets. As a result, the “<p>” and “</p>” tags are used to indicate the start and end of each paragraph, respectively. “<S>” and “</S>” are employed as sentence annotators, while “<H>” and “</H>” signify header information for each text. Given the structural similarity between Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs and Chinese ancient poetry, the annotation framework for the CEPNSHFS follows the structure depicted in Figure 2.

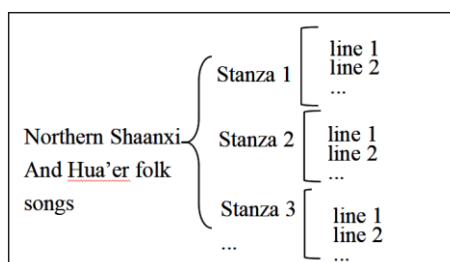


Figure 2. Annotation Framework of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er Folk Songs

Just like Chinese ancient poetry, Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs typically consist of multiple stanzas, with each stanza containing several lines. Consequently, it is essential to configure the software tags in preparation for alignment. Figure 3 illustrates the tag settings for ParaConc.

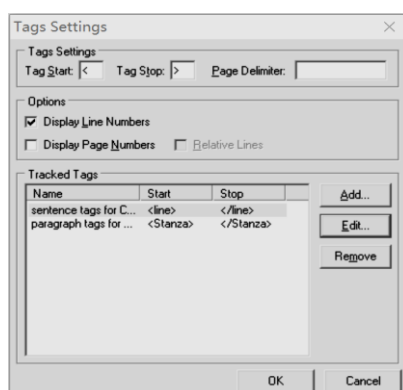


Figure 3. ParaConc Tag Settings



In ParaConc, sentence tags for Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs are set as <line>...</line>, while paragraphs are represented as <stanza>...</stanza>. Table 2 provides a list of the additional tags used for the CEPNSHFS, apart from sentences and paragraphs.

TABLE 2  
THE METADATA FOR THE CEPNSHFS

Content	Tag	Content	Tag
Chinese title	<CH_TITLE>...</CH_TITLE>	gender	<GENDER>...</GENDER>
English title	<EN_TITLE>...</EN_TITLE>	publication date	<PUB_DATE>...</PUB_DATE>
subtitle	<SUBTITLE>...</SUBTITLE>	publication place	<PUB_PLACE>...</PUB_PLACE>
translator's name	<TRANSLATOR>...</TRANSLATOR>	publisher	<PUBLISHER>...</PUBLISHER>
author's name	<AUTHOR>...</AUTHOR>	words	<WORDS>...</WORDS>

These tags are employed to annotate crucial information in the corpus, including details such as the title, subtitle, translator's name, author's name, gender, publication information, publication location, publisher, terms, and more. For example,

<CH_TITLE>满天星一颗颗明</CH_TITLE>	<EN_TITLE>One Star Shines Overhead The Brightest</EN_TITLE>
<CH_Stanza=Hy001><line>满(啦)天(哎咳)星(哎咳)一(啦)颗颗(哎)明,</line>	<EN_Stanza=Hy001><line>One star shines overhead the brightest;</line>
<line>天底下我就挑下了妹妹(呀)你一人.</line></CH_Stanza>	<line>I sort out you all over the world the nicest.</line></EN_Stanza>
<CH_Stanza=Hy002><line>九(啦)天(哎咳)仙(哎咳)女我(啦)不(哎)爱,</line>	<EN_Stanza=Hy002><line>The fairy in the heaven I don't ever love,</line>
<line>单(啦)爱我(那)小妹妹你(呀)好人才.</line></CH_Stanza>	<line>For I have you, my love, and I love you alone.</line></EN_Stanza>
<CH_Stanza=Hy003><line>山(啦)在(哎咳)水(呀哎咳)在人(啦)情(哎)在,</line>	<EN_Stanza=Hy003><line>Mountains stand firm and rivers flow away;</line>
<line>咱二人(哎咳)啥时候才能(呀)把天地拜?</line>	<line>When should we enjoy our wedding day?</line>
<line>咱二人(哎咳)啥时候才能把天地拜?</line></CH_Stanza>	<line>When should we enjoy our wedding day?</line></EN_Stanza>

Figure 4. An Example of Metadata Annotation

Figure 4 illustrates the metadata annotation for a folk song from Northern Shaanxi in the source text (ST) and its English translation (TT). This annotation serves to facilitate information retrieval within the CEPNSHFS through corpus software. And the extent of annotation may vary depending on the study's objectives.

#### (d). Segmentation & POS Tagging

Word segmentation is most frequently applied to the source texts (ST) of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs. This process involves dividing a sequence of characters into distinct and recognizable components. Since English words are separated by spaces, it is essential to segment Chinese texts into individual words or insert spaces between each Chinese character to facilitate retrieval using corpus software. Various methods can be employed for segmentation, such as manually creating gaps between Chinese characters using the "search-replace" tool in Word documents or employing corpus software for automatic segmentation. Figure 5 provides an example of how the text in the ST of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs was segmented using SegmentAnt in this study.

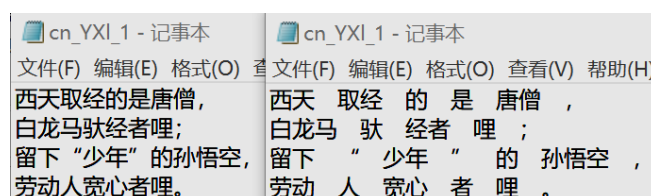


Figure 5. Segmentation in the ST of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er Folk Songs

Figure 5 indicates the format of the text before segmentation on the left side, where Chinese characters are not spaced, and the format after segmentation on the right side. Following segmentation, each line of this Hua'er folk song was divided into several units, typically about four or five pieces. For instance, based on the basic usage or function of certain words or phrases, the first line “西天取经的是唐僧” was segmented into “西天”, “取经”, “的”, “是”, and “唐僧” with spaces.

Part of speech (POS) tagging involves categorizing words in a sentence or group of words in a paragraph into specific grammatical categories such as verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, etc., based on their contextual usage (Chiche & Yitagesu, 2022). This process helps to understand the grammatical functions of words within a corpus. In the ST of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs, POS tagging was carried out using CorpusWordParser, a tool owned by the Chinese Ministry of Education Institute of Language Application. For the TT of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs, POS tagging was performed using TreeTagger, a tool developed by the Institute for Computational Linguistics at the University of Stuttgart. Figure 6 shows an example of POS tagging in the ST of a Hua'er folk song, generated using CorpusWordParser.

日头/n  
 月亮/n 盘场/ns 是/v1 刮风/v 哩/u, /w  
 日头/n 盘场/ns 是/v1 下/v 哩/u。 /w  
 女婿/n 知道/v 是/v1 活杀/v 哩/u, /w  
 公婆/n 们/k 知道/v 是/v1 骂/v 哩/u! /w

Figure 6. POS Tagging by CorpusWordParser in the ST of a Hua'er Folk Song

In this example, characters like “日头”, “月亮”, “女婿”, and “公婆” are marked with the “/n” symbol, indicating that they are “nouns” in the ST of this Hua'er folk song. Other tags include “/ns” for place names<sup>1</sup>, “/v1” for linking verbs, “/u” for auxiliary words, “/k” for proclitics, and “/w” for punctuation. The information in Table 3 provides a guide for understanding and exploring these tags that have been assigned by CorpusWordParser.

TABLE 3  
CORPUSWORDPARSER TAGSETS

Tag	Meaning	Tag	Meaning	Tag	Meaning
/n	noun	/nt	time noun	/d	adverb
/nh	human name	/p	preposition	/u	particle
/ni	institution name	/o	onomatopoeia	/c	conjunction
/v1	link verb	/nd	location noun	/ns	place name
/m	numeral	/v	verb	/e	interjection
/r	pronoun	/a	adjective	/w	punctuation

Indeed, every software tool has its own tagset, comprising a range of tags. Table 4 shows the tags established by TreeTagger for reference.

TABLE 4  
TREETAGGER TAGSETS

Tag	Meaning
DT	Article and determiner
IN	Preposition or subordinating conjunction
MD	Modal verb
NN	Common noun, singular or mass
NNS	Common noun, plural
PP	Personal pronoun
PP\$	Possessive pronoun
VV	Lexical verb, base form (e.g. live)
VVD	Past tense verb of lexical verb (e.g. lived)
VVP	Present tense (other than third-person singular) of lexical verb (live)
VVZ	Present tense (third-person singular) of lexical verb (lives)

These tags serve as a kind of roadmap for researchers, assisting in data analysis and interpretation. Figure 7 displays the result of POS tagging in the TT of the Hua'er folk song from Figure 6, achieved through the use of TreeTagger.

The\_DT halo\_NN around\_IN the\_DT moon\_NN forecasts\_\_VVZ wind\_VVP,\_,  
 The\_DT halo\_NN around\_IN the\_DT sun\_NN foretells\_VVZ rain\_NN.\_SENT  
 If\_IN my\_PP\$ husband\_NN knew\_VVD,\_, he\_PP would\_MD blame\_VV me\_PP,\_,  
 If\_IN my\_PP\$ parents-in-law\_NN heard\_VVD,\_, they\_PP would\_MD scold\_VV me\_PP.\_SENT

Figure 7. POS Tagging by TreeTagger in the TT of a Hua'er Folk Song

The TT of this Hua'er folk song can be understood and analyzed based on the tags provided in Table 4. To make the underlying meaning of the ST more visible and comprehensible to the TT reader, the translator rendered the last two lines, “女婿知道是活杀哩/公婆知道是骂哩” into two hypothetical if-clauses: “If my husband knew, he would blame me,/If my parents-in-law heard, they would scold me”. These four verbs- “刮风” (forecasts wind), “下” (foretells rain), “活杀” (blame), and “骂” (scold)-were faithfully translated in the TT, appearing in each line of the ST, respectively. It has been observed that POS tagging the corpora will facilitate linguistic comparison between the ST and TT of Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs. In addition to tagging words or sentences for the study of lexical and syntactic features in the ST and TT, other data such as rhetorical devices, translation strategies and methods, translation universals, and more can also be tagged and explored.

#### (e). Parallel Alignment

The term “alignment” refers to the process of matching up the translated and original texts. Given that there are not many relevant factors requiring further investigation, text or paragraph alignment may be insufficient for translation studies. Moreover, determining word alignment is challenging due to significant differences between Chinese and English. Hence, sentence alignment is recommended for research on Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs

<sup>1</sup> The Chinese character “盘场” in this song does not refer to a place name. Instead, it is a dialect term from northwestern China that alludes to the natural phenomenon of a halo, a circle that forms around the moon in the previous evening, indicating that it will be windy the following day.

translation. In practice, there are numerous approaches to parallel alignment, which can be carried out manually or automatically using computer programs such as Trados, SISU Aligner, ParaConc, and others. In this study, sentence alignment for Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs is conducted using ParaConc, and the result is displayed in Figure 8.

ParaConc - [Alignment Chinese (PRC) - English (United States) (A_WHycn_10.txt - A_WHycn_10.txt): Segments]	
File Alignment Search Frequency Window Info	
上一道坡下一道梁	I Climb up A Slope and Come Down A Ridge
上一道 (那个) 坡来 (哎哟哟哎), 下一道梁 (哎),	I climb up a slope and come down a ridge,
想起了 (那个) 小妹妹 (哎哟哟哎), 好心慌 (哎哟哎嗨嗨)。	And I think of my dear girl, and I fall into distraction.
你不去淘菜 (哎哟哟哎), 岸畔上站 (哎),	Why don't you come washing greens but stand on the riverbank?
把我们 (那个) 年轻人 (哟哟哎), 心扰乱 (哎哟嗨嗨)。	You simply stir up my love and I love you to distraction.
你在山上 (哎哟哟哎), 我在沟 (哎),	Now you stand high on the top of hill and I, down in the dale;
探不上那个拉话话人 (哎哟哟哎), 招一招手 (哎哎咳哎),	I can't reach you there but simply wave my hand to you,
探不上那个拉话话人 (哎哟哟哎), 招一招手 (哎哎咳哎),	I can't reach you there but simply wave my hand to you,
招一招手, 招一招手 (哎嗨嗨)。	To greet you, to greet you ...

Figure 8. Sentence Alignment by ParaConc

In the example provided, each sentence of the Northern Shaanxi folk song is aligned separately. The user interface showcases how ParaConc arranges the source text (ST) on the left and the translation (TT) on the right, facilitating the comparison between the ST and TT for researchers, allowing them to track specific words or phrases. Once completed, the parallel alignment files can be saved in either workspace or "txt" formats. However, it is essential to set the tags before saving, as demonstrated in Figure 9.

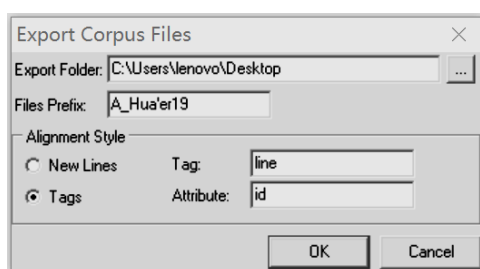


Figure 9. Tag Setting Before Exporting the Alignment Files in ParaConc

As a result, when the "seg" tag is changed to "line" and the attribute "id" is set, each line of a folk song will be automatically numbered from <line id="1"> to <line id="n">. Figure 10 offers an example of the completed alignment file for the translation text (TT) of a Hua'er folk song.

```
<line id="1"><EN_Stanza>Seeing_VVG off_RP my_PP$ beloved_JJ ,_
</line><line id="2">My_PP$ heart_NN wept_VVD like_IN a_DT beeswax_NN candle_NN ;_:
</line><line id="3">Without_IN him_PP I_PP am_VBP as_IN a_DT tiger_NN away_RB from_IN the_DT forest_NN ,_
</line><line id="4">And_CC the_DT dragon_NN away_RB from_IN the_DT Yangtze_NP River_NP .SENT </EN_Stanza>
```

Figure 10. The Alignment File for the TT of a Hua'er Folk Song

Therefore, as seen in Figure 10, the completed alignment file can serve as a valuable resource for research on Northern Shaanxi and Hua'er folk songs translations, as it contains both the Chinese lyrics and their English translations along with any segmentation, POS tagging, or other annotations. Since each song has very few sentences, the alignment quality is quite high. At this stage, the corpus processing is complete, and the exported files are ready for research use. It's worth noting that postscripts, translators' assessments, and book introductions can be stored in separate files for future reference.

#### IV. RESULT AND EVALUATION

This section provides essential details about the CEPNSHFS and assesses its applicability in research related to folk song translation. It includes preliminary studies that utilize various analytical techniques, such as Word Frequency analysis, Concordance analysis, Cluster analysis, and N-grams analysis, to demonstrate the corpus's potential utility.

The CEPNSHFS consists of 118,497 characters for the ST with 15,491 tokens and 3,677 word types. For the TT, it contains 27,719 words with 3,240 word types. In the CEPNSHFS, two bilingual sub-corpora are established: one for Northern Shaanxi folk songs (Sub\_PC 1) and the other for Hua'er folk songs (Sub\_PC 2). Sub\_PC 1 contains 26,576 word tokens and 5,721 word types, while Sub\_PC 2 contains 9,184 word tokens and 2,818 word types.

Indeed, the Type-Token Ratio (TTR) and word density are important metrics in corpus linguistics and text analysis. The TTR is calculated as (number of types/number of tokens) \* 100%. Word density is measured as "number of words/total text length". A high TTR might indicate a rich and varied vocabulary in the songs, while word density can provide insights into the songs' efficiency in conveying cultural and lyrical content. Researchers can use these indicators to gain a quantitative understanding of the linguistic aspects of the songs and how they relate to translation and cultural preservation.

The most frequently used words and expressions in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, in both the source language (SL) and the target language (TL), can be identified via observing word frequency in the CEPNSHFS. AntConc’s Keyword List Tool is a valuable feature for identifying phrases that are particularly common or distinctive in a specific corpus compared to a reference corpus (Anthony, 2004). The findings of the word frequency analysis, which are presented in Table 5, can be used as a foundation for deeper research on the cultural and translational elements of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs. It provides quantitative data that can complement qualitative analyses of the songs’ content and translation choices.

TABLE 5  
WORD FREQUENCY LIST

Rank	Chinese		English	
	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency
1	的	948	the	1,712
2	你	601	and	1,067
3	我	468	I	957
4	了	408	you	864
5	哟	294	a	829
6	那个	278	my	642
7	哥哥	272	to	601
8	呀	269	is	535
9	哎	253	in	495
10	是	228	of	467

Table 5, which lists the top 10 terms from the CEPNSHFS, highlights the frequent usage of mood auxiliary words such as “哟”, “呀”, and “哎” in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs. While these words may not carry specific semantic meanings, they play a crucial role in enhancing the aesthetic appeal of folk songs. They serve to evoke emotions and establish a connection with the audience, as seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
EXAMPLES OF MOOD AUXILIARY WORDS IN THE CEPNSHFS

ST	TT	Corpora Source	Translation Method
(哟.....哎咳哟.....)	(Yooooooooo, Aihaiiiiiiiiiiii, Yoooooooooooo!)	N_cn1_3	transliteration
女: 心里 (呀) 想你脸上笑,	W: I put up a smile for I think of you.	N_cn1_37	omission
口里 (呀) 不说谁知道。	I do not tell and who could know.		
正月里冻冰 (哟) 一春消	Ice in the first month melts in spring.	N_cn1_50	omission
一个在那山上 (哟) 一个在那沟	You’re high on the hilltop and I, down in the dale.	N_cn1_51	omission
与往年不一般, 不 (呀) 一般	Its old look is forever gone.	N_cn1_92	omission
九月里九重阳 (呀) 秋收忙	Autumn is a season for harvesting.	N_cn2_69	omission
谷子 (呀) 糜子 (呀) 收上场	Farmers are busy reaping and bundling.	N_cn2_69	omission
一道道的 (那个) 山来 (哟) 一道道水	Across mountains and rivers one after another.	N_cn2_83	omission
绿叶儿它自家展哩	Its green leaves will stretch out and grow.	H_cn1_22	omission
就是个铁心也软哩	Without doubt her cold heart will then be warmed.	H_cn1_22	omission
哎, 漫一首花儿了问一句话	Well, let me ask by singing.	H_cn1_51	replacement
哎, 花儿本是个杂俗话	Well, the name is a common term.	H_cn1_51	replacement

In Table 6, it becomes evident that only a minuscule fraction of terms, exemplified by “哟.....哎咳哟.....”, were translated literally, adhering closely to their Chinese pronunciation. Occasionally, “哎” was rendered as the adverb “well”, a versatile term capable of conveying various emotional nuances. However, due to the potential to disrupt the fluidity and coherence of the target text (TT) (Li, 2009), the translator chose to omit the majority of mood auxiliary words in the CEPNSHFS in the translation process.

Additionally, researchers can make use of Concordance, often referred to as Key Word in Context (KWIC), a software feature that allows users to search corpora for specific words or phrases and view their contextual usage. KWIC has the advantage of generating a comprehensive list of all relevant instances along with their respective contexts. To illustrate this, let’s examine the keyword “哥哥” from the ST of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, and the corresponding search results are provided in Figure 11.

Concordance Hits 272	
Hit	KWIC
1	马兰 那个 开花 根连根，我 和我 那个 三 哥哥 一条 ( 哎哟 哟 ) 心。三月 里 来 杏花 白
2	儿 水上漂，水上漂 想起 奴家 哥，想起 奴家 哥哥 一等 我，三月 里 桃花 满山红，四月 里 杨
3	窑 顶上的 燕子 秋去 春 又 归，没良心的 哥哥 一走 不再 回，痴心 女子 爱上 负心汉，毛腿
4	下上 ( 哎 )，赶 骡子的 哥哥 赶 骡子的 哥哥 七尺 高，他 上 身穿 的是 蓝布 布袄，脚
5	头上 又 把 那 羊 肚子 毛巾 罩，赶 骡子 哥哥 七尺 高，壮实 的 身板 常常 抿嘴 微笑。
6	两 溜溜 山，三 溜溜 山 ( 啊 )，脚夫 哥哥 下 了 ( 的 个 ) 四川 ( 噢哟 哟 哟 )
7	的 个 ) 四川 ( 噢哟 哟 哟 )，脚夫 哥哥 下 了 ( 的 个 ) 四川。今个 日子 牵 (
8	半夜 里 想起 ( 你 ) 干 妹妹，狼 吃了 哥哥 不 后悔。想 妹妹 想 得 迷 了 窍，酱油 盐
9	院，你家 院 里有 哥哥 的 牵魂线。你 说 哥哥 不 亲 你，口 含 冰糖 喂 过 谁。妹子 开 门
10	，海枯 石烂 不 ( 呀 么 ) 不 变 心。但愿 哥哥 不 要 牵心，早晚 盼 你 庆 ( 呀 么 ) 庆
11	，海枯 石烂 不 ( 呀 么 ) 不 变 心。但愿 哥哥 不 要 牵心，早晚 盼 你 庆 ( 呀 么 ) 庆
12	生 生 的手儿 红格 丹丹 的 脸，惹 得 那 哥哥 丢 了 放羊 的 铲，哎 毛眼 眼儿 亲，毛
13	落 口。女：洗 了 个 手来 和 白面，三 哥哥 今 天 上 前 线，任务 就 在 那 走 边 县，三 年
14	里 来 有 大路，戏楼 拆 了 修 马路，三 哥哥 今 年 一十九，咱 们 二 人 没 羞 够。洗 了 个
15	了 一个 三 哥哥，他 是 我 的 知心人。三 哥哥 今 年 一十九，四 妹子 今 年 一十六，人 人 说
16	三 哥哥，他 是 我 的 知心人。女：三 哥哥 今 年 一十九，四 妹子 儿 今 年 一十六，人 人

Figure 11. KWIC for “哥哥” in the CEPNSHFS

Therefore, it has been observed that the term “哥哥 (*gege*)” appears 272 times in the ST of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, with its primary usage denoting a familial relationship. However, it holds a distinct meaning from the term for a biological older brother and is frequently employed by songwriters in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs. Concordance proves to be an invaluable tool for second or foreign language learning, as it allows learners to explore vocabulary, identify common collocations, analyze syntax, and understand writing styles. In this study, it is also utilized to examine the TT of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, with a focus on identifying translation choices and addressing cultural nuances, as demonstrated in Figure 12:

Concordance Results 2:	
Concordance Hits 29	
Hit	KWIC
1	iverbank? You simply stir up my love and I love you to distraction. Now
2	’t ever love, For I have you, my love, and I love you alone. Mountains stand
3	uch a stitch Each stitch sews my love for my sweetie I stitch two lovebirds
4	bloom, Oh, I have not seen my love for so long, Yet, my love, In
5	by side But I feel shy and let my love hide The corn in the East and
6	ws away a boat, a boat. I tell my love in the boat: Worry about me? Not.
7	een my love for so long, Yet, my love, In the pine wood a tiger lies
8	as a girl I can’t spell out my love, my love, —The most miserable of
9	ge collapsed, and I lost you, my love; Oh, a collapsed bridge can be rebuilt,
10	arly, my love, When you get my love pouch.
11	ut, I long for you so much, my love, that my heart is tied in knots;
12	girl I can’t spell out my love, my love, —The most miserable of all! Wild
13	behind The songs take away my love The stars that talk to me at
14	Spring Equinox, And I give my love to Mr. Sam, the best lad. Chinese
15	om. Please come back early, my love, When you get my love pouch.

Figure 12. KWIC for English Translation of “哥哥” in the CEPNSHFS

According to the search engine results, the address term “哥哥” was translated into English with the following frequencies: 5 times as “brother”, 22 times as “lover”, and 29 times as “my love”. Common expressions and address phrases are particularly prevalent in Chinese dialects, which are commonly used in the performance of Chinese folk songs (Yin, 2013). In Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, “哥哥” is used to address the boy adored by the girl as a culturally loaded word, serving as a euphemism for a “boyfriend” (Li, 2016). Therefore, translating it as “brother” is inaccurate (Tang & Ji, 2022). Furthermore, the term “lover”, which often refers to a person with whom one has a romantic or sexual relationship but is not married in English, is not a suitable translation for “哥哥” in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, as per most dictionaries. Nevertheless, “my love”, “my love”, or “my dear” may be a preferable choice for translators when rendering such address terms in Chinese folk songs, as commonly found in English poetry and folk ballads (Liu, 2013).

Cluster is another useful tool in AntConc that can be employed for research on Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs. A word cluster is defined as a set of words connected forward and backward in the text (Scott, 2008). In other words, it refers to instances where two or more word forms are repeated in the text with an intentional relationship of combination or placement. Therefore, when using AntConc’s search item-Cluster to conduct a context-sensitive search, a word or word forms can serve as the central focus.

For example, metaphors and similes are frequently employed in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs as rhetorical devices to convey people’s feelings and emotions. Consequently, the word “like” can be used as a trigger word to search for its Cluster Types in the CEPNSHFS. The minimum frequency is set to 1 time, and the word cluster size is set to 3 to 4 words. Figure 13 presents the cluster window for “like”:



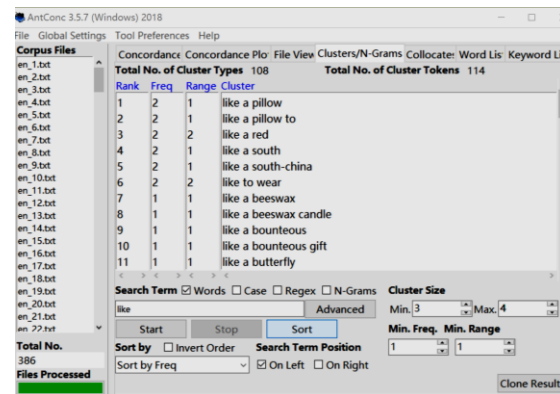


Figure 13. Cluster Window for “Like” in the CEPNSHFS

The data reveals that certain phrases, such as “like a pillow”, “like a pillow to”, “like a red”, “like a south”, “like a south-china”, and “like to wear”, are frequent occurrences within the cluster. When comparing the source text (ST) and target text (TT), we observed that these clusters, especially “like a pillow” and “like a pillow to”, were utilized in the translation of this Hua’er folk song, as illustrated in the following example.

Example 1:

ST:

瞌睡遇了枕头了，  
好连好是遇下的；  
花儿搁成媳妇了，  
这是老天爷施下的。(H\_cn2\_41)

TT:

**Like** a pillow to rest one’s weary head,  
Blessed with many a fortune;  
My sweetheart has now become my wife,  
**Like** a bounteous gift from heaven.

The opening line of this song, “瞌睡遇了枕头了”，which signifies that individuals achieve what they sought or experience unexpected good fortune, actually portrays the hero’s joy in realizing his dream. The translator enhanced the song’s meaning by incorporating the preposition “like” in the first and fourth lines to establish a connection between these four lines. Whether it’s “Like a pillow to rest one’s weary head” or “My sweetheart has now become my wife”, both convey the idea of being “Blessed with many a fortune” or simply “Like a bounteous gift from heaven”. It can be concluded that the translation of this Hua’er folk song not only faithfully captures the essence of the original text but also effectively interacts with readers in the target language.

AntConc software categorizes word cluster tables based on the full text or corpus as N-grams, which can be employed to identify and explore clusters throughout the entire CEPNSHFS. Figure 14 presents the N-gram interface.

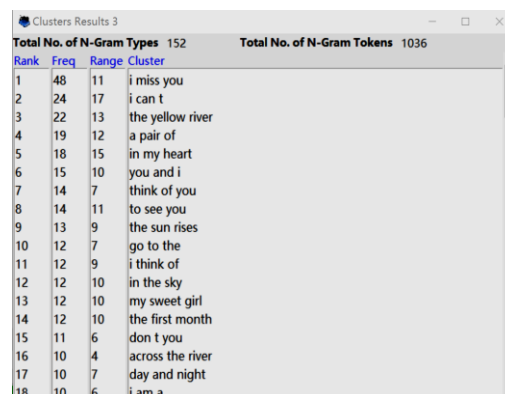


Figure 14. The N-Gram Interface of the TT in the CEPNSHFS

The N-grams results, which analyze the frequency of word sequences, offer the researcher an opportunity to examine the word structure and its translation across the entire corpus. These results reveal that the cluster “I miss you” appears most frequently, occurring 48 times in the target text of the CEPNSHFS. In fact, “missing someone” is a prevalent theme in such love songs in Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, and people frequently express their deep affection by repeatedly uttering “I miss you”. For example,

Example 2:

ST:

男：前半夜我想你吹不熄个灯，

后半夜想你就翻不了个身。

女：三天（呀）不见哥哥的面，

口含上砂糖也不甜。（N\_cn1\_47）

TT:

M: I couldn't put out light before sleep when **I miss you**,

I couldn't turn over in bed in dream when **I miss you**.

W: I couldn't taste the sweetness of sugar,

During the three days I didn't see you.

This song is a superb example of a Northern Shaanxi folk song that perfectly conveys romantic feelings. In Chinese language, the night is often divided into two parts—"the earlier part of the night (前半夜)" and "the latter hours of the night (后半夜)", signifying the passage of time. The first two lines are translated as "I couldn't put out the light before sleep when I miss you, I couldn't turn over in bed in a dream when I miss you". This conveys that the man is unable to sleep through the entire night due to the intensity of his longing for his beloved girl in the song.

In response to the boy, in the last two lines, the girl expresses that if she were separated from her beloved for even three days, she wouldn't be able to enjoy the sweetness of sugar. This usage is akin to the expression "Not seeing each other for a day feels like being separated for three autumns (一日不见如隔三秋)", frequently used in Chinese literary works to denote the deep longing and missing someone even after a short separation between protagonists. The translator rearranged the third and fourth lines of the song to ensure they were more suitable and comprehensible to the TT reader.

To convey this sense of longing, Hua'er folk songs employ various rhetorical devices, as exemplified in examples 3 and 4.

Example 3:

ST:

我问花儿啥痛呢？

啥也不痛想人呢！

想得深嘛想得浅？

肠子想成一根线。

心肠肝花早想烂，

肋巴想成了蜜蜂箭。

想得我浑身啦啦颤，

三天没吃一叶儿面。（H\_cn2\_84）

TT:

I asked my sweet girl, "What's wrong with you?"

"My heart aches, for I miss you so much," she said.

I asked her, "How badly do you miss me?"

**"I miss you to the very core, and my gut has turned into a string.**

**I miss you so much that I ache from heart to liver,**

**Even my ribs have turned thin like honeybee stingers;**

**And I miss you so much that I cannot help trembling,**

**And I have not eaten for three long days."**

Example 4:

ST:

白日里想你心痛烂，

夜夜晚夕者梦见。（H\_cn1\_9）

TT:

I miss you to death in the daytime,

And dream of you night after night.

In these two Hua'er folk songs, the emotions of "I miss you" are conveyed through the use of exaggerated expressive techniques. In example 3, the boy asks her beloved girl, "How badly do you miss me?", and she responds, "I miss you to the very core, and my gut has turned into a string./I miss you so much that I ache from heart to liver,/Even my ribs have turned thin like honeybee stingers;/And I miss you so much that I cannot help trembling,/And I have not eaten for three long days". The translator faithfully reproduced the intense affection of the ST for the TT reader.

Similarly, in Example 4, the feeling of missing someone is vividly described as "白日里想你心痛烂" (My heart aches when I miss you during the day) and "夜夜晚夕者梦见" (I dream of you night after night). As a result, these lines are translated liberally as "I miss you to death in the daytime,/And dream of you night after night", with "心痛烂"

being transformed into “I miss you to death”. This transformation maintains the exaggeration while preventing any potential misunderstanding by the TT reader.

In summary, this section demonstrates the application of AntConc for conducting various research investigations on the translation of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs through a corpus-based approach. These research techniques include the utilization of tools such as the Keyword List Tool, Concordance, Cluster, and N-grams. Additionally, researchers have the capability to explore language characteristics like type-token ratio (TTR), lexical density, high-frequency phrases, and average sentence length by employing tools like ParaConc, AntConc, WordSmith, or Python. These analytical approaches offer valuable insights into the translation of these folk songs and provide a deeper understanding of the linguistic and stylistic choices made by translators.

## V. CONCLUSION

The corpus methodology holds significant promise as it prompts researchers to pose novel questions with both theoretical and practical implications. It facilitates the identification of contextual significance for specific words, phrases, and texts while capturing numerous instances of language use. Indeed, the corpus-based approach has gained popularity in the study of translating Chinese folk songs, particularly Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs, which are known for their strong national identity. The research presented here was motivated by the absence of an existing parallel corpus for Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs translation studies.

This article provided an introduction to the corpus methodology in translation studies, with a specific emphasis on its application in researching the translation of Chinese folk songs. We developed the CEPNSHFS, a valuable resource for translators, researchers, and students. Folk song translators can use the CEPNSHFS to obtain precise English translations of specific words, phrases, or collocations, improving their own translations. Researchers can employ the corpus to investigate various aspects of folk songs translation, from vocabulary and grammar to discourse features and translation strategies. Students can use the CEPNSHFS to practice translation and learn more about Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs. The CEPNSHFS also plays a vital role in preserving and transmitting Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk songs and promoting traditional Chinese culture and folk music globally.

In this context, the Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er Folk Songs (CEPCNSHFS), introduced in this article, is poised to play a significant role in the field of Northern Shaanxi and Hua’er folk song translation research by offering substantial empirical evidence. We hope that this exploration will help rectify existing imbalances and address limitations within the current landscape of Chinese folk songs translation research.

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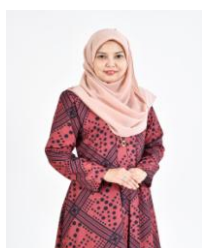
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# A New Historicist Reading of John Dos Passos' Novel *The Big Money*: Depiction of Children as a "Second Lost Generation"

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**Abstract**—This article examines the representation of children as a “second lost generation” in John Dos Passos’ novel *The Big Money*. It explains that the documentary and narrative sections that Dos Passos integrates into the novel explore how children’s position in the 1930s is caught between parents’ care and indifference. Dos Passos clarifies the impact of the American Dream and materialism upon the structuring of this conflicted position. In the novel’s Newsreels, Dos Passos presents a composite of popular songs and news headlines that present children seeking jobs and also departing from their family houses. Alongside the presentation of this phenomenon which resonates with children’s social situation in 1930s, in the narrative sections Dos Passos portrays Juvenile characters as living in families whose main concern is the making of money. To investigate this representation, the article considers the views of historians about the first “lost generation” (the post-World War I generation). It utilizes the “second lost generation” term to describe the juveniles who struggled during the 1930s age of Depression. The article historicizes the position of children in 1930s America. It refers to literary critics’ views about Dos Passos’ modernist and political inclination. The article concludes that Dos Passos’ *The Big Money* manifests in a modernist form fragmented historical realities about 1930s America’s materialistic thinking, within which children are seen as a second “lost generation”.

**Index Terms**—children, Dos Passos, lost generation, modernist form, 1930s

## I. INTRODUCTION

John Dos Passos’ *The Big Money* (1936), the last volume of the trilogy *U.S.A.*, is composed of fragmentary sections: Biographies, Newsreels, Camera Eyes, and the narratives. Throughout these sections, the novel, published in a peak year during the 1930s proletarian literary movement, bears numerous messages to help Americans transgress the economic crisis of the 1930s. The novel investigates real issues taking place in 1910s-1930s from multiple perspectives. By incorporating and constructing fragmented narratives, the novel explores complexity within the early twentieth-century in America. Cooper (2020) points out, the literary techniques developed by Dos Passos “served at least to deconstruct the ideological underpinnings of monopoly capitalism” (p. 5). Jun Young Lee (2008), who regards Dos Passos as a political and modernist writer in *U.S.A.*, similarly argues that the trilogy’s four sections portray “the heterogeneous aspects of American capitalism from multiple points of view [...] Through the dialectical medication between these perspectives, American capitalism as a whole is presented as a dialectical unity” (Lee, 2008, p. 183). The current paper relates the Newsreels to the narratives, which present children’s lives in *The Big Money*, and it argues that the novel embodies a warning message that the juvenile generation of the 1930s is “lost” due to materialism and the lack of adequate familial care. Dos Passos sets the novel in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, aiming to break down the turmoil of economic decline in 1930s, which was caused by America’s individualist and capitalist priorities.

Not unlike other American modern novels, *The Big Money* indicates certain messages without explicitly stating them. Modernist texts replicate and juxtapose various patterns and the reader is induced to understand the connectedness between the patterns to infer wider messages. These messages are scattered within the texts’ complex structure: “Part of the accessibility of the modernist text was that readers could enter it from a number of perspectives” (Wanger-Martin, 2020, p. 108). Claude-Edmonds Magny (1972) maintains that modern American literature shows its reader that “the most striking artistic effects are those born on the juxtaposition of two images, without any commentary” (Magny, 1972, p. 48). In his article “Literary Prophecy” (1894), the novelist Hamlin Garland anticipated the content and the purpose that modern American fiction was to adopt. Garland proposes that the modern novel “will teach, as all earnest literature has done, by effect; but it will not be by direct expression, but by placing before the reader the facts of life as they stand related to the artist. This relation will not be put into explanatory notes, but will address itself to the perception of the reader” (Garland, 1894, p. 51).<sup>1</sup> This implies that readers of modern texts need to relate the fragmented points presented by the writers to get coherent messages about serious issues relevant to their lives. In fact, American fiction of the 1930s indicates how to transgress the decade’s economic crisis. Writers with leftist affiliation want to revolt against social injustice, poverty, class discrimination, and the parents’ as well as children’s working for low payments.

<sup>1</sup> Anne-Elizabeth Murdy presents a substantial view that literature is to be read as “testaments to a particular political and historical project of claiming gender, race, and ultimately citizenship on the terrain that once held these authors [the African Americans] and their readers slaves” (8).

Communist and social commitments were, as suggested by this period's leftist fiction, to establish a unified American society. Langston Hughes and John Steinbeck, for example, symbolize these ideas in their novels *Not Without Laughter* (1930) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). *The Big Money*, composed of juxtaposed documentary segments and narrative sections, portrays young persons and even children as lost due to materialistic ways of living.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Previous literary critics examine Dos Passos' representation of women and men who were seen as victims of American ideologies, the American Dream and individualism. Nonetheless, the critics have not considered how Dos Passos' novels portray children as marginalized under social and materialistic pressure. Casey (1995) and Pizer (2012) read the Biographies, Newsreels, and Camera Eyes in Dos Passos' *U.S.A.* as integral parts which complement the themes in the trilogy's narratives. This "intricate, multifaceted" approach, argues Casey (1995) helps Dos Passos "deconstruct and reconstruct the story of women in American history" (p. 263). While Casey uses this approach to examine the representation of women, the current paper argues that the Newsreels and the narratives concerning children in *The Big Money* offer a complementary image to what is historically shown about children of the 1930s. Pizer (2012) suggests that Dos Passos' deployment of documentary and narrative elements in *U.S.A.* enacts "a complex way of perceiving reality" (p. 58). Reality is captured from multiple angles, and the reader is encouraged to relate these visions to get a unified message from the text. Casey suggests that "By incorporating historical elements into a work that is essentially fictional, he [Dos Passos] creates the illusion of historical truth even as he subjectively refashions history" (p. 251). Dos Passos' illusionary narratives concerning children's lives fill gaps in the Newsreels. This offers a way to conclude that children are caught between care and indifference. Near the end of the *U.S.A.* trilogy, Dos Passos (1936) declares that "[w]e have only words" against "Power Superpower" (pp. 524-25). The "Superpower" that *The Big Money* attempts to defy is capitalism, and Dos Passos indicates his interest in saving the juvenile generation from being lost when writing his trilogy about the social condition in America within the early-twentieth century. As Garland (1894) predicts, "If the child of the past was ignored, the future will cherish him. And [modern] fiction will embody these facts" (quoted in Barnard 2005, p. 45). The interest in the futures of these children is encoded in the narratives and the Newsreels of *The Big Money*.

Dos Passos uses fragmentation and multi-voiced sections to capture instability, confusion, and anxiety in the lives of children and their parents. He utilizes modernist devices to revolt against traditional politics and conventional styles of writings. For example, he weakens the plot in his novel with fragmented sentences and jumbled thoughts and expressions in different modes of narration. Stephen Kern (2011), in investigating how modernists use various strategies to raise serious themes without having unifying plots, observes that "Modernists who produced weak plots repeatedly assailed the institution of the family" (p. 231). Modernists react against any traditional stricture from society as the ones found in families, and their novels are not strongly plotted because modernist writers believe that life is full of uncertainties and it does not have clear sequence of events and closure (Kern, 2011, p. 214). In *The Big Money*, and in the *U.S.A.* trilogy as a whole, Dos Passos features no example of a unified family. He represents children as silenced, ignored, or as suffering from haunting memories and controlling parents. Furthermore, children are shown as running from their families looking for better life conditions.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The current study adopts a new historicist approach. It historicizes the position of children in 1930s America, and the term "lost generation" will be applied to how Dos Passos represents juveniles in the novel under examination. Indeed, the novelist Gertrude Stein was the first to use the term; she coined it to describe writers from the 1920s who witnessed WWI and who were disillusioned by the war circumstances. In a conversation with Ernest Hemingway, who joined the army, Stein says that all "young people who served in the war [...] are a lost generation" (Hemingway, 1964, p. 61). John Dos Passos in *The Big Money*, E. Hemingway in *The Sun also Rises*, and S. Fitzgerald in *Tender is the Night* capture characters from the post-World War I generation. It is a "lost" generation in the sense that it experienced despondency and disillusionment within the war's context. The generation lost faith in politics and values, and its members used drinking alcohol as a means to escape from the futility of their lives. Michael Soto (2020) argues that generation of WWI became lost due to social forces and "economic turmoil" that followed the war (p. 141). Soto demonstrates, "To be a lost generation signaled not just the senseless forfeiture of human life, but also a spiritual bankruptcy and more broadly the decay of Western civilization" (Soto, 2020, p. 142). The post-World War I generation was devoid of morality, spirituality, and sentimentality.

Dos Passos, an ambulance driver in World War I (WWI), belonged to the lost generation, and, further, he extends its connotations and associated features by writing about people struggling as a result of capitalism. His portrayal of the modern generation resembles T. S. Elliot's view of the modern men as "hollow" and empty yet filled with despair and disappointment. In his poem "The Hollow Men", Elliot (1925) writes: "Shape without form/Paralysed force" (quoted in Hasan, 2019, p. 171). The circumstances of the war and its consequences cause the hollowness of these men and force them to "live for the sake of the 'self' rather than 'selves'" (Hasan, 2019, p. 171). They turn into paralyzed beings who lack the agency of taking actions. Similarly, the persons who struggled in capitalist societies are seen by Dos Passos as

a “lost generation.” Alfred Kazin (1995), examining writings from the thirties, proposes that for Dos Passos, “the lost generation becomes all the lost generations from the beginning of modern time in America—all who have known themselves to be lost in the fires of war or struggling up the icy slopes of modern capitalism” (Kazin, 1995, p. 321). As a modernist novelist, he regards the modern generations as filled with emptiness and as lost due to their passivity and lack of morality especially when they chase materialistic goals without focusing on their human relations.

The exact term, “the lost generation”, is used frequently in 1930s contexts. In her 1936 article “The Second Lost Generation,” Harlan Hatcher calls the youth who suffered from poverty and unemployment in the Depression era “the second lost generation” (p. 621). This “new lost generation,” Hatcher points out, drew the attention of writers such as Dos Passos (p. 622). In his novels, Dos Passos represents the juveniles as victims of economic decadence, poverty, and dysfunctional family relationships. Marginalized from their parents’ daily concerns, they became another “lost generation”. Eleanor Roosevelt (1933) admitted her worry about the juvenile generation’s future when declaring, “I have moments of real terror, when I think we may be losing this generation” (quoted in Uys, 1999, p. 23). Mrs. Roosevelt further projects this expected loss of a whole generation on the children’s parents. In her words, “it is not purely a question of the education of youth; it is a question of the education of parents, because so many have lost their holds on their children” (quoted in Uys, 1999, p. 23).

In the mid-1930s, particularly in 1936 when *The Big Money* was published, children’s departure from the family house became a noticeable phenomenon. In *Riding the Rails*, Errol Lincoln Uys (1999) maintains that a large number of children of the 1930s left their families to seek job opportunities wherein they experienced adventurous lives and, indeed, escape from poverty. Uys writes:

At the height of the Great Depression, 250,000 teenage hoboes were roaming America. Some left home because they felt they were a burden to their families; some fled homes shattered by the shame of unemployment and poverty. Some left because it seemed a great adventure. With the blessing of parents or runaways, they hit the road and went in search for a better life. (Uys, 1999, p. 11)

Uys, who received letters from people living at that time, concludes in his book that many children hit the road seeking adventures (p. 52). John Fawcett, a hobo from the 1930s, generalizes the view that, like many children in the 1930s, he left the family for “an adventure”. Fawcett declares: “Mom and Dad were good, loving parents, so I certainly didn’t run away because of my home life. Why do boys run away? For adventure, I guess, because it’s exciting and dangerous” (quoted in Uys, 1999, p. 68). Bill Hackett, another hobo, describes his departure of Flint with excitement. In his words, “My heart beat fast and the adrenaline flowed. With a great spurt of steam, the locomotive got under way. . . What an incredible adventure! I felt as if I were Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and the Swiss Family Robinson combined” (quoted in Uys, p. 63). In *The Big Money*, in some Newsreels and in two main narratives, Dos Passos delineates the circumstances of the modern generations and indicates that children were not totally cared for; they do not have valid communications with their families, and they were not loved in the way they should have been due to their parents’ being busy with making money.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the novel, twelve of the twenty-five Newsreels contain something relevant to children, and previous critics have clarified the Newsreels’ function. Robert C. Rosen (1981) maintains that the Newsreels’ presence in *U.S.A.* “is not random” (p. 79). The chosen news headlines and popular songs offer a frame to read the novel’s narratives. Charles Marz (1979) argues that each headline in *U.S.A.* “is a verbal snapshot, a verbal recapitulation of some part of the world. Each snapshot is a short re-lived event . . . Persons and events are shot and the Newsreels preserve the remains” (quoted in Edwards, 1999, p. 249). In *The Big Money*, two contradictory views toward children’s lives are shown within the same Newsreel to indicate family dysfunction. Parents aspire for upward social mobility, and this typical American Dream leads to the children’s departure of the family house. Newsreel XLV, for instance, states that “Father wants economy, Mother craves opportunity for her children, daughter desires social prestige and son wants travel, speed, get-up- and- go” (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 14). While this Newsreel presents the mother’s interest in craving “opportunity for her children” and suggests that children are interested in traveling, a poem in the same Newsreel reads:

I hate to see de evenin sun go down  
Hate to see de evenin sun go down  
Cause my baby he done lef’ dis town. (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 14)

The persona in this poem hates her/his lover’s departure from the town. Yet, the juvenile in the previous headline departs the family house seeking a better life condition. This contradiction of a parent’s hatred of the beloved’s departure while being interested in finding opportunity for the child shows the extent to which the young generation is “lost” between conflicting states: hidden care and prominent carelessness. The child’s being in contradiction leads him/her to seek work to be away from family.

Due to children’s interest in escaping from the family’s hard life conditions, opportunities for young boys predominated newspapers, as the novel’s journalistic segments show. Newsreel XLVII presents the headline: “boy seeking future offered opportunity . . . good positions for bright. . . CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT. . . boy to learn. . . errand boy. . . office boy” (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 23). This fragmentary line indicates hollowness and absence in the lives of children as they seek to leave the family house. Within the children’s attempt to escape from the family

house, the working parents are seen as indifferent in developing their children's personalities. In Newsreel LIX, which introduces a chapter about Charlie Anderson's life, a lyric reads:

I want to see my pa  
I want to see my ma  
I want to go to dear old Omaha. (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 227)

The beginning of this stanza, "I want to see my pa," signifies the persona's need to his father's presence indicating the father's major role in developing his children's personality. In spite of this detail in the above Newsreel, children choose to seek better life conditions away from their families.

Even in the first Newsreels of Dos Passos' novel *1919*, Newsreels XLVI and XLVII, there is a large survey of boys' and young men's job opportunities in the advertisements in addition to a celebration of their hard work:

boy seeking future offered opportunity. . . good positions for bright. . . CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT . . .  
boy to learn. . . errand boy. . . office boy. (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 790)  
YOUNG MAN WANTED. (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 790)

. . .  
young man not afraid of hard work. (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 791)

Within this context that encourages the juvenile's works, the generation of the 1930s as represented by Dos Passos pursues the fulfillment of the American Dream. It is the illusion of achieving wealth and better social life conditions.

While Dos Passos' characters try to reach a better social life condition by adopting the American Dream, the consequence of materialism and the seeking of upward social mobility lead to their personal downward mobility, especially in morality and spirituality. By achieving material success, they become self-indulged and rarely do they consider their families' emotional needs. As Stylianos Papadimitriou (2021) explains, Dos Passos and Faulkner, in their novels from the 1930s, criticize the American Dream's promises as it leads to moral degradation; it corrupts the individual as well as the society (p. 18). Walther R. Fisher (1973) accurately defines the American dream as a "materialistic myth [that] does not require a regeneration or sacrifice of self; rather, it promises that if one employs one's energies and talents to the fullest, one will reap the rewards of status, wealth, and power. The materialistic code assumes that one will pursue one's self-interest, not deny it for the betterment of someone else" (Fisher, 1973, p. 161). The selfishness resulted from this materialistic myth leads to parents' denying their responsibility of promoting healthy relationship with their children.

*The Big Money's* narratives about fictional characters portray how children's lives are in conflict and futility due to being born in families whose main concern is money. For the sake of money, parents and children lack familial contact. In the narratives concerning Charlie Anderson and Margo Dowling, similarly to what is shown in the Newsreels in *The Big Money*, Dos Passos represents money's influence on children's lives. Being busy in a capitalist world, the world of money, detaches parents from their sons and daughters. In the narrative about Charlie there is little reference to Wheatley and Marguerite, Charlie and Gladys' children. Meanwhile, Charlie indulges himself with business to breed his money. While he succeeds in business, Charlie does not behave as a loving parent or even as what Marx (1844) calls "a social being" (2000, p. 213). The night before Charlie marries Gladys, he asks her to have a drink just like she does in the country club; yet, she rejects his offer. Seemingly more of a parent than him, Gladys says: "Mother says that if the parents get drunk they have idiot children" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 243). He responds to her, "Oh, you poor baby" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 243), reflecting his indifference about his future children. Also after his wife gives birth to Wheatley and Marguerite, Charlie, not considering his wife's several small operations due to delivering the children, shows his interest in getting into bed with Gladys (Dos Passos, 1936, pp. 244, 245). Selfishly, without attention to his developed family, Charlie cares about satisfying his needs. His character as a parent, fragmented in different segments in the novel, illustrates the agony and emptiness of the modern family's life during the 1930s aftermath.

Paradoxically, Charlie, a businessman from the bourgeois class, is not unlike the working poor parents who are presented in the novel's last Newsreel, Newsreel LXVIII, as leaving their children in order to make money. The Newsreel presents Ella May Wiggins' protest song, "Mill Mother's Lament" (1929), which reads: "We leave our home in the morning/ We kiss our children goodbye" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 418). Indeed, Wiggins' song is about another context which is the protest of the working mill mothers in 1929 due to their low wages which are not enough to provide their families' basic needs (Huber, 2009, p. 100). In the exact song, Wiggins poignantly clarifies that the working mothers leave their houses for their work while in their hearts they have love for their children. When earning their salaries, however, these mothers pay the bills without fulfilling the responsibility of childbearing (Huber, 2009, p. 100). This conflicted position emerges due to poverty and for money's sake. This view is apparent in "While we slave for the bosses/ Our children scream an' cry/ But when we draw our money/ Our grocery bills to pay" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 418). The interest in paying the bills is what Charlie also assumes his family needs. Charlie justifies not coming to the house by saying that he is making money. Rhetorically he asks Gladys, "if I didn't make the money how I would pay the bills?" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 245). Charlie's foremost priority is accumulating money. Even if the outcome is paying the bills his wife creates, Charlie is busy in this capitalist world. As a result, a breakdown of communication and a sense of alienation extends in Charlie's family.

Rarely does Charlie think in a foreshadowing perspective about his children's future. When in the hospital after having an accident at work, Charlie does not mind his son Whatley coming to see him. The narrator describes: "Gladys

and Charlie had a bitter row about letting Whatley come as she said she didn't want the child to remember his father in the hospital" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 251). Here, due to a materialistic mentality being influenced by his business life, Charlie assumes that "plenty of time" is enough to make Whatley forget the experience of seeing him at hospital. In his business-like words, Charlie says, "But, Glad, he'll have plenty of time to get over it, get over it a damn sight sooner than I will" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 252). Charlie's supposition is probably true. Nevertheless, Charlie neglects to think about his son's future recalling of the situation. This reflects a difficulty that a materialistic parent faces while interpreting and understanding their children's conditions.

The silence and the reductive representation of Charlie's children indicate how children at that time were marginalized from their parents' concerns due to materialistic reasons. This has a strong impact on children's recalling of awful memories, a thing which the novel does not show on the surface; yet, it is encoded. In her book *The Nature of Trauma in American Novels*, Michelle Balaev (2012) argues that fragmentation and complexity in narratives convey personal tensions in the lives of the protagonists. Balaev writes: "The lack of cohesion and the disturbance of previous formulations of self and reality are sometimes conveyed in the form of an interruptive or nonlinear narrative. In addition, a temporary disjointed narrative highlights the struggles of the protagonist to identify the meaning and purpose of an experience" (Balaev, 2012, p. xvi). Charlie tries to find a meaning to his life yet he does not consider what his children might recall in their futures. The centeredness of Charlie and the passivity of his children in the narratives of the novel demonstrate emotional loss and tension in such a family, a message which Dos Passos indicates in this representation.

Charlie's experience in the hospital and being away from his business for a while, however, causes a slight change in his role as a parent. When he is brought to his house from the hospital, Charlie spends some of his time playing with his children and talking with their governess (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 252). Without his business, Charlie develops his relationship with his children by showing his concern for what interests them. In response to this progress, his children are lost between Charlie's current attention and his past carelessness. Newsreel LIX carries a similar message by presenting the "radio song" (1924): "Mr. Radio Man won't you do what you can/ 'Cause I'm so lonely/ Tell my Mammy to come back home/ Mr. Radio Man" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 228). The persona here is a child trying to appeal to the radio after his mother's death. It seems that Dos Passos chooses to present this song to capture the feeling of the children whose parent is absent. This feeling of loneliness resembles what children such as Whatley and Marguerite might feel, even if the narrative sections about Charlie do not say it explicitly. In fact, the physical or emotional absence of the parent in the modern context, as the one delineated by Dos Passos, illustrates that the modern children are as hollow as their parents; they are drowned in confusion and futility that they passively accept or subconsciously reject.

Margo Dowling, whose childhood is traced in the narrative sections, is another child who is victimized because of moral degradation and a profit-driven mentality. At the very beginning of the narrative about Margo, Margo's father Fred says nice words to Margo, such as "How's daddy good little girl?" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 130). Margo also "would bounce up and down on his [Fred's] shoulder and feel the muscles of his arm hard like oars tighten against her" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 130). In this particular example, the father's care is reflected; through feeling her father's hard hands, Margo is playing with him. Yet, heavy drinking shatters this tender fatherhood. As a consequence, her stepmother, Agnes, begins taking care of Margo while Fred is away from the family house (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 130). Agnes' care for Margo clashes with her continuous rows with Margo's father. When Fred comes back to the house and he is drunk, Agnes quarrels with him until Fred calls her "dirty names" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 132). Although Fred used to play with Margo and Agnes used to tell stories showing a good image of Fred in the past, because of such rows, Margo "would run into her bedroom and slam the door and sometimes even pull the bureau across it and get into bed and lie there shaking" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 132). The momentary physical "shaking" causes instability in Margo's life. "Margie's dreams", the narrator describes, "were [only and all] about running away" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 132). The concern here is the subconscious of Margo. Her feelings are left unvoiced and the audience should relate the narrator's limited description of the character to how Margo is shown in the narrative. In modernist novels, even the character's silence elicits the readers to know the thoughts and feelings that the character represses due to personal or societal reasons. The narrator's description of Margo's inner thoughts and that Margo does not put her feelings into words demonstrate how society and family dysfunction make Margo considers leaving the family house.

Margo's dream of leaving her family results from the moral callousness of her family: her father is drunkard and her stepmother's main concern is the making of money. Margo realizes, while awake in the middle of the night, "how awful it was to be poor and have a father like that" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 136). Margo here is caught between poverty and her father's drinking. Fred, a drunkard and a representative of the first lost generation, causes Margo to decide "to run away or kill herself as soon as she got home so that she wouldn't have to face the people. . . ever again" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 134). Margo, to escape from poverty and the harsh reality of her life, is introduced by Agnes to the acting work wherein Margo reads *Smart Set*, which Frank, Agnes' second husband, describes as "that filthy magazine" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 143). Margo, further, does not resist being sexually abused by Frank who works as an actor. "When it [the rape] was over," the narrator describes, "she [Margo] wasn't crying. She didn't care. . . She got up and straightened her dress" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 144). The only thing that "she could think of was to run away" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 145). At the moment, it is Agnes's responsibility to let Margo think of running away; Agnes leaves Margo in Frank's care. Agnes, further, devotes her life to paying the bills, a materialistic aim which eventually corrupts Margo's childhood. Margo, sexually abused, has the thought of running away to Cuba by marrying Tony, though she is only sixteen (Dos Passos,

1936, pp. 146, 192). Margo is victimized because of Agnes' plans of paying the bills that indirectly cause a deterioration in Margo's childhood.

Margo's realization of her own loss is further reflected when she does not care about the death of her blind infant. What Margo does when her baby dies is "hoping that she's died too" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 197). As if she desires the blindness of her dead infant, Margo does not react to calming words. "No matter what anybody said to her," the narrator describes, "she wouldn't answer or open her eyes" (Dos Passos, 1936, p. 197). Margo's experiencing this momentary blindness when closing her eyes resonates with her unspoken realization that she is similar to her dead infant; she is lost in a "lost generation." In modernist novels, the characters struggle to put into words their thoughts and experience, and this explains Margo's situation when she remains silent after the loss of her baby. Similarly to her infant, who is born blind, Margo is figuratively blinded in a society which chases money by any means.

The conflicted situation of Margo can be clearly understood when comparing it to a real anecdote from the 1930s America. The reason behind relating a fictional representation of a character to a situation from the 1930s is Dos Passos' choice of writing about historical realities in a modernist form. Modernist art, as Peter Childs (2000) defines it, is "experimental, formally complex, elliptical, contains elements of decreation as well as creation, and tends to associate notions of the artist's freedom from realism, materialism, traditional genre and form, with notions of cultural apocalypse and disaster" (Childs, 2000, p. 2). *The Big Money* encodes the novelist's real and fictionalized reaction against capitalism and its consequences on children and their relationship with their parents. Not unlike Dos Passos' portrayal of Margo's hatred of life, in a letter sent to Eleanor Roosevelt in 1934, a fifteen years old girl shows her suffering as a child. The girl asserts to Mrs. Roosevelt that she is sick of her life. The letter reads:

I hate everything now because life seems blind I love my mother dearly my dad works 3 dys a wk he gets \$40 a mth. But he has lots of old bills to pay from before when he did not work I wish I had work I would help my dad although he is mean to me. As old as I am I still get beaten well you would say (why) because sometimes he gets drunk and starts to beat us for silly things I'm sick And tired Dad buy me something once in a great while. (qtd. in Cohen, 2002, p. 46)

The juvenile sender of this letter and the represented children (such as Margo) in *The Big Money* are lost because of their parents' preoccupation with money. They are "lost" as a consequence of being between contradictory concerns. Sometimes, love and passion support them, yet indifference is also there. Due to living with the carelessness of their parents, which results from a preoccupation with what is materialistic, children of this period become a second "lost generation".

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Dos Passos indicates in *The Big Money*'s Newsreels and narratives a warning societal message that some of the 1930s Juveniles in America are a second "lost generation" due to one of their parents' chasing money. Children presented in the novel's documentary segments are seeking jobs outside the sphere of their families. Charlie Anderson's children are ignored from their father's self-centered materialistic concerns. Even Margo Dowling stands frozen between the care and the materialistic thinking of her stepmother and the changed nature of her father. Ultimately, Margo, sexually abused and later married at a young age, gives birth to a blind child, symbolizing the status of these children's generation at that time in America. Within *The Big Money*'s sections, and in novels such as *The Big Money*, Dos Passos showcases and formulates historical realities about 1930s America's materialistic thinking, within which children are seen as a "lost generation".

Indeed, literary critics have considered Dos Passos a modernist who features humanitarian, political, and social issues in his writings. He repeats, juxtaposes, and complicates various viewpoints and representations in novels as *The Big Money*, aiming to demonstrate the complexity of realities within the modern period. Pizer (2013) suggests that Dos Passos deploys modernistic techniques to indicate naturalistic themes (p. viii). Heather A. Love (2016) argues that Dos Passos' writings present the complex nature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century communication culture (p. 128). Dos Passos sets up a relationship between historical and fictive information, and the reader is challenged to understand the message by relating the clustered facts (Love, 2016, p. 126). Love writes: "By interspersing fictional character studies with fact-based vignettes, Dos Passos' work illustrates the role that literature can play in modeling ways to engage the complicated and interconnected reality of twentieth- (and now twenty-first) century America" (p. 126). The current paper considers the function of Dos Passos' integrating documentary and narrative sections in *The Big Money* and examines Dos Passos' depiction of children in these sections within the 1930s context.

*The Big Money*, a modernist novel, carries messages in narrative and documentary sections that children of the 1930s, due to their parents being busy with materialistic affairs, are seen as a second lost generation. Indirectly, Dos Passos prompts his readers to relate the messages fragmented in public and personal sections so they would avoid the tragedies which he records fictionally and historically in novels as *The Big Money*. As Linda Wanger-Martain (2020) maintains, "American modern writing has the aim of showing rather than saying"; it gives its readers the opportunity to critically comment on the juxtaposed representations (p. 111). *The Big Money* and the *U.S.A.*'s other two volumes embody this point. Dos Passos indicates complicated messages about the position of children in 1930s America, and the reader face representations of children in different sections from a number of perspectives to reach a bigger understanding about how children struggled like a "second lost generation" within the context of 1930s in America.



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# A Comparative Study on Epistemic Modality in Linguistic Research Article Conclusions

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**Abstract**—Epistemic modality is an important and complex linguistic device in academic writing, which could help authors state their claims and positions. The conclusion is also a critical part in research articles, where authors summarize their studies and give suggestions. Many scholars study modality in many aspects, but they rarely focus on its application in research article conclusions. Therefore, this study compared the use of modality in 25 conclusions of linguistic research papers written by native English speakers and 25 English conclusions written by Chinese authors from a systemic functional perspective. It focused on the similarities and differences of the use of modality in linguistic research article conclusions from two perspectives: value and orientation. The results show that both native English speakers and Chinese authors are more likely to rely on low and median value and subjective orientation in their conclusions. The findings suggest that linguistic research article authors tend to make claims in a reserved and tentative way. Moreover, this study shows that Chinese authors are more likely to employ modal expressions and subjective orientation of modality in their conclusions, which may relate to cultural diversity and modality shift. The findings of the study may help non-native English authors to produce linguistic research articles in a more acceptable way.

**Index Terms**—modality, research article conclusion, value, orientation

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the past decades, English has always been the “official” language of research articles. According to academia, the most authoritative international academic journals are also written in English. Henceforth, in nations where English is not the native language, there is a trend of delivering degree programs in English, with English language majors and doctoral candidates mandated to compose their dissertations in English. With the increasing number of international academic publications edited in English, most academic communications have increasingly been dominated by English. Research articles are very important to start, advance or maintain a scholar’s study and career. However, writing an English research article is a more challenging thing for non-native English scholars than for native English speakers (Ahmad, 1997; Lillis & Curry, 2011). Nevertheless, scholars who are non-native English speakers are compelled to engage in academic competition by publishing in their respective fields in a language that is not their first, and in doing so, strive to attain recognition in the academic community (Hyland, 2016).

Epistemic modality has long been regarded as being critical to academic writing, and modality is used to hedge or boost propositions (Hyland, 1994). There are various ways to define modality. According to Lyons (1977), epistemic modality is concerned with “matters of knowledge, belief, or opinion rather than fact”. According to Coates (1983), the domain of epistemic modality ought to center on the speaker’s suppositions or evaluations of potentialities, which, in the majority of instances, conveys the speaker’s level of assurance (or lack of confidence) in the veracity of the proposition being articulated. Palmer (2001) introduces epistemic modality as speakers express their judgments about the factual status of the proposition. From the perspective of systemic functional grammar, Halliday (2004) defined epistemic modality as the speaker is expressing his judgement or making a prediction. In systemic functional grammar, modal expression has two variables, “value” and “orientation”. “Value” refers to the writer’s commitment to the modalized statement, means different degrees of certainty at three levels, and it implies an obvious differentiation between certainty and uncertainty. The orientation of epistemic modality shows the author’s responsibility for the modal meaning conveyed through diverse linguistic forms, while also communicating the subjective or objective nature of a modal expression. For example,

Eg 1: She **must** have told you the truth. (high value)

Eg 2: Tom **should** go to school now. (median value)

Eg 3: She **may** be sad. (low value)

Eg 4: **I’m sure** we can success. (subjectivity)

Eg 5: **It’s possible** that he has already told her. (objectivity)

A conclusion is a crucial component of any type of writing. The academic writing’s conclusion is distinct from the result or discussion. Facts are descriptive, but points are interpretative, therefore if the result part deals with facts, the conclusion part deals with points. Authors of conclusion have some flexibility in deciding which of their possible points to include and then which to highlight. In short, authors claim that their contributions have proved and/or provide a new perspective. It reveals the author’s perspective on the research and what they anticipate from the entire article. However,

how to write qualified conclusions is a challenge to non-native English authors. As epistemic modality is an effective tool to express an author's attitude, non-native English speakers need to use modality properly in the conclusion to improve the quality of their work. Though the function of epistemic modality in the conclusion is of great value, less attention has been given to the comparison of epistemic modality between conclusion of linguistic articles by English authors and those by Chinese authors. The use of epistemic modality is different in Chinese and English (Xie, 2022), which may influence Chinese authors expressing their attitudes and stating their claims. This study, therefore, aims to compare the differences between the use of epistemic modality in the conclusion section of English research articles written by English authors and Chinese authors. To achieve the research goal, the following questions are addressed:

(1) What are the similarities and differences of the use of epistemic modality between native English speakers and Chinese authors?

(2) What are the reasons for the different use of epistemic modality between native English speakers and Chinese authors?

On the basis of the findings of the study, hoping non-native English authors will have a better awareness of the choice of epistemic modality in the conclusion. With this awareness, non-native English authors may be able to more strategically qualify their claims to their propositions.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Epistemic Modality in Systemic-Functional Grammar*

The interpersonal metafunction in systemic-functional grammar encompasses all modes of linguistic expression employed to convey social and personal relationships, ranging from the speaker's manner of entering a speech situation to their performance of a speech act. This function is realized by the implementation of mood and modality. Modality is an essential part that realizes the function of the interpersonal metafunction. Therefore, effective communication between the speaker/writer and the listener/reader is contingent upon the judicious employment of modality. Within systemic-functional grammar, the system of epistemic modality types is comprised of the scales of probability, which gauges the likelihood of the proposition's veracity, and usuality, which ascertains the frequency of the proposition's truthfulness, in addition to the scales of inclination and obligation. Halliday (2004) has referred to probability as "epistemic modality".

According to Halliday (2004), there are two parameters of each epistemic modal expression: value and orientation. Value refers to the speaker's modal commitment and the degree of certainty, while orientation indicates the linguistic forms of expressing modality and the speaker's modal responsibility (Thompson, 2013). In epistemic modality, the concept of value, or the degrees of certainty, may be classified into three distinct levels: low, median, and high, which correspond to the modal expressions of possibly, probably, and certainly, respectively. Furthermore, modal expressions may be categorized according to their orientation, either subjective (e.g., 'I think that...') or objective (e.g., 'it is likely that...'), and explicit (e.g., 'I believe that...', 'it is possible that...') or implicit (e.g., 'possibly', 'may'). The orientation of modal expressions serves to demonstrate the source of modality, either directly from the speaker or indirectly conveyed through the speaker by another party, as well as how the speaker assumes responsibility for the expressed judgment via various linguistic forms (Thompson, 2013). The orientation is objective when the speaker is trying to state things which are objective and s/he just tells the fact to the hearer, whereas the orientation of epistemic modality is subjective when the speaker is indicating that s/he is the source of modality instead of telling the facts.

### B. *Studies on Modality in L1 and L2 Academic Writing*

Recent researches have shown that L2 speakers use epistemic modality differently than L1 speakers. In academic writing, L2 speakers tend to use less epistemic modality compared to L1 speakers (e.g., Chen, 2010). This is often attributed to L2 speakers' limited knowledge of academic vocabulary and discourse conventions. L2 speakers also tend to use more tentative language when expressing uncertainty in academic writing (e.g., Hu & Li, 2015). Comparative studies were widely adopted for the usage of epistemic modality in L1 and L2 academic writing. Scholars conducted their investigations from the perspective of the different use of epistemic modality in various languages. Hinkel (2009) discussed the effects of essay topics on modal verb uses in L1 and L2 academic writing. He introduced the indirectness in L1 and L2 academic writing which includes the study of epistemic modality. Yang et al. (2015) conducted an examination of the utilization of epistemic modality in a corpus of 25 English-medium medical research articles from a systemic functional perspective. The results indicated that medical research article writers were more likely to use low and median values, implicitly subjective, implicitly objective and explicitly objective orientations of epistemic modality. These studies indicated there are differences between L1 and L2 writers' usage of epistemic modality. However, few studies have focused on the similarities and differences of the use of epistemic modality between L1 and L2 writers, taking into account the conclusion as an important part of the academic writing.

### C. *Studies on Conclusion*

As the conclusion section has always been the critical section in a complete article, scholars research the conclusion in various ways. Some scholars compare expressions of an evaluative stance in English and non-English research article conclusions (Loi et al., 2016). The structure of conclusion is a popular topic to discuss. Bunton (2005) explains the

general structure of PhD conclusion chapters and analyzes for their functional moves and steps. Likewise, Sheldon (2019) studies knowledge construction of conclusion sections of research articles written by English L1 and L2 writers to help them find a better way to organize their conclusions. Moreover, some scholars pay more attention to the genre of conclusions. Although there are bodies of research studies on modality and conclusions respectively, the studies on their correlation are few. The reason for this may lie in scholars' insufficient awareness of the importance of modality in conclusions. Therefore, in this study, we will focus on modality in linguistic research article conclusion by applying quantitative research to give an appropriate suggestion of the use of modality in conclusion to non-native English authors.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Data

The selection of research materials from a solitary academic discipline was predicated on the likelihood that any subtle variations could have arisen due to disciplinary disparities in the texts. Specifically, the research articles scrutinized for this study were obtained from the discipline of linguistics. This choice of discipline was made as the writer possessed a considerable degree of familiarity with the field, thus facilitating the reading and interpretation of its research articles, and thus minimizing the possibility of bias in the analysis.

50 research article conclusions in English, with 25 for each group, g1 being English native speaker authors and g2 being Chinese authors, were chosen from *Journal of Pragmatics* and *Lingua*, which are the most authoritative international linguistic journals. All 50 articles were published from 2012 to 2022, with a length of conclusion ranging from 200 to 700 words.

Among the 50 linguistic research articles, 25 English research articles were written by first-language English speakers and 25 English research articles by Chinese native speakers. Native English speaker authors were distinguished from non-English speaker authors based on Wood's (2001) standard: "first authors must have names native to the country concerned and also be affiliated with an institution in countries where English is spoken as the first language." Similar to the selection of research articles written by English native authors, Chinese authors were also chosen based on the institutions they attach to.

The conclusion section was defined as the last section of a research article which was found after the 'discussion' section or 'results and discussion' selection. The unit of this analysis for the investigation was the CLAUSE. According to Halliday (2004), clause was defined as "the central processing unit in the lexicogrammar — in the specific sense that it is in the clause that meanings of different kinds are mapped into an integrated grammatical structure". In general grammar, a clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a verb, and form a sentence or part of a sentence. A complex clause is a unit consisting of two or more clauses linked by coordination or subordination. There are examples from our research materials.

Eg 6: ||Our analysis **suggests** that standardized, scripted approaches to communication **are likely to** be limited in their effectiveness||if they...

Eg 7: ||I also **believe**||that they **confirm**||what I had set out as my own general impression of my own sense of humor.

Therefore, the selected field, the arrangement of time, authors, the identification of conclusions and the unit of analysis have been determined. Then, research procedures were explained in the next part specifically.

#### B. Research Procedures

The modality that applied in native English speakers' conclusions and non-native English speakers' conclusions was compared based on two parameters: value and orientation, which were developed by Halliday (2004) and Thompson (2013). Therefore, it is important to make clear classifications of value and orientation. There are three values in epistemic modality: high, median, and low. Table 1 shows the values of modality in systemic functional grammar with examples from corpus. The author of this thesis divided each parameter into different types of linguistic realization based on modal expressions in the corpus to make it easier to recognize and collect.

TABLE 1  
VALUES OF MODALITY IN SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Value	Linguistic realization	Examples
High	An epistemic verb with a subject in a clause	We believe that...; our findings show...; we conclude...
	Modal auxiliary	Must; have to; could not...
	Adverb	Undoubtedly; unquestionably; unlikely...
	Adjective	Undisputed; unquestionable...
Median	An epistemic verb with a subject in a clause	We hypothesized...; it suggests...
	Modal auxiliary	Should...
	Adverb	Probably; likely...
	Adjective	Probable; possible...
Low	An epistemic verb with a subject in a clause	Our findings imply...
	Modal auxiliary	May; could; might...
	Adverb	Potentially...
	Adjective	Potential...

Then, as explained before, orientation is divided into subjectivity and objectivity. Examples of modal expressions in the corpus of different orientations have been presented in Table 2. Table 2 presents some modal expressions of subjectivity and objectivity of orientation.

After having a basic concept of these expressions, 50 research articles were divided into two groups, 25 research articles written by native English speakers were group 1, and the other 25 research articles written by Chinese authors were group 2. The author calculated all the modal expressions in conclusion sections of each group and classified them based on orientation and value. Data have been showed in Table 3. Then, the frequency of each type of modal expressions could be compared.

The results of the analysis were subject to a quantitative analysis. The occurrence frequencies of modal expressions in conclusion in the research articles under study were manually counted. In order to answer the questions mentioned in the introduction section, what kinds of modal expressions were most frequently used in conclusions written by native English-speaking authors and Chinese authors was discussed. Besides, reasons for using these modal expressions were explored based on value and orientation.

TABLE 2  
ORIENTATIONS OF MODALITY IN SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Orientation	Linguistic realization	Examples
Subjective	An epistemic verb with a first person subject in a separate	We believe that...; we conclude...; we speculate...; we hypothesize...
	Modal auxiliary	May; might...
Objective	Adverb	Perhaps; unlikely
	Adjective	Likely; unlikely; possible
	Modal lexical verb with an inanimate subject referring to the data, results, findings, etc	Our findings imply...; our findings suggest...; our result suggests...; our discussion implies...

#### IV. RESULTS

##### A. The Frequency of Value in Conclusion

According to the analysis of the 50 linguistic research articles, most of the modal expressions got the chance to occur in conclusions, though the frequencies of each expression were not in equal proportion.

In 25 research article conclusions written by English native speakers (g1), the least frequently used was high value, with a total number of 7 (8.43%) only. The most frequently used in conclusion was low value, with a total frequency of 47 (56.62%). Median value lay in between with the frequency of 29 (34.93%). Similarly, in the 25 research articles written by Chinese native authors (g2), high value was the least frequently used in conclusions, with a total frequency of 4 (4.16%). While the most frequently used in conclusions was low value, with the total frequency of 58 (60.41%). Median value still lay in between with the number of 34 (35.41%). Examples 8-13 are instances that show different values in Group 1 and Group 2 (g1-19 in Example 8 refers to the 19<sup>th</sup> sample in Group 1, and so on).

TABLE 3  
THE FREQUENCY OF VALUE IN CONCLUSION

	Low	Median	High	Total
English (g1)	47 (56.62%)	29 (34.93%)	7 (8.43%)	83 (100%)
Chinese (g2)	58 (60.41%)	34 (35.41%)	4 (4.16%)	96 (100%)

Eg 8: It **must** have undergone shaping by UG theorists only after studying all relevant linguistic data from all possible human languages. (g1-19) (high value)

Eg 9: Nonetheless, **we believe that** the naturalistic quantitative merits of this study far outweigh its methodological limitations,... (g2-16) (high value)

Eg 10: Elicitation data, in which nouns are provided in a relatively context-free environment, **shows** that the notion of default class membership for nouns is fairly robust. (g1-4) (median value)

Eg 11: The results of the study have also **shown that** whether and how readers' online interpretation of referring expressions will be affected by over-specifications is closely related to three factors,... (g2-6) (median value)

Eg 12: **I hypothesize that** the kinds of immediate judgments noted by Ambady and Wilson are linked with the sorts of emotional processes detailed by Damasio, et al. (g1-2) (low value)

Eg 13: Until this question is answered, interpreting directionality will remain a **potential** factor that **might** pose a challenge to our arguments. (g2-16) (low value)

##### B. The Frequency of Orientation in Conclusion

As shown in Table 4, the use of subjective was more frequent than objective in both Group 1 and Group 2. Obviously, research articles written by Chinese authors applied much more subjective modality (81.25%) than objective, while the proportion of subjective (60.24%) and objective (40.96%) in research articles written by English native speakers were relatively close. Examples 14-17 indicate different orientations in Group 1 and Group 2.

TABLE 4  
THE FREQUENCY OF ORIENTATION IN CONCLUSION

	Objective	Subjective	Total
English (g1)	34 (40.96%)	50 (60.24%)	83 (100%)
Chinese (g2)	18 (18.75%)	78 (81.25%)	96 (100%)

Eg 14: **We suggest that** in the future it **might** be useful to consider the possibility that both degree of prominence and communicative significance are continuous variables. (g1-15) (subjective)

Eg 15: In summary, **I suggest that** the study of semantics **should** take context into account, as this is consistent with the fact that the same sentence can have multiple interpretations in different contexts. (g2-22) (subjective)

Eg 16: Once the set of **potential** referents has been narrowed to those belonging to that category, the hearer will follow the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure and test interpretations in order of accessibility. (g1-23) (objective)

Eg 17: **It is thus shown that** syntactic and pragmatic processes interact to determine the different readings of the copular constructions. (g2-11) (objective)

### C. The Frequency of Different Modal Expressions

Table 5 shows the proportion that each modal expression takes respectively. The table presents that Chinese authors focus a lot on the employment of modal auxiliary, with a frequency of 75%, while native English speakers using modal expressions in research article conclusion are more decentralized in various modal expressions, with modal auxiliary accounting for 53.01%. More specific examples of different modal expressions are as follows.

Eg 18: **I have, however, suggested that** extending an account of right node raising to self-repairs may shed some light on the phenomenon,... (g1-25) (an epistemic verb with a first person subject in a separate)

Eg 19: Such highly variable input data **might** reasonably be thought to make resulting representations about morphemes weaker than if the input data were highly consistent and regularly activating the posited morphemic representation. (g1-21) (modal auxiliary)

Eg 20: The information this study has provided for teachers and researchers is that ER and EV are very valuable for the literacy needed in English class, that EV is **potentially** as good as ER in providing vocabulary input,... (g1-13) (modal adverb)

Eg 21: Once the set of **potential** referents has been narrowed to those belonging to that category, the hearer will follow the relevance theoretic comprehension procedure and test interpretations in order of accessibility. (g1-23) (adjective)

Eg 22: On a final note, **this study shows that** “I thought”-turns are highly inflected by social relationships as a long-term feature of social life. (g1-5) (modal lexical verb with an inanimate subject)

Eg 23: **I conclude that** the first-person pronoun + topic marker combination is gradually developing into a construct that is used as the topic of a matrix clause and as a pragmatic marker. (g2-5) (an epistemic verb with a first person subject in a separate)

Eg 24: This **may** constrain the generalizability of our empirical findings. (g2-8) (modal auxiliary)

Eg 25: However, we clearly know that the sample used for the paper is not at all adequate as a typological sample, but it **probably** is appropriate for the purpose of this study... (g2-17) (modal adverb)

Eg 26: However, it should be noted that, as a naturalistic corpus-based approach, this study could not fully exclude all **potential** confounding factors, as would be **possible** in a highly-controlled experimental setting. (g2-16) (adjective)

Eg 27: **The results of the study have also shown that** whether and how readers' online interpretation of referring expressions will be affected by over-specifications is closely related to three factors... (g2-6) (modal lexical verb with an inanimate subject)

TABLE 5  
THE FREQUENCY OF DIFFERENT MODAL EXPRESSIONS

Modal Expressions	English (g1)	Chinese (g2)
An epistemic verb with a first person subject in a separate	7 (0.08%)	6 (0.06%)
Modal auxiliary	44 (53.01%)	72 (75%)
Modal adverb	10 (12.04%)	2 (0.02%)
Adjective	9 (10.84%)	7 (0.07%)
Modal lexical verb with an inanimate subject referring to the data, results, findings, etc	14 (16.86%)	9 (9.38%)
Total	83 (100%)	96 (100%)

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. The Comparison of Modality

The results present that almost every conclusion that had been researched involved modal expressions in linguistic research articles written by both native English speakers and Chinese authors. This finding can show that academic authors rely so much on modality in their conclusion sections. It may be due to the pragmatic function of modality, which mainly expresses politeness.

Politeness is widely regarded as an important factor in effective scientific or academic writing and used to develop the interaction between the author and reader (Hyland, 1994). Without polite expressions, a good interaction between the author and the reader cannot be established, which may prevent the author from making the reader accept his or her claims. The following examples with low value from our samples also show authors' reserve and respect for the reader in making their claims.

Eg 28: The data explored here also pose a challenge for the notion of semantic composition for these languages, since it is **possible**,... (g1-4) (low value)

Eg 29: Finally, metadiscourse use in RAs is subject to complex epistemological and socio-cultural influences which **could** only be partially revealed by a corpus-based study like ours. (g2-8) (low value)

Eg 30: Although some groups of data appear to be subject to the conserving effect of frequency, showing very low reduction rates, for most of the data, the more often that para occurs with a word, the more **likely** that para is to be reduced. (g1-16) (median value)

Eg 31: However, we clearly know that the sample used for the paper is not at all adequate as a typological sample, but it **probably** is appropriate for the purpose of this study,... (g2-17) (median value)

In linguistic discourse, the utilization of low and median value modality in the conclusion section denotes an expression of the author's viewpoint in a reserved manner, thereby suggesting that the author's claims are not definitively established as truth. This form of discourse invites doubt and allows for alternative perspectives to be considered, indicating the author's intention to treat the reader as an intellectual equal who is capable of independent thought. Hyland (2006) suggests that this approach reflects the author's desire to avoid imposing their views on the reader, opting instead for a negative politeness strategy through the application of low and median value modalities in the presentation of novel claims. The prevalence of low and median value modalities in the conclusion sections of linguistic research articles implies that authors in this field exhibit a tendency to adopt these strategies in their writing.

Myers (1989) suggests that the readers of research articles are either "an immediate audience of individual researchers and particular groups of researchers doing similar work" or "the wider scientific community". Obviously, the intended audience for linguistic research articles comprises of proficient linguistic scholars, as opposed to laypersons, who possess sufficient expertise and professional acumen to develop their independent perspectives. For these learned readers, any form of imposition may encroach upon their negative face, as it infringes upon their autonomy to form ideas and opinions. Therefore, when linguistic authors prepare for their research articles, they usually use particular linguistic devices to show their respect for the negative face of their readers and mitigate the force of their academic knowledge claims.

Besides, the results of this study indicate that Chinese authors tend to employ more modality than native English speaker authors. Cultural diversity between China and English-speaking countries may be the main reason for different frequency of modality in conclusion. Because of the difference of Chinese and western cultural tradition, the concepts of politeness and face in writer-reader interaction also have different cognition, one of the important differences is that the concept of "face" is strongly influenced by Confucianism and collectivism characteristics, while in western society, here mainly refers to the European and American developed country English society, have been strongly influenced by individualism. Saving face is Chinese first characteristic of social context. Using modality to state one's claims is a good way to cater to readers' positive face. Therefore, Chinese authors tend to employ a lot of hedges in their research article conclusion sections even in statements which are not used to state their claims. For example,

Eg 32: As the notion of (in)appropriateness is context-dependent and socio-culturally motivated, future research **may** compare RHD topical divergences with topic use practices of neurologically intact participants in other languages,... (g2-17)

Eg 33: However, it **should** be noted that, as a naturalistic corpus-based approach, this study **could** not fully exclude all potential confounding factors,... (g2-16)

Examples 32-33 from our samples show that Chinese authors sometimes use modality in sentences which are not concluding sentences. Comparing with research article conclusions written by native English speaker, Chinese authors applied more modality in non-concluding sentences. This finding may be influenced by different cultures and language preference.

### *B. The Comparison of Value*

The finding results clearly show that high value is not used frequently in conclusion sections of research articles written by either native English speakers or Chinese authors, constituting less than 10 percent of the total number of modal expressions. This low percentage suggests that linguistic authors are often too cautious to use high value modal expressions to express positive politeness, which can be risky (Myers, 1989). In linguistic research articles, although authors could use high value modal expressions to express solidarity with readers and assume that readers have the same opinion about a proposition, the readers may not necessarily agree with the authors. If the authors' points of view are not shared by the readers, the authors' politeness strategy is likely to fail, and the interaction between the authors and the readers will not succeed. Therefore, authors will fail to get acceptance for their claims from the readers.

As shown in Table 3, low value and median value predominate in both research article conclusion written by native English speakers and Chinese authors. The number of employment of low value and median value may indicate that linguistic research article authors tend to express uncertainty rather than certainty about their claims in conclusion. This

study also conforms to Hyland's (1996) studies in hedge and modality, which report that low value and median value modality are most frequently used modal expressions. There are some examples from our samples. Examples 34-39 are statements with low value modality.

Eg 34: Teachers **might** reasonably ask how this one recording of a teacher intervening in a dispute between three children can apply to a range of interventions in a range of settings. (g1-8)

Eg 35: Therefore, although the cognitive mechanisms triggering the behavioral variations associated with linguistic choice **may** be the same for all humans. (g1-2)

Eg 36: **It is possible that** notions such as coercion, construal, or other related concepts would provide useful ways of talking about these mismatches and their resolution. (g1-4)

Eg 37: The mismatch between patterns of perceptual similarity and patterns of unfaithful mapping is inconsistent with a **potential** extension of the P-map hypothesis to the production of phonotactically unattested sequences. (g1-18)

Eg 38: It is therefore especially important for Chinese scientists to develop an awareness of the variety of hedging devices that **could** be employed in showing detachment or commitment in their writing. (g2-4)

Eg 39: Another **possible** motivation is the interaction between person deixis and spatial deixis in a language which lacks person marking on the verb. (g2-7)

Examples 40-42 are statements with median value.

Eg 40: Generalizable pragmatic rules may be discovered ethnographically, or through psychological investigation, but they will **likely** never account perfectly for every case. (g1-2)

Eg 41: ...but it **probably** is appropriate for the purpose of this study, which demonstrates a method, rather than drawing conclusions about frequencies, distributions, etc. (g2-17)

Eg 42: **Our findings indicate that** the divergent rhetorical construction by means of metadiscourse across Chinese and English RAs may arise from some linguistic, sociocultural and rhetorical factors. (g2-2)

To some extent, despite the variety of linguistic forms and values, the modal expressions used in the above examples all convey writer's intention to add uncertainty in their statement. It is appropriate for both native English speaker authors and Chinese authors to propose their claims and statement by the means of modal expressions. Based on their studies and investigations, linguistic authors often give their considerations to the amount of certainty they should put in a particular statement. Low value and median value help authors express their proposition more cautious and tentative but not too categorical. Therefore, low value and median value are more frequently used in conclusions written by both native English speakers and Chinese authors because of the provisional nature of the conclusions being discussed.

Linguistic research article authors' preference for low and median value modal expressions may be associated with the nature of language. Language itself is an uncertain and complex science, which means it is often influenced by other factors and it is not always expressed by a certain form. Thus, the data of their study are often not as reliable and precise as those science academic articles. An absolute or definite conclusion is often not available. It might be due to imprecision, indicativeness and the lack of systematic empirical validation that the authors of linguistic research articles prefer to express more uncertainty than certainty in conclusion.

The inclination of authors of linguistic research articles to utilize expressions of uncertainty may be attributed to their endeavors to persuade their readership of the validity of their assertions, thereby enhancing the likelihood of their claims attaining the status of established knowledge. This is achievable by employing modalities of low and median values, which demonstrate a relatively high degree of likelihood regarding the certainty or veracity of the authors' propositions, reflecting their academic rigor and discernment in formulating conclusions. By employing low and median value modalities in their conclusions, authors can mitigate the risk of encountering opposition from their readers (Martín-Martín, 2008), and engender greater acceptance of their claims among the readership. Therefore, the appropriate utilization of low and median value modalities has the potential to facilitate the acceptance of the assertions posited by authors of linguistic research articles.

### C. The Comparison of Orientation

In both articles written by native English speakers and Chinese authors, subjective marks the prominence of subjectivity in conclusion by explicitly stating the subjective source of conviction, that is, the authors or the readers. In the corpus, the subjective orientation is used more frequently than objective orientation, especially in Group 2 (Chinese). The following are examples of modality with subjective orientation from the samples.

Eg 43: **I hypothesize that** the kinds of immediate judgments noted by Ambady and Wilson are linked with the sorts of emotional processes detailed by Damasio et al. (g1-2) (subjective)

Eg 44: **I conclude that** the first-person pronoun+topic marker combination is gradually developing into a construct that is used as the topic of a matrix clause and as a pragmatic marker. (g2-5) (subjective)

Appropriately expressing subjectivity in conclusion of academic research articles may contribute to the acceptance of the authors' claims by the readers and the establishment of a good writer-reader relationship. Because of the author's subjective statement, the claim is marked only as a possible opinion to be verified, not as a definitive or absolute statement of fact (Hyland, 2006). Modality with a subjective orientation conveys the idea that what the authors present is only their personal/subjective point of view, and that the reader's point of view is obvious. The interaction between the author and the reader develops well when the reader has room for dissent.

The subjective orientation used in the linguistic research articles written by both native English speakers and Chinese



authors in the study is predominantly realized by the use of modal auxiliary. As shown in example 45-49, this pattern eliminates personal involvement by hiding first-person pronouns in the expression, thus indicating that the author is trying to express non-personality in their statement, which is considered an essential characteristic of scientific academic writing (Lassen, 2006). The lower the researchers' participation in a scientific study, the more credible it is and the more persuasive its conclusions.

Eg 45: We suggest that in the future it **might** be useful to consider the possibility that both degree of prominence and communicative significance are continuous variables. (g1-15)

Eg 46: Since judgment tasks have a metalinguistic component, and force a binary choice, a key skill that develops with age **ought to** be the metalinguistic awareness that even slight violations of meaning (pragmatics) **ought to** be rejected or objected to in a similar fashion as violations of truth (semantics) and well-formedness (syntax). (g1-22)

Eg 47: I have, however, suggested that extending an account of right node raising to self-repairs **may** shed some light on the phenomenon, and perhaps support an approach that at first glance **might** seem to be a radical departure from more traditional approaches. (g1-25)

Eg 48: Finally, metadiscourse use in RAs is subject to complex epistemological and socio-cultural influences which **could** only be partially revealed by a corpus-based study like ours. (g2-8)

Eg 49: However, it **should** be noted that, as a naturalistic corpus-based approach, this study **could** not fully exclude all potential confounding factors, as would be possible in a highly-controlled experimental setting. (g1-16)

On the other hand, the study shows that Chinese author tend to apply more subjective orientation of modality in their conclusions. As shown in Table 4, research article conclusion sections written by Chinese authors employ more subjective modal expression (81.25%) than native English speaker (60.24%). As shown in Table 5, most of subjective modal expression in research article conclusion written by Chinese authors focus on the use of modal auxiliary. The frequency of "should" in conclusion written by Chinese authors is apparently much higher than native English speakers' in the study. There are some examples in group 2.

Eg 50: Therefore, the results cannot be extrapolated to the whole academic culture or to other disciplinary fields and **should** be taken cautiously. (g2-2)

Eg 51: Without question, to gain further insight into the mutating extension, the statistical sense threshold of the marginal instances' dissimilarity from the exemplars in terms of the semantic dilution level **should** be identified. (g2-12)

Statements like "...should..." have a predominant proportion in research article conclusions written by Chinese authors. One reason for they frequently apply "should" is the result of the method of "modality shift" adopted by Chinese authors when translating Chinese into English. In other words, Chinese authors tend to translate their claims and suggestions directly into English by Chinese language habits. Another reason why Chinese authors prefer to employ "should" in linguistic research article conclusion is that Chinese authors often pay more attention to different use between two languages in their studies, and give suggestions to the readers based on their findings. Therefore, their conclusions always involve suggestions for language learners and some suggestions for further research. "Should", as a result is the modal auxiliary which can express suggestion and instruction.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Modality is a very important yet complex linguistic device in research article writing which is challenging for non-English speakers to implement and understand appropriately. In order to have a better understanding of modality in research article writing, especially in conclusion, 50 (25 for each group) linguistic research articles had been investigated from a systemic functional perspective. Instructed by the key research questions, which were raised on the basis of the research aim, this study took the conclusions of linguistic research articles as the research materials, and aimed to give a suggestion to non-native English linguistic authors to produce more acceptable linguistic research articles. This investigation into the comparison of value and orientation of modality reveals that these authors tend to apply low and median value of modality (altogether more than 90% of all examples in each group) and they are more likely to apply subjective orientation (altogether more than 50% of all examples in each group) in their conclusions. These findings suggest that linguistic research article authors will persuade readers and construct new knowledge mostly through a reserved and tentative presentation of their claims and avoid absolutizing their claims simultaneously. The differences of the use of modality between Chinese authors and native English speakers can be considered as cultural diversity and language habits, which may provide us a suggestion for language teaching and learning.

Even though the size of the corpus is limited, and the findings could not be generalized to the whole population of linguistic authors, some of the findings of modality in the study can provide the instruction of linguistic research article authors in their writing course on the semantic and pragmatic expectations and conventions of modalities they need to master if they want to successfully publish their research. Pragmatically, modality has interpersonal functions, among which negotiation and politeness are especially important. A better understanding of certain interpersonal aspects of from the perspective of modality, and the appropriate use of modality in writing about linguistic research articles may help non-native linguistic research article authors to make more persuasive claims in their research and to construct more appropriate writings stylistically.

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# Unveiling the Power of Liberal Feminism in Namita Gokhale's Selected Works: A Journey Towards Gender Inclusivity

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**Abstract**—Liberal feminism serves as a crucial theory that ignites equality between men and women. The aim of this study is to introduce liberal feminist concepts into Namita Gokhale's selected works. The author of these works delves into women's lives and the reinforcement of men, reflecting the principles of liberal feminism. What sets liberal feminism apart from other theories is its support for men while advocating against male discrimination. Notably, Roman Payne, among numerous liberal feminist thinkers, emphasizes the significance of liberal feminism in his book *Hope and Despair*. Payne's work conveys the idea that "A woman must prioritize her liberty over a man in order to attain happiness" (Payne, 2008). This notion underscores women's pursuit of freedom and equality. Consequently, this study concentrates on women's lives depicted in Namita Gokhale's works, drawing comparisons to the ideals of liberal feminism.

**Index Terms**—empowerment, gender equality, liberal feminism, gender roles, equality, discrimination, self-identity

## I. INTRODUCTION

Among the various strands of feminism, liberal feminism stands out as both distinct and crucial. It actively advocates for women's rights and fights against discrimination. However, what sets liberal feminism apart from broader feminism is its emphasis on addressing both women's and men's equality and discrimination. The objective of this study is to explore the supportive stance of men towards women and also delve into men's rights. Gokhale's writings portray the multifaceted experiences of women, including their roles as mothers, housewives, working professionals, physically disabled individuals, and even mothers-in-law. Similarly, her works shed light on the experiences of men as working individuals, brothers, fathers, and husbands. By adopting an egalitarian perspective, Namita Gokhale's writings provide a basis for comparison with the principles of liberal feminism. Liberal feminism suggests that society should provide equal opportunities for women while discouraging discrimination against men. This is because both women and men can face discrimination from their own gender, not just from the opposite gender. For instance, a worker (regardless of gender) may face domination by a boss (regardless of gender). This perspective motivated the development of this study in conjunction with the ideas presented in Namita Gokhale's works.

For this study, three prominent works by Namita Gokhale have been selected, namely *The Book of Shadows*, *Priya: In Incredible Indiyaa*, and *Things to Leave Behind*. These literary pieces by Gokhale exhibit elements that embody the principles of liberal feminism. The study itself is organized into various sections, which include a literature review, analysis of results, discussion, and a concluding section.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is a crucial component of any research as it can demonstrate that this study is distinct from all previous studies. Several studies have explored the suffering experienced by women. For instance, Nirmala's article focuses on whether educated middle-class women prioritize the development and assertion of their identities, along with their aspirations for an equal partnership with men. By embracing a balanced view of Indian feminist ideals, Indian women can also anticipate improved cooperation from men, the development of their own identities, and equal partnerships within society (Nirmala, 2010).

Jonathan Crowe's study delves into the perspective of men regarding women, exploring their viewpoints and insights. The researcher has meticulously divided the study into three distinct parts, categorizing them based on whether participants support or do not support feminism. Additionally, the study delves into the primary psychological viewpoint, shedding light on the complexities of human perception. One crucial aspect of the discussion centers around the experience of guilt among certain men who hold themselves accountable for their perceived lack of success. In response to this phenomenon, feminists argue against solely blaming men for such circumstances. Moreover, the

research, from a feminist standpoint, demonstrates that failure and success are universal experiences that apply to all individuals. By drawing upon the Connell theory, this study provides valuable insights into the role of males within the context of feminism (Crowe, 2011).

Another significant study, conducted by Nikodemus Yudho Sulistyo, focuses on men's active participation in feminism. This research highlights the important fact that men also respond to women's issues and actively advocate for freedom and equality. By comparing Kiberd's perspective on feminism, which emphasizes the pursuit of genderless equality (Kiberd, 1985), this study contributes to the broader discourse surrounding gender dynamics. Additionally, Sulistyo's study uncovers how the character Krishna embodies male feminism within the narrative of *The Palace of Illusions* (Sulistyo, 2021). Through these studies, we gain a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of gender relationships and the evolving role of men in feminist movements.

Prajjal Saha, in their article "Are women genetically designed to be multi-skilled and multi-talented?" asserts that women assume numerous roles in their lives, including those of a wife, mother, and daughter, and are capable of even more. This article examines the issue of women's multifaceted talents and skills, while also exploring the different stages of women's lives (Saha, 2015).

In another study, Pittman discusses the involvement of men in feminism. The research analyzes Mc Gorry's ideas of feminism to gain insights into the study. Mc Gorry is praised for their feminist viewpoint, suggesting that it is relatively easier for men to embrace feminism. This is because women feminists often have to articulate their perspectives extensively to make society understand, whereas male feminists primarily need to support females in their pursuit of freedom and identity (Pittman, 2016). Honig's study scrutinizes the role of fathers as caregivers and educators for children. It explores how men can undertake tasks traditionally associated with women in their own lives. Men engage with children through various relationships, such as being a father, stepfather, or grandfather. The study aims to compare the different stages of men's lives with those of women, leading to the conclusion that men can perform tasks traditionally ascribed to women (Honig, 2008). A similar study has been done by Kumar (2020) and Jabeen et al. (2022) (Kumar et al., 2022).

The study conducted by Cornish critically examines the statement made by male thinker Soobug regarding the role of men in feminism. It highlights the perspective of certain men who consider it essential to support females and actively participate in collective mobilization alongside women. Additionally, this study delves into the intricate dynamics of women and men within the context of the family unit (Cornish, 1999).

Gardiner's research centers around the analysis of Ursula K. Le Guin's novel "The Dispossessed" and specifically explores the thought-provoking quote, "A person chooses work according to interest, talent, strength—what has the sex to do with that?" (Gardiner, 2005). By employing Friedan's feminist theory, this study dives into the realm of men's feminism, showcasing how feminist approaches have evolved in response to the changing societal roles of women. These theories have demonstrated their efficacy in transforming the consciousness and circumstances of both men and women (Gardiner, 2005; Kumar, 2021).

It is worth noting that there is a notable dearth of studies examining the ideas and perspectives of men in feminism. This scarcity offers a valuable opportunity for researchers to explore the current study within the context of Namita Gokhale's works. A thorough literature review reveals that the selected studies have not yet encompassed the results and ideas put forth by Namita Gokhale, thereby highlighting the distinctiveness and originality of the current study.

In the article "Women's Rights in India," the primary focus revolves around the lives of women. It acknowledges that each country has its own set of regulations and requirements, with specific laws designed exclusively for the betterment of women. Furthermore, the article sheds light on laws that promote the liberal lives of both men and women, such as provisions for free education and fundamental rights (Wilani & Mehdi, 2014).

Through these diverse studies and articles, a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of gender dynamics, feminism, and the pursuit of equality emerges. By analyzing different perspectives and exploring unique contexts, scholars contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding gender and social progress.

Furthermore, in her article, Emma Bjertén-Günther explores the significance of women and addresses the need to discuss "women's issues". Initially, the article inadvertently referred to "men" instead of "women," reflecting society's prevailing practice of considering men as the norm and women as exceptions. This article identifies and examines various challenges faced by women, including sexual and reproductive health, child-care leave, domestic violence, equal pay, martial law, welfare politics, and education (Bjertén-Günther, 2018). Women are not only fighting for their lives but also for their rights and complete freedom. Through careful observations, this article uncovers the root causes of these issues without undermining men. Its aim is to promote equal rights for all.

Seeken's study delves into the lives of both men and women, acknowledging that society often primarily focuses on the challenges faced by women. The research analyzes factors such as understanding, respect, and strength. It recognizes that in marriage, both partners encounter issues similar to the two sides of a coin (Seeken, 2018). Shreya Suresh Kumar discusses the dynamics of the husband-wife relationship, emphasizing the importance of honesty, both mentally and physically, on the part of the husband. The article encourages open communication, independent decision-making by women, and unwavering support from the husband. These aspects form the core of Shreya Suresh Kumar's discussion.

Powell's study, "Women and Men in Management," explores the experiences of men and women in the workplace. The researchers provide a comprehensive account of workplace issues such as payment disparities, harassment, and strategies for fostering inclusive cultures. This article incorporates Gary N. Powell's recent survey and review, shedding light on new challenges while drawing comparisons to past problems (Powell, 2018).

In Tannen's study, "You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation," the daily and psychological challenges faced by women are explored. The study delves into the complexities of communication between men and women, highlighting societal double standards. While women's work at home is accepted, men engaging in similar domestic responsibilities face societal resistance. Nowadays, both husbands and wives often work outside the home, yet women continue to shoulder cooking and cleaning responsibilities, while men's contribution in these areas remains scarce (Tannen, 1991).

The subsequent article, "Women, Men, and Power," examines theories regarding the existing disparity between men and women. Power dynamics between the genders are discussed, with women being treated less favorably in various spheres, including work, home, and society. Additionally, this article offers insights into understanding interpersonal relationships (Lips, 1991). Eagly's study, "The Science and Politics of Comparing Women and Men," focuses on gender stereotypes. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the research compares the behavior of women and men, with the aim of elevating the status of women (Eagly, 1995).

The literature review clearly demonstrates that no research has been conducted analyzing Namita Gokhale's novels from the perspective of liberal feminist theories. Consequently, this research applies the concepts of liberal feminism to explore the dynamics between men and women within the selected works of Namita Gokhale.

### III. DISCUSSION AND RESULT

The current research contains ideas about liberal feminism that can be understood by a discussion with perspectives of liberal feminism theory and Namita Gokhale's selected works. In many places, the researchers found that liberal feminism theory is a more interrelated theory to discover notions between men and women. From the selected works of Namita Gokhale, the researchers found that there are some interrelated correlations between women and men. This makes the researcher to compare the ideas of liberal feminism theory. For instance, in *The Book of Shadows*, the protagonist Rachita is story about exile, strangeness, and forbidden passions, as well as family history. Her character shifts between several levels of consciousness that are yet to be explored. After Rachita's husband death, she led her life unhelpful. She says that,

My best friend's husband had slithered off somewhere, but my fiancé's sister, as unstable a specimen as her sibling, had thrown a beaker full of acid on my face the day after the inquest. (Gokhale, 2001, p. 5)

You have tried me sorely, you have abused my trust! My tryst with time is over! Tell the faithless one, the Dililah, that her betrayal will cost her dear... (Gokhale, 2001, p. 5)

But Rachita didn't continue her unhelpful life. Because she believes that life has multiple ways to live. Moreover, Rachita realises her life has more unhappy movements than happy ones. So she started to live her life without her husband. After her husband's death, she witnessed an acid attack incident by her husband's very own sister. Rachita couldn't control her acid pain, and she thought the acid had been splashed by a woman (husband's sister). Her non-stop thinking is about 'woman taking revenge on another woman'. This point of view reflects in the concepts of Mill's theory, "Add to this the fact that to understand one woman is not necessary to understand any other woman; that even if a man studies many women of one social level or one country, that won't enable him to understand women at other levels or in other countries" (Mill, 1869).

After the acid attack, she decided to live in a different place where no one could disturb her. So she decided her childhood place, Ranikhet. While traveling to the hills, she didn't fear for anything. But her driver had doubts about continuing to Ranikhet. He arranged something for her to stay in the safe hotel. This place looks absolutely jungle mumsahib,' he said, a note of concern in his voice. "There must be wild animals around here, not to speak of thieves and robbers. Do you want to go on? We found a nice hotel in Ranikhet" (Gokhale, 2001, p. 8). The taxi driver was getting more and more alarmed. 'Maybe we should turn back now,' he said timidly, 'I don't think this road leads anywhere' (Gokhale, 2001, p. 9). In this discussion, the researchers found that as a man, the driver having concerned about Rachita. He provides numerous options for her protection and is also concerned about her stay. Likewise, in reality, many women and men are concerned about their opposite gender. Many people feel at ease with friends who are the opposite gender. They truly understand how to improve their lives in many different ways, such as by making sound financial decisions, selecting the right partners for them in life, and improving their life in general. They are not just friends.

To prove this, Lohanju is an important character in *The Book of Shadows* who always takes care of Rachita. She feels comfortable with Lohanju because he is not bothered about her face and always tells her motivational words. Lohanju gives solace words to Rachita. He doesn't know whether she feels comfortable, but he provides encouraging words to Rachita. She decided to listen to her mind when she lost her face by an acid attack. She is not worried about her past. For Rachita, even the sounds of the animals are familiar but not the society. Every day she meets different people with different combinations. So, she feels every woman and the men are strangers in her everyday life. She did not feel comfortable with the people in society. Lohanju is also a strange person, but he is comfortable. Rachita expressed her

opinion about Lohanju that “He has forgotten how old I am, how old he is. It is as though I am a child again, sitting huddled by the fireplace...” (Gokhale, 2001, p. 12). Lohanju is her motivational partner even though he is a man. This shows gender is not a big problem because anyone can motivate others. The entire words of Lohanju give her strength, which helps her come out from the problem. She tells about Lohanju that, “I have always found his fiction irresistible, I have never doubted any word he has ever spoken. Like this house, he too has taken me in, to hush my sorrow. He was born here, in this house...” (Gokhale, 2001, p. 16).

To discuss the bond between male and female, there is an important discussion to understand the mother and son relationship. In Namita Gokhale’s *Priya: In Incredible Indya* relationship between mother and son is essential to discuss. Because whenever Luv calls Priya, researchers can identify the true bond between mother and son. In reality, many children do not understand their parents. Parents are the best motivators because they always show their children love. However, some children don’t understand their parents and adopt the wrong lifestyle. When they understand that children and mothers are becoming stronger, life in a family will become more stable and happy. “Oh Maa, I need you! I miss you so much –” (Gokhale, 2011, p. 65). Mill says that “All processes are equally good, and all persons are equally qualified for every task or trade; but rather: Freedom of individual choice is the only thing that leads to the adoption of the best processes and puts each operation into the hands of those who are best qualified for it” (Mill, 1869). This idea of Mill is reflected in *Priya: In Incredible Indya*. Priya works for her twin son, husband, and her home. So Priya is the highest and more valuable person in the family.

In the novel, *Priya: In Incredible Indya*, Priya’s husband is natural and doesn’t hide anything in his mind. He always gives respect to Priya and her work. After coming to know about the ‘sati,’ he was confused. He told Priya that “I want to tell you something,” he said, his voice laden with tenderness. ‘If something should happen to me, if I were to suddenly die, I would want you to continue living, to be happy’” (Gokhale, 2011). Everyone has their individual life to live. There is no need to lose their life for others. “I didn’t want to change the course of my life” (Gokhale, 2011). The changes in everyone’s life may change their atmosphere and behavior. At the same time, changes should improve their lives and enhance their path to success.

Luv always likes his mother, and he expresses all the things and he accepts any corrections from his mother. He tells his mother that he admires her for her straightforwardness, smile, and candour. When Priya sees the girls with the entire artificial appearance, she believes they are wealthy and live luxurious lives. But now that she had heard their story, she felt strong, beautiful, and simple because of them. By this, it is clear that Priya wants encouraging and motivational words about her. Not only Priya, but everyone in real life desires for some words of encouragement about them.

There are many customs and traditions involved in marriage that becomes a business. The people follow the same methods for marriage. She displayed no anxiety and shed no tears but kept her head modesty downcast, as Suruli had suggested. The night before the wedding, women of the family and friends, and neighbors gathered to sing and dance (Gokhale, 2016).

After marriage, every woman has to face many situations. And they should be ready to manage all work. Tilottama is the protagonist of the novel *Things to Leave Behind*. Namita Gokhale correctly points out her condition after the marriage, “She had new and not travelled out of Naineetal before. She drank in all the new and strange sights form under her lowered veil. A vista of hills and valleys swathed in cloud and mist unfolded” (Gokhale, 2016, p. 47).

Women should also be prepared to make money and jewelry from their parental home because they have a tradition that requires dowry in order to lead their family. Namita Gokhale implies this in her novel, “Her mother’s jewelry and some of suruli’s gold bangles and rings were stitched into a belt around her waist-her, which belongs to her and her alone” (Gokhale, 2016, p. 47). During Tilottama’s marriage, her husband refused to take dowry because he stated that he already had enough furniture and money. But his parents and Tilottama’s parents didn’t get Tilottama’s husband’s point as necessary (Priyadarshini et al., 2021).

Many women are doing work like men and proving that they can do anything like men. Women are said to be stronger than men by many experts. But many women do not know the exact steps to take in order to advance in their lives. In order to succeed and lead happy lives, women therefore claim their own lives (Kumar et al., 2022). Tilottama is also doing her excellent work at her husband’s home. She was perfect as a wife, mother, daughter, daughter-in-law, and caretaker. But her dream diminished by doing perfectly household work. When she realized her unsuccessful life, she started to plan her life. Also, her husband and uncle helped her achieve in her life (Priyadarshini et al., 2021).

Also, in Namita Gokhale’s *Things to Leave Behind*, the protagonist’s life is portrayed as an emotional and depressed person. The protagonist Tilottama fights for her rights in her family because society always has restrictions on women’s life. But Tilottama didn’t like to follow other people’s opinions. She became emotional and depressed when Tilottama was not allowed to study (Gokhale, 2011). And her family expressed that women are born to take care of their family and children. But Tilottama decides to break others’ opinions and planned to study English and Mathematics to improve her knowledge. But her mother-in-law didn’t allow her to study. Tilottama didn’t expect any help from her family even though her husband and uncle helped her pay her education fees. Also, she encouraged her girl baby to get an education, and she gave more importance to education because she realised that education is the basis for every work. Though many people looked at her as a stranger, she didn’t stop her plan to get an education.

From the above analysis of Namita Gokhale’s works, the researchers can tell that there is a deep connection between men and women in selected works for this research. In the discussion, it is clear that men are more concerned about

their family members. Women are given more importance and are not involved in different roles assigned by the society such as caretaker, wife, mother and so on. These opinions are exact concepts of liberal feminism theory.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Women and men are simply different in terms of gender, and while they may hold opposing viewpoints, they may also hold similar viewpoints at times. It is obvious from the discussion that Namita Gokhale stated that the relationship between men and women is a strong one. It's also notable to witness that women were not just for the family, the husband, and the children. Men's concern about women understands this, giving equal respect to their wives, mothers and so on. Liberal feminism is also proclaiming that the prejudice between men and women is plummeting. When women are given opportunities, men are also improving their lives, but their lives are not always without improvement. The future recommendation will encourage and give interest to other researchers to study Namita Gokhale's work. This research focuses on comparing and bridging men's and women's lives. Also, the researcher has found some different spaces for research: psychological discussion, feminism, alienation, loss of self-identity, and rights of women.

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# Woman Interrupted: A Foucauldian Reading of Gender, Madness, and Power in the Movies *Girl, Interrupted* and *Unsane*

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**Abstract**—This article presents a Foucauldian reading of the movies *Girl, Interrupted* (1999) and *Unsane* (2018) which deal with women in psychiatric institutions. Building on Foucault's conceptualization of asylums, the medical gaze, and confinement as a paradigm of power, the researchers study the female protagonists in the two movies as characters struggling with psychological issues stemming from their rejection of gender normativity. The experiences of Susanna and Sawyer in asylums are a reflection of a larger struggle against social expectations and sexual norms.

**Index Terms**—gender, movies, medical gaze, Foucault

## I. INTRODUCTION

This article examines the representation of incarcerated mad women in the movies; *Girl, Interrupted* (1999) and *Unsane* (2018). It analyzes the construction of female madness by examining the themes of madness and sexuality, women and confinement, and healing and re-assimilation into society post-treatment. It aims to depict the two female protagonists, Susanna Kaysen and Sawyer Valentini, as objects of held power. Drawing on Michel Foucault's theories on the birth of the clinic, confinement as a paradigm of power, and the panopticon, this study argues that the depicted madness and mental instability of the two characters are in fact symptoms of their social struggle. Susanna and Sawyer fight against social control over their sexuality, bodies, gender identity, and self-actualization. Both women end up in mental institutions, being admitted there by social coercion and deception respectively. However, it is important to underscore that the path that led them to these confined places and their experiences there are direct consequences to their personal unhealthy relationships with men. Susanna gets involved with a married man while Sawyer has a relationship with a stalker. This article examines these relationships within a social construct that is central to how asylums have been created and operated.

According to Foucault (1965, 1977b) the birth of the clinic is inextricable from confinement as a mode of 'treatment'. In fact, he states that hospitals, asylums, and prisons as well as their subjects have parallel histories in being managed and controlled by people in power (1965, 1977a, 1977b). Psychiatric hospitals, thus, not only become a manifestation of power struggles and existing power dynamics but an extension of both. The doctors, the nurses, the administrators perform control and authority over patients similar to the power practiced by elites including upper classes, capitalists, patriarchal authorities on their subjects and other disempowered and disenfranchised groups. As women and victims of heteronormative and capitalist expectations, Susanna and Sawyer are seen by those around them as in need of confined treatment, which is not only to 'cure' them of their mental ailments but also their rebellious attempts to reject the social and the male gaze. Susanna's promiscuity and Sawyer's resistance of her stalker's admiring gaze qualify them as subjects in mental institutions bent on reforming and medicating them. Their relationships with men outside and inside the institutions are fundamental for their 'diagnosis'. Some of these relationships have caused their admittance and others are depicted as a way of healing. The argument of this article is that these women are confined and diagnosed with madness due to their rebellious nature particularly as women challenging social and cultural norms.

*Girl, Interrupted* is a 1999 movie based on Susanna Kaysen's memoir of the same title. It documents her experience at a psychiatric hospital during 1967 after attempting to commit suicide by overdosing on painkillers and alcohol. It follows the aimless life of this eighteen-year-old female particularly through her doomed affair with a married man and a causal relationship with a young man who is later drafted to fight in Vietnam. Upon attempting to kill herself, Susanna

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is cajoled by her parents and their family doctor to check into Claymoore which is a psychiatric hospital. There she gets to meet several female patients who appear to be social outcasts and are dealing with trauma. Susanna's relationship with Lisa, a fellow patient in Claymoore is crucial in understanding her therapeutic journey. Lisa is the epitome of the charismatic troubled rebel, and Susanna gets tremendously intrigued by her and her wild spirit. As her alter ego, Lisa represents everything Susanna wishes to be and say. However, once their friendship sours, Susanna turns to the institution she detests and finds refuge and solace in Valerie, the head nurse, and the "wonderful" Dr. Sonia Wick. The movie ends with Susanna's release from hospital and her reminiscing about her time there and the bonding she has made with fellow women there. The movie received mixed reviews from critics and audiences but launched the career of Angelina Jolie who won her only Academy Award for her role as Lisa.

While *Girl, Interrupted* represents fond memories of its protagonist's stay at a psychiatric hospital, Steven Soderbergh-helmed film *Unsane* has a contrary take. It is a psychological horror movie about its protagonist Sawyer Valentini who escapes her old life after enduring a traumatic experience of being the victim of stalking. Even though she moves to a new city, starts a new job, and upends her former life, she still suffers from post-traumatic symptoms that affect her performance at work and hinder relationships with her mother and men in her life. After an episode that follows her inability to engage in an intimate physical relationship with a man, she seeks help at Highland Creek Behavioral Center. What begins as an attempt to find a support group for victims of stalking, ends with her unwittingly admitting herself to the center after an administrator misguides her into signing 'routine' forms. Sawyer finds herself confined in the center against her will, unable to reverse her decision or convince anyone that she is not ill. During a conversation with an undercover reporter, a patient by the name of Nate, she finds out that the center is running a scam operation. It becomes clear that the center tricks people into checking themselves in, in order to receive payments from the insurance companies they deal with. Once the claims run out, the patients are deemed cured and are released. The events take a dark turn when Sawyer finds out that her stalker has impersonated an orderly in order to stalk her in plain view, taking advantage of her vulnerable position as a medicated patient. What transpires is a series of horrific events and murders that concludes with Sawyer escaping her stalker and tormenter by brutally killing him and the center being exposed. However, while *Girl, Interrupted* ends with Susanna arriving at a triumphant place of self-growth and realization, *Unsane* ends with a frozen image of its protagonist running and looking behind her and into the stalking camera with eyes full of terror and madness. This article unpacks these two cinematic experiences of madness and mental instability as socially constructed and explores the façade of tranquility in the ending of *Girl, Interrupted* and the lingering terror in *Unsane*.

## II. WOMEN AND MADNESS

The association between certain female behaviors and mental illness is a practice that goes back into history. Hysteria is one of the earliest conditions that have been used characteristically to describe socially unacceptable female conducts. First reference to hysteria dates to ancient Egyptians in 1900 BC which "identifies the cause of hysterical disorders in spontaneous uterus movement within the female body" (Tasca et al., 2012). This 'diagnosis' of hysteria continued during ancient Greek times. Melampus, a physician, diagnosed some virgins' refusal to engage in sexual activities or "to honor the phallus" as a form of madness (Tasca et al., 2012). In fact, the word 'hysteria' comes from the Greek word for uterus. There and then began the history of intertwining women's sexual rebellion and madness and mental illness. It also gave rise to medicalizing women's unorthodox behavior. Centuries of medical progress have not changed this perspective on female difference as being an illness or a disability. Even though Freud revolutionized the way psychological conditions are treated by preferring talk therapy over medication and lobotomy, his view of women's anatomical difference still ascribed it to abnormality. He saw women as castrated men, psychoanalyzing females' realization of the absence of the phallus as detrimental to their psychosexual growth (1905). He termed that condition as penis envy. Several feminist psychoanalysts have adopted a social rereading of Freud's theory, seeing the lack as a social castration performed by society and social norms on women and the female body. The envy, they argue, is not for the penis but for the freedom society grants men (Horney, 1926; Thompson, 1943).

This view of psychological symptoms and neuroses as being socially constructed has been the core of the emergent disability studies. Under patriarchy, women who stray from the norms have been seen as medically "abnormal, the sick ones" (Garland-Thomson, 2002, p. 22) and as "negative, vulnerable figures" in society unable to function (Morris, 1992, p. 166). All this led to the conclusion that disability has been used as a "cultural category" of a prejudicial nature (Shakespeare, 1996, p. 98) and a social construct (Garland-Thomson, 2002, 2011; Linton, 2005; Titchkosky, 2000). Female behavior and bodies have been historically characterized as disabled whether through the Freudian lack or "conditions such as premenstrual tension, hysteria, post-natal depression and Munchausen's syndrome by proxy" (Goodley, 2016, p. 46). In their seminal work *The Mad Woman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, Gilbert and Gubar (1980) see women's madness as a form of rebellion. They argue that the representation of women's madness has been inextricable from their deviation from the norms. In this patriarchal view of women's psychological illness, madness becomes a "female disease" (p. 53). This article's discussion of the two movies builds on this perspective, as Susanna's and Sawyer's perceived medical and psychological conditions and diagnoses are intricately viewed from within this prism that women's nonnormative choices are incoherent and unstable.

### III. FOUCAULT AND THE ASYLUM

In *Madness and Civilization*, Foucault (1965) describes the historical event of the establishment of the general hospital in Paris as the moment when medicine has become a power tool by using what he calls the great confinement:

From the very start, one thing is clear: the Hospital General is not a medical establishment. It is rather a sort of semi judicial structure, an administrative entity which, along with the already constituted powers, and outside of the courts, decides, judges, and executes (p. 125).

Thus, according to Foucault, the birth of the hospital has been marked by an understanding of its usefulness as a tool of correction, control, and management. The use of confinement, particularly in psychiatric hospitals and centers, as a pretext of treatment makes these institutions indistinguishable from prisons while blurring the line between treatment and punishment.

In tracing the origin of the clinic and medical centers, Foucault (1965, 1973) notes that these institutions have been created to solve what people in power observe as political and economic problems. Unemployed people were some of the first to be admitted to these establishments. Their condition as unemployed and their poverty as a consequence have been equated with idleness and uselessness to maintain them under control and prevent any uprising (Foucault, 1965). It is no coincidence that “madmen were included in the proscription of idleness. From its origin, they would have their place beside the poor, deserving or not, and the idle, voluntary or not” (p. 136). This led to the rise of medical institutions as places of an “ethical status” (p. 137), as they do not only ‘cure’ the body but also the spirit and immorality. This status, Foucault writes, grants them power and authority which are usually associated with judicial and security apparatuses. They are able to confine, punish, administer medicine without the consent of the patients, and take full control of people’s bodies, spaces, personal and intimate choices. Administrators and doctors in medical and particularly psychiatric hospitals can decide when and where patients sleep, when they eat, where they spend their free time if they have any, and when they ‘misbehave,’ they are sent to solitary confinement. Consequently, when a nonmedical behavior is treated as an illness and such institutions are given unlimited power to ‘correct’ that behavior, then places of healing become spaces of a performance of power, subjugation, and moral correction.

In psychiatric hospitals or what used to be called asylum, “madness was controlled, not cured” (Foucault, 1965, p. 143). This control is administered using fear which is “an essential presence in the asylum” (p. 144). The administration of fear takes several forms, most powerful of all are confinement and solitary confinement which is a confinement within confinement. The threat of permanent confinement surrounds Susanna’s entrance to Claymoore. First, the taxi driver who dropped her there warns her not to throw anchor in that place. Then, Valerie, the head nurse, cautions her not to be like Lisa who has been in the hospital for eight years. For Sawyer, the threat of making her accidental confinement permanent prompts her to perform the role of the voluntary patient temporarily until she gains her freedom when her insurance money runs out. This performance is interrupted when she sees her stalker and a greater terror trumps the fear of confinement. Thus, the fear of punishment leads to socially approved self-disciplining and re-indoctrination. For Susanna, she is reintegrated into society while Sawyer remains a social pariah because her treatment is interrupted by the stalker’s intrusion in the institution.

One technique used in asylums, according to Foucault (1965), is guilt which is administered like a medicine. He says that as part of their treatment, patients are held responsible for their irrational and violent actions which affect them and other patients. Even though psychiatric hospitals create the environment of fear of confinement that is conducive to the patients’ violent behavior, the treatment makes it the responsibility of the patient to control the anger, the fear, and the violence it creates (pp. 145-6). Sawyer, for example, is blamed for her outbursts when they are the result of her coercive confinement. Even Nate, who is the only sympathetic figure in the hospital, tells her that it is up to her to remain sane. Lisa in *Girl, Interrupted*, is seen as incurable because she does not control her anger and causes harm to others. In a climactic scene in the movie, Lisa’s harsh words provoke Daisy, a former patient, to hang herself. Lisa shows no remorse which stuns Susanna who feels guilty for not defending Daisy. Susanna is the ideal Foucauldian madwoman who accepts her guilt whereas Lisa remains defiant rejecting her culpability because the system and society are to blame for what has happened to all the women in Claymoore. Foucault concludes that “the asylum no longer punished the madman’s guilt ... but it did more, it organized that guilt” (p. 146). Therefore, what is central to the asylum is management rather than cure, and control rather than treatment. These spaces that are supposed to heal the mind and the spirit become places of indoctrination, and madness becomes a manifestation of nonnormative behavior rather than an illness.

### IV. MADNESS AND SEXUALITY

The sexuality of the two female protagonists plays a central role in their institutionalization. In *Girl, Interrupted*, Susanna uses her sexuality to explore her choices and test the limits of the social norms. She engages in an affair with a married professor and casual sex with Toby, a man whom she has met at a party. Sawyer, in *Unsane*, rejects the attention of David who meets her when she volunteers to read to his invalid father. He stalks her until she gets a restraining order against him. She seeks professional help when she has a traumatic reaction during sexual intimacy with a man she has met online for casual sex. She explicitly tells him that she wants to have sex with him and not to see him again. The next day she looks up Highland Creek Center to join a support group and is unwittingly admitted as a

patient. Both women assume nonnormative sexual choices and immediately after are deemed psychologically unstable and are coerced into checking into mental facilities. As Foucault suggests, these places of confinement are meant for moral corrections and programming people into accepting social norms.

Foucault (1978, 1982) argues that sexuality as well as sexual behavior is aspects that social, religious, and/or political authorities find suitable to regulate. Not only do they regulate sexual behavior but they also produce identities based on observing sexual norms, eliminating what they deem abnormal, unnatural, or deviant. Susanna's promiscuity and noncommittal sexual appetite become a precursor to her admittance into Claymoore. The audience sees no other indicators that led to her attempted suicide; no family history of abuse or infidelities, no disillusionment at school, no heartbreaks, as if her 'abnormal' sexual experimentations are her only ailment. The sociopolitical framing of normalcy vs. abnormality becomes clearer when Susanna's story is placed in parallel to Toby's. After their first sexual encounter, he tells her that he might be drafted to fight in Vietnam. Later when Susanna is in Claymoore, Toby comes to visit her. They attempt to have sex in her room before they are interrupted by head nurse Valerie. When they take a walk outside, Toby tells Susanna that he has been drafted and he will be shipped to Vietnam. He asks her to run away with him to Canada where she can escape her confinement and he the draft. She refuses because she is not ready to leave Claymoore now and if she were to leave with a man, it would not be him. Toby disappears from Susanna's life and from the narrative as no conclusion is given to his fate. The film's juxtaposition of Susanna's and Toby's confinements, hospital and army respectively, creates a parallel of situations; however, Toby's decision to escape which Susanna rejects in favor of continued confinement suggests that her war is more serious and in need of administration than his. In the historical context of a senseless war which will cost thousands of lives, Susanna is represented as finding haven and logic in a psychiatric institution, making her choice sane in comparison to the insane war. Susanna returns voluntarily to the confinement she has been resenting, signaling the beginning of her 'therapy' when she rejects Toby and the kind of sexual non-attachment he represents for her. Her reformation has begun.

For Sawyer, her so-called 'non-feminine' character is highlighted from the beginning and before she is institutionalized. When a colleague in another cubicle overhears Sawyer speaking irately with a client on the phone, she tells her that she can win him [the client] over with honey rather than with vinegar, assuming the caller is male. Sawyer corrects her tersely that the caller is a woman before she walks angrily out of the office. She is already viewed by people around her as cold and unaccommodating particularly towards men. Her next interaction is with her boss who compliments her work before he offers her a trip with him to a conference, insinuating an expectation of sexual favors on her part. Sawyer rejects her boss' unwanted sexual advances; however, the narrative does not frame it as an act of empowerment but rather as a symptom of her trauma. She is seen as broken because she does not appreciate men's 'attention;' however, this is not a symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, but of her nonnormative behavior of resisting the male gaze and being the passive recipient of men's attraction, whether David the stalker or her harassing boss.

Not long after this incident, she is depicted as seeking physical pleasure with a stranger whom she has no intention to see again. When she is unable to be intimate in this purely physical relationship, the audience realizes that she has a psychological problem due to her traumatic experience of being stalked. Sawyer is not represented as firm, strong, or independent as these encounters might suggest but she is weak and unstable. Her refrain from using 'honey' is not a reflection of her professional character, her rejection of her boss' unwanted sexual advances is not a sign of strength, or her clear and unburdened pursuit of sexual pleasure is not characteristic of metropolitan independence, but they are all framed as PTSD and her failure to play the woman role. Sawyer is disintegrating and her symptoms are related to her refusal to play the normative social roles.

When Sawyer goes to Highland Creek Center, the administrator tricks her into confessing that she has thought of suicide and encourages her to sign the 'routine' forms, which are in fact a relinquishing of her freedom and licensing for the center to confine her. Once she is involuntarily admitted, she reacts angrily and violently to her confinement; punching an orderly and slapping another patient. Even though these actions are reactions to the terror of her sudden ordeal, a violent reaction to the violence of confinement, all elements of the system of the asylum blame her for her actions, whether the administrators, the doctor, or fellow patients. This is the guilt, described by Foucault, which the system creates around the patient who in turn internalizes it. When Sawyer meets the doctor for the first time to explain to him the mistake that happened because the therapist she has met tricked her into checking herself into the center, he responds by listing her own violations. He uses her confession that she has thought about suicide and the incident of punching the orderly to make her believe that she belongs in the asylum. It is the discourse of the asylum that the patient should be in control of their actions even when they are not in control of their own bodies and freedom as they are confined and observed. Even though Sawyer has been struggling even before she went to the center, her violent reactions do not begin until she is admitted there. It is her confinement that exasperates her anxieties rather than her condition that is causing her volatile reactions. Susanna's reaction to her confinement might not have been as violent as Sawyer's but she too begins to get worse in Claymoore especially when she becomes increasingly lethargic as she refuses to leave her bed for days. This continues until head nurse Valerie intervenes and physically forces her out of bed and into a filled bathtub. Valerie scolds her for "wasting her life." Even though the movie and Susanna herself see this as a healthy intervention, Valerie performs the role of guilt assigning. It is Susanna's fault and not the confining aspect on

which the asylum is built that causes her condition to deteriorate. Claymoore, represented by Valerie, creates the façade of being a place of corrective influence rather than a place of control and discipline.

Central to the two protagonists' experience in the asylum are relationships with other individuals connected to confinement: Susanna and Lisa in *Girl, Interrupted* and Sawyer and David/George in *Unsane*. The moment Susanna sees Lisa she is taken by her. Her entrance is quite theatrical, as she storms back to Claymoore like a celebrity, a well-dressed enigma. She is everything that Susanna is not. Most importantly, Lisa is confident in her own madness. Throughout the movie, Susanna begins to experience Claymoore through Lisa. She enjoys her stay and becomes more rebellious when her relationship with Lisa is strong. Lisa is madly rebellious and rebelliously mad, as she spectacularly blurs the line between the two, madness and rebellion. Susanna is instantly drawn to Lisa's free spirit and embrace of her madness. She disregards Lisa's cruelty towards other female patients which comes in the form of brutal honesty. Lisa recognizes Susanna's fascination and takes her under her wings, giving her special attention and protecting her when she is vulnerable. Once when Valerie is about to walk in on Susanna and Toby having sex in her room, Lisa playfully attempts to stall Valerie from walking towards the room to allow Susanna privacy. Lisa also notices the attraction between Susanna and orderly John and orchestrates some privacy for them to kiss. She is invested in nourishing Susanna's sexual rebellion and breaking the rules of confinement.

In another and central instance, Lisa loudly and aggressively defends Susanna when she accidentally runs into the wife and daughter of the professor with whom she was having an affair. Bonnie, the indignant wife, confronts an uncomfortable Susanna and tells her that she hopes "they put her away forever," which is a language associated with prison and sentencing, creating that Foucauldian link between criminality and mental illness. Susanna's sexual 'crimes' (affair with a married man, promiscuity) are what lead to her confinement, and her reaction to seeing Bonnie in the ice cream shop reveals her sense of guilt as she tries to hide from view. On the contrary, Lisa demands conspicuity. When Valerie asks her what ice cream she wants, she sleekly walks towards the front of the counter and uses sexually suggestive language and gestures when she makes her ice cream order. Her performance is rewarded with outbursts of laughter from the young people in the shop and a disapproving headshake from older women. During all that, Susanna stands next to Lisa and in her shadow as she tries to hide her presence and the memories of the sexual transgressions it evokes. Lisa parades her sexuality and attempts to do the same for Susanna when she retorts back to Bonnie: "Look she gave your husband a rim job. Big fucking deal! I'm sure he was begging for it and I heard it was a pencil anyway!" Lisa relocates the shame from Susanna to the cheating husband when she publicly acknowledges the affair and humiliates the husband by describing his genitals as small. Not only does she defend Susanna from public humiliation, but she also turns tables on the social morality that shames the woman and excuses the man. The wife displaces her anger from the cheating husband to the exploited teenager, and Lisa redirects it where it belongs. Unlike the psychiatric institution that thrives on guilt, Lisa liberates Susanna from self-blame.

It is clear from these examples and others that Lisa is presented in the narrative as Susanna's alter ego. She does what Susanna wishes to be able to do and she says what Susanna is afraid to say. The most important power that Lisa has is her ability to break her confinement. Repeatedly in the movie, she leaves her room and wanders freely in Claymoore. She leads Susanna and sometimes other patients on late night walks around the hospital. Susanna excitedly follows, relishing the rebellion that Lisa leads. Since, according to Foucault, confinement is central to the power dynamics established in the birth and rise of asylums, Lisa's ability to physically liberate herself from it reflects her intellectual, mental, and social freedom. She turns Claymoore into a hotel where she is a guest. Susanna is most rebellious when she follows her alter ego on these adventures. She rejects the 'treatment' whether in pretending to take her medication or in her incredulity towards the therapy. Only when her relationship with Lisa strains does she begin to accept Claymoore as a place of rehabilitation. This happens when Lisa and Susanna escape the hospital after Lisa is treated with electroshocks and placed in solitary confinement as a punishment for drugging the night nurse/guard and spending the night in the hall outside their rooms. Susanna and John the orderly get physically intimate. It is significant that Lisa is harshly 'treated' while Susanna and John are not even punished though their transgression is more serious. This can be read symbolically as the system taming Susanna's wild side and desires by punishing Lisa. However, true to the mechanism of asylums, rehabilitation is finalized when the patient willfully renounces this rebellious madness rather than being forced to relinquish it.

During their escape, Susanna and Lisa go and visit a former patient, Daisy who has a complicated relationship with her father. He gets her an apartment and a cat, creating a sense of normalcy that is quietly revealed as a façade by a visibly shaken Daisy. This façade infuriates Lisa who is determined to take a hammer into that performance of normalcy which she sees as a surrender to social norms/normalcy. In the movie, she is often triggered by others' 'cure' as she resists the system. She reveals that 'cured' Daisy still self-harms and accuses her of enjoying the abusive incestuous relationship with her father. Susanna is appalled by the way Lisa treats Daisy and hides in the bathroom. In the morning, she discovers Daisy hanging from the ceiling after slashing her wrists. Susanna immediately feels guilty and collapses while Lisa shows indifference and instead searches Daisy's body and room for stashed cash. Their opposite reactions to Daisy's suicide reveal their differing attitudes towards psychiatric hospitals, treatment, and mental illness. Susanna's go-to reaction is guilt. She tells us that she feels guilty for not defending Daisy against Lisa's verbal attacks, which reveals that she feels both of them are responsible for her death. However, Lisa sees Daisy's victimhood to predate their encounter. The social system has normalized the father's abuse as care which is evident when the hospital allows him to

discharge her while she is still troubled and when he houses her in a place alone like a secret mistress. Lisa reads their relationship accurately and sees the real villains. She resists self-blame and Susanna's accusations. Incidentally, she stuffs the money she steals from dead Daisy in Susanna's pocket, hoping to be able to liberate her. When Susanna refuses to leave with her, Lisa leaves penniless and alone while Susanna returns to Claymoore and succumbs to her treatment. As she detaches from Lisa, she dissociates madness from rebellion and seeks normalcy with Valerie and Dr. Sonia. In the narrative, then and there, Susanna is healed.

In *Unsane*, Sawyer's deceptively voluntary confinement seems like an insurance scam until her stalker David impersonating an orderly called George is hired at the facility. Before Sawyer meets David-as-George, she forms a friendship with Nate another patient who reveals to Sawyer that Highland Creek is running an insurance scam in which they trick people to check themselves in to get payment from their insurance. He tells her to play the role of the patient and stop resisting her incarceration until her insurance stops payment. His advice falls within the expectations that healing and freeing oneself from the asylum is the responsibility of the patient even when the patient knows that they are wrongfully confined and admitted. Sawyer plays along until she sees David and she responds traumatically to his presence and his ability to exert power over her. At this point in the narrative, the other characters and the viewers are still not sure whether George is really David, or Sawyer is hallucinating since the movie has yet to introduce him as a character rather than Sawyer's told memory. After her outburst, Sawyer is restrained to her bed and even Nate turns away from her, upset by her resistance to playing the game; thus, prolonging her confinement. Again, when Sawyer is victimized by her stalker, she is blamed for the trauma she experiences. Only when George goes to visit Sawyer's mother in her hotel room when she comes to help secure her daughter's release, we begin to suspect that he might be David and his intentions are sinister.

At this point, the narrative changes from being about insurance scams and involuntary confinement to a horror story. Before that scene, the audience is unsure whether David truly exists or is a creation of Sawyer's paranoia. What ensues is a power play between Sawyer and David; however, the psychiatric facility remains central to this conflict as it tips the balance in David's favor since he impersonates an orderly and has control over Sawyer's body, movement, and most importantly her medication. In one scene, he gives her a large dose of methylphenidate, which is a nervous system stimulant that causes her to hallucinate and become violent. She breaks the television set in the common room and is again restrained in her bed. When David intentionally switches her medication, not only does he reinforce the display of her madness in the eyes of others, making her accusations against him unreliable, but he also exercises power over her body and mind. David clearly shows to Sawyer and to the audience that in this place, he reigns supreme over Sawyer who is already disabled by the institution that strives on patients' constructed physical and mental submission to the doctors, nurses, and administrators. The free and unchecked criminality of David is allowed by the psychiatric institutions that Foucault says assume a moral and behavioral authority over the patients. David is capable of completely fulfilling at Highland Creek what he was unable to do outside the asylum when the restraining order Sawyer took against him kept him at bay. He freely stalks Sawyer there and even gets paid for it. No one seems to suspect him; in fact, the other orderlies like him and praise him as friendly and helpful. Even when a nurse points out his 'error' in administering the medication, she covers for him. The institutionalization of Sawyer allows David, the troubled and unbalanced criminal to be seen as sane and socially agreeable.

The camerawork in *Unsane* is crucial in capturing and communicating Sawyer's position as an object of surveillance and power. Director Soderbergh, responsible for hits like *Erin Brockovich* and *Traffic*, shot the film using his iPhone (Kroll). This filmmaking method visually maintains the focus on Sawyer and transforms the cinematic gaze into a stalking one, as she is consistently chased by the camera. So even before her admittance to Highland Creek, hints of Sawyer's ordeal are felt through the camerawork which captures her from a distance through bushes as she walks towards her workplace or other places. The camera assumes a lurking eye that transforms Sawyer into the object of the gaze. Moving in between the bushes, this gaze, which we as viewers also assume, does not only create a haunting atmosphere to Sawyer's existence on screen and in the narrative, but it also sets the balance of power. She is watched and seen but we do not see her perspective nor do we see the lurker, which is at the center of the victimizing nature of stalking. The stalker maintains the power of violently grabbing the permission to watch and observe the object of their obsession. But it is also central for the stalker to make their presence felt which enhances the terrifying experience of the victim. Even when the stalker is not seen, their presence is felt by the victim who is unable to resume their lives when they know they have no control over the stalking gaze.

This construction of simultaneous visibility/invisibility of the stalker and the constant visibility of the stalked victim make this gaze panoptic. Foucault (1977b) describes the panoptic gaze as a construct of power in which the person under surveillance is seen by the gaze but cannot see it themselves. The panoptic gaze grants its possessor the power of seeing while not being seen but also by making their ability to see known to the observed. Like the prisoners who know that the guards in the watchtower can see them at any point. But the way the panopticon is constructed maintains the guards as invisible in the watchtower while their presence (the constant possibility of being there) is visible even they are not seen within the tower. For this gaze to be panoptic, the object of the gaze has to know that they are watched even if they cannot see their observer.

This fear of being constantly watched even when they cannot see their stalker makes the victims of stalking also the object of the panoptic gaze; thus, subject to the power of the stalker whose pleasure comes from this domineering

position. Even when Sawyer moves to another city to escape her traumatizing past, she never escapes this panoptic paradigm. She continues to live in fear of being observed, as she senses David's presence even when he is not visible to her or the audience. When she attempts to have a one-night stand with a man she has met through the dating app, she violently snatches herself away from him as if she is grabbed by an invisible hand. The fact that she does not see David watching her does not disprove his presence, which is what makes stalking traumatizing. The camerawork enhances this sense of helplessness around Sawyer as she is constantly observed. While we cannot see David yet, our gaze through the camera presents Sawyer as the powerless object of surveillance. When she decides to seek professional help and meets the administrator at Highland Creek, the camerawork keeps cutting between the two of them. The shots alternate between them as they exchange glances and words. After Sawyer fills out the forms and is left in the waiting room, we see her through a surveillance camera's perspective. This camerawork maintains the view of Sawyer as someone who is seen, watched, and above all unable to control the gaze that haunts her visibility because she cannot prevent the gaze or even return it.

The panoptic eye of the camera is significant because it implicitly inserts David into the narrative even before he makes his first actual appearance. The audience senses his effect on Sawyer before she is admitted to Highland Creek. David, thus, only exists through the symptoms she is exhibiting, that is until he begins to murder people around her like her mother and Nate, which reveals him as the psycho killer and the stalker Sawyer has accused him of being from the outset. When the audience begins to believe Sawyer, the panoptic gaze gradually shifts. In several scenes, we observe David's panoptically gazing at Sawyer; for example, when he watches her from afar laughing with and confiding in Nate. As David loses his panoptic power at least in the visual construction of the film, that is we no longer see her through his stalking panoptic gaze, his demise begins and his power fades. The camerawork begins to show him like other characters without privileging his gaze. This tips the balance of power in Sawyer's favor, as with his loss of panoptic power, she is freed from his dominance and she begins to manipulate him.

This is clear in the solitary confinement scene where David, for the first time, confesses to the audience that he is Sawyer's stalker. Visually, David's loss of power is exhibited through showing part of their interactions through the surveillance camera in solitary confinement. Both Sawyer and David become the object of the asylum's surveillance and gaze. They are both patients. Once David loses his grip of power, enabled by the psychiatric institution, Sawyer is empowered and fights back until she kills him. This empowerment is allowed by the reduction of David from an orderly into another patient subject to the system.

Like Susana, Sawyer begins to regain power and the upper hand over David when she plays her role in the system. First, she tells David that she feels the same towards him and accepts his obsessive passion. She demands that he have sex with another woman in front of her to prove that he is capable of sexual connections. This demand also switches the panoptic power between them. While David has been subjecting her to the panoptic gaze, she now subjects him to a voyeuristic gaze of which she is in total control. She suggests Violet, a fellow patient who has been antagonizing Sawyer throughout her stay. She brings two of her victimizers into solitary confinement and controls them like a director of a terrifying play. When a petrified Violet resists David's sexual assault, Sawyer tries to calm her down and then grabs the shiv Violet once showed Sawyer to scare her and which she hides in her clothes. The shiv is usually used by prisoners in jail to attack other inmates, which creates a correlation between the experiences of psychiatric institutions' patients and prisoners. Sawyer uses the shiv to attack David and grab his keys to release herself from the locked room and lock them both in it. As she makes a final glance, she sees David snapping Violet's neck. The significance of Sawyer sacrificing Violet to free herself reveals the division of power in the asylum of captives/captors, controllers/controlled, and victims/victimizers. As David kills Sawyer's mother and Nate because he feels that they stand in the way of them being together, Sawyer discards of Violet by forcing her to take her place temporarily as the object of David's invasive sexual interest and then leaving her with him to be killed. When Sawyer succumbs to the rules of the institution, she is powerful enough to defeat David but by becoming as brutal.

However, before Sawyer overpowers David, she has to submit to his fantasies and obsessions even in pretense. She tells him she is to blame for not reciprocating his love and interest in her. She confesses that she has been ungrateful in not appreciating his sincerity. This performance of subjugation can be interpreted as an admittance of the incel narrative that women's rejection of insecure and undesirable men is the cause of their anger and misogyny. It reinforces the belief that women must play along to gain power and appear sane again. Throughout the movie, Sawyer is seen as either aloof and cold towards men or hysterical and unstable. She is grounded only when she plays the role of the desired and pursued. She is able to attack and wound David only when she performs the roles which he has designed for her. His passionate yet obsessive pursuit of her is contrasted with her coldness and inability to engage with others. When she yields, she wins while when she resists, she is overpowered. Both Susanna and Sawyer have to assume the role of docility in order to regain their 'sanity'; Susanna by rejecting Lisa as a rebellious role model and Sawyer by succumbing to David's stalking.

## V. CONCLUSION

This article concludes with a discussion of the conclusion of the two movies. *Girl, Interrupted* ends with the release of Susanna from Claymoore and her narrative voice reminiscing about the friendship she forged there. She remembers that period of her life fondly during which she anchored her life in emotional stability. She represents the asylum as a

place of rebirth and female bonding even when Susanna ‘recovers’ by betraying Lisa and subjecting her to the medical gaze. According to Foucault (1973), the medical gaze is used by doctors to objectify the bodies of the patients as spaces of illness and abnormalities. The medical gaze dehumanizes the patients and reduces them into faulty organs. Foucault sees the medical gaze as institutional rather than individual. In Claymoore, Dr. Melvin listens to the patients and translates their narratives into diagnoses. He looks for abnormalities and flaws in their stories rather than reflections of their feelings, vulnerabilities, and fears. In one scene, Lisa leads the gangs on a nightly wandering in the institution and they break into Dr. Melvin’s office and find his files on each one of them. Lisa distributes them like homework but as they begin to read their respective ‘diagnosis,’ a disempowering quiet descends on them. They look depleted and defeated as they see themselves through the medical gaze. Their intimate stories and confessions are reduced to flaws and deficiencies. Even their act of empowering flipping of the balance of power through acquiring Dr. Melvin’s notes and files leaves them still captive of the medical gaze.

Susanna reproduces that medical gaze through her journal which she uses to diagnostically describe the flaws of her ‘friends.’ On her last night in Claymoore, Lisa steals the journal and reads out Susanna’s judgmental view of them, as she did on their nightly invasion of Dr. Melvin’s office. This time it is Susanna who betrays Lisa by looking at her and understanding her through her flaws only. Her judgment reduces the formidable Lisa into a wail. Lisa is not defeated by Claymoore but by Susanna who adopts their gaze in seeing and constructing Lisa’s rebellion against social expectations and particularly the medical gaze. Susanna is healed when she accepts her place in the system and by rejecting the likes of Lisa who challenge it.

In *Unsane*, Sawyer defeats her victimizer when she kills David and inadvertently exposes Highland Creek scam. The movie’s final scene shows Sawyer having lunch with the same colleague who earlier called her cold but this time, Sawyer is her boss as she has been promoted at work. She has not only regained her sanity but also her career. She is confident and brutally firm in firing inadequate employees, displaying corporate strength. However, these moments are interrupted when Sawyer sees a man in the restaurant who looks like David. She grabs a knife and walks slowly towards him before she realizes that he is not David. In a moment, the façade of normalcy, sanity, and professional prowess crumples, as we realize that Sawyer is still haunted by David and his traumatizing memory. Both movies end with memories but while Susanna paints hers as uplifting, Sawyer’s is destructive. *Unsane* ends as it begins with Sawyer being chased by the camera, haunted and dispossessed. She gives us one final glance as she looks at us through the camera, and frame freezes and we are left with that final look that is frantic and disillusioned. Sawyer might have killed her tormentor but she is still tormented. As we gaze back at her, the camera sees her through the medical gaze, as a clinical condition.

The two movies end on different notes and with different technique, the fact that allow for us to perceive two examples of ‘mad’ women. As Vera Chouinard (2009) notes, *Girl, Interrupted* has a complicated relation with cultural expectations as it seems to trouble them only to reaffirm them later on. Susanna accepts her diagnosis and sees herself through the medical gaze. She succeeds and moves on in her life. Sawyer sees the asylum as a place of confinement and exploitation of the weak. She assumes the medical gaze to understand David’s vulnerability and uses it to free herself and kill him. She is not ‘healed’ by the system but temporarily uses it to conquer her stalker. Sawyer does not receive or accept the indoctrination that Susanna receives, and the film leaves her without any resolution. The still image of her disturbed gaze at the camera does not give her any resolution. She stands for the Lisas of the social structure, rather than the Susannas.

Through this comparative analysis of *Girl, Interrupted* and *Unsane*, this article views gender politics as inextricable from the representation of mental illnesses when it comes to women. Using Foucauldian concepts, such as the panoptic gaze, the socialization and moralization of psychiatry, and the medical gaze, we posit that the two female protagonists’ true diagnosis is their resistance to social norms and refusal to accept their roles in society. Their sexuality is seen as the primal symptom of their diagnosis. Susanna’s promiscuity and Sawyer’s so-called lack of femininity are seen as medical flaws that require admittance to psychiatric facilities and compulsory medication. Their submission to the social male gaze determines whether they are cured, such as in the case of Susanna, or remain troubled as the audience clearly realizes in the case of Sawyer.

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# Analysis of Word Choice Errors in Saudi EFL Students' Spoken Language

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**Abstract**—The purpose of this research paper is to identify and analyze word choice errors committed in spoken English by Saudi EFL students at King Khalid University. It also seeks to identify the origins of the errors and to suggest relevant solutions to assist learners in developing lexical competence and reducing the occurrence of these errors. The research focuses on five different forms of word choice errors. These errors consist of errors of redundancy, literal translation, subject /verb agreement, collocation, and inappropriate usage of formal and informal words. To gather data, the study is based on conducting structured interviews with three EFL-speaking teachers. It also employs a speaking test as a data collection technique from fifteen EFL learners chosen at random, who are required to speak one by one in front of the class for 3-6 minutes. Their oral performance is recorded by mobile phones. According to data analysis, the most common error category is literal translation (33.97%), which is followed by collocation errors (24.88%) as well as subject/verb agreement (18.66%). Furthermore, there are redundancy errors with a percentage of (12.44%). The last type of error committed is inappropriate use of formal and informal language, which has a percentage of (10.04%). The study attributes these errors to a variety of causes, including the Arabic language's impact as well as ineffective teaching techniques and learning strategies. The study offers several recommendations and pedagogical implications to help EFL learners overcome and minimize word choice errors.

**Index Terms**—EFL students, errors, Saudi, spoken language, word choice

## I. INTRODUCTION

The most crucial skill that helps students improve in the second language learning process of learning is the ability to speak English. Mastering speaking skills is crucial for understanding other English skills and improving overall proficiency. Speaking appears to be the most important aspect in learning a new language, out of the four major language abilities. According to Brown and Yuke (1983), as stated by Dang et al. (2023), speaking is the ability on which learners will be assessed the most in real-life settings. Furthermore, Rao (2018) believes that speaking plays an important part in learning a second language. According to Nga and Quynh (2021), word choice is an essential component of any interaction. The style of communication is determined by the word choice. In general, a competent speaker will use language that he or she is familiar with, confident in, and sufficiently straightforward for the listeners to comprehend. Word choice is crucial in speaking skills because it makes it easier for listeners to understand the topic. It explains, clarifies, and broadens concepts. Weak word choice produces ambiguity and dooms a speaker's work to fall short of expectations or fail to deliver its message entirely.

However, communicating fluently like a native speaker is challenging. Learners experience numerous challenges, most of which are caused by incorrect word usage. Choosing the appropriate vocabulary words is one of the challenges that EFL learners face when speaking. Handini et al. (2021), see that the learners have a low level of vocabulary knowledge. Similarly, Ra'uf (2020) claims that the majority of EFL students struggle with English communication due to a lack of vocabulary knowledge. According to Sahan et al. (2023), one of the reasons influencing the students' difficulty in speaking is the failure to produce words appropriately. Speaking is one of the most difficult abilities to learn in English. Learners must master English pronunciation, comprehend grammar, possess a large vocabulary, and maintain accuracy and fluency when practicing English speaking abilities. Learning a foreign language and developing communication abilities in general rely substantially on vocabulary. The main meaning of the sentences is represented by vocabulary. As a result, some students have difficulty selecting the appropriate words for a specific utterance.

For Yang et al. (2013), word choice errors are those that are semantically incorrect yet grammatically acceptable in the given linguistic context. They believe that the biggest challenge in selecting the proper word is the semantic transfer of the mother tongue. As reported by Agassy et al. (2020), vocabulary is the foundation of language, and without it, one will have difficulty comprehending people or expressing ideas. Some students struggle with vocabulary. They have difficulty selecting the appropriate words to employ in their sentences because not all words can be utilized in every sentence. They are additionally impeded by a lack of vocabulary. Furthermore, Mukminatien (1999) observes that language learners make numerous mistakes when speaking, such as poor word choice.

Based on the researcher's teaching experience, EFL learners have difficulty selecting acceptable words when speaking. Many learners are competent in spoken language, but they are rarely accurate; they frequently use inappropriate words. When speaking, learners frequently fail to recognize and comprehend the semantic differences between words. Identifying and evaluating word choice errors in spoken language by learners are crucial because such errors appear to be one of the key causes of interaction challenges. The study of EFL learners' word choice errors will provide data that will allow English teachers to identify the cause of the errors that characterize students' spoken language, as well as contribute to productive approaches to assist EFL students in acquiring suitable and correct word choice and useful English vocabulary. Addressing EFL learners' word choice errors when speaking English is critical. However, in the Saudi EFL setting, this topic has received less attention. Thus, the purpose of this research is to fill a gap by investigating the origins of these errors and to assist EFL learners in recognizing errors in English speaking. As a direct result of the research findings, learners can learn about their mistakes and find appropriate remedies to improve their English-speaking skills. As a result, the purpose of this research paper is to explore, identify, and analyze word choice errors made in spoken language by Saudi EFL undergraduates at King Khalid University. It is hoped that the results of this study will help to a better understanding of the nature of word choice errors in EFL speaking. As a result, the study aims to find and evaluate word choice errors in English speaking, to identify the causes of these errors, and to propose efficient remedies to assist learners in developing lexical competence and reducing the recurrence of these errors.

## II. STUDY METHODOLOGY

### A. Method

Both quantitative and qualitative are used to find out the word choice errors committed by Saudi EFL students in the spoken English language.

### B. Participants

The study targets EFL students who enroll in the Speaking 4 course. 10 students are randomly chosen as a sample for this study. They all study the textbook "Open Forum 3" by Duncan and Parker (2008) in the first semester of 2023/2024 at King Khalid University, College of Science and Arts in Tanumah, Saudi Arabia. The study targets also three EFL teachers who teach this course.

### C. Instruments of Data Collection

The current study uses two instruments to collect data as follows:

#### (a). Testing

This study applies to an oral test. In this test, each student is asked to talk freely for about 4 to 6 minutes about his first day at the college.

#### (b). Interview

The interview is intended to elicit specific information from the EFL teachers who teach the Speaking 4 course. It contains two questions. The first question concerns the causes of word choice errors in the spoken language of EFL Saudi students. The second interview question focuses on the teachers' recommendations for enhancing students' lexical competency and assisting them in lowering the occurrence of these errors.

### D. Data Analysis Techniques

1. Each student is asked to speak individually in the classroom.
2. The students' oral performances are audiotape recorded and then examined to find errors.
3. The errors are classified into five types involving errors of redundancy, literal translation, subject /verb agreement, collocation, and incorrect use of formal and informal words.
4. Following the classification of all errors, each error is counted to determine its percentage.
5. Structured interviews with EFL instructors are analyzed and evaluated to identify error sources and provide solutions.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### A. Analysis of Learners' Spoken Language

This section identifies and categorizes word choice errors into five types: redundancy, literal translation, subject/verb agreement, collocation, and inappropriate usage of formal and informal words. The table below shows these errors:

TABLE 1  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF WORD CHOICE ERRORS

NO	Types of wrong choice errors	Frequency	Percentage
1	Literal translation	71	33.97 %
2	Collocation	52	24.88%
3	Subject /verb agreement	39	18.66 %
4	Redundancy	26	12.44 %
5	inappropriate usage of formal and informal words	21	10.04 %
Total		209	100%

As stated in the table, the total number of word choice errors is (209). The percentage of errors ranges from (33.97 %) to 10.04 % involving errors of literal translation with a percentage of (33.97 %) as the most frequent error made by the students. Collocation errors are the second most common form of error, representing 24.88% of all errors. The third category of word choice error is subject/verb agreement, which has a rate of (18.66%). Then there are redundancy errors with a percentage of (12.44%). With a percentage of (10.04%), the last type of error committed is inappropriate usage of formal and informal words.

#### **Categories of word choice errors:**

Word choice errors occur when learners employ wrong or inappropriate words in their spoken language. This could include employing words with inappropriate meanings or using words that are incorrect for the context. Here are some instances from the students' speaking tests:

##### **(a) Errors of literal translation:**

Literal translation errors occur when items are translated straight into a second language while maintaining the literal meaning of the original. Consider the following examples:

Example (1) My plan in college is to work hard to bring a good grade.

Correct form: My plan in college is to work hard to get/obtain a good grade.

Explanation: The learner uses the verb (bring) instead of the verb (get or obtain). This error can also be attributed to the impact of the mother tongue.

Example (2) This will make problems.

Correct form: This will cause or create problems.

Explanation: The learner uses the verb (make) instead of the verb (cause or create). This kind of error can also be related to the influence of the Arabic language in the English language learning process.

##### **(b) Errors of collocation**

Collocations are defined by McCarthy (2005) as a couple or group of words that are frequently used together. A collocation error occurs when a word is chosen that should not typically follow or precede another word.

Example (3) We ate breakfast in the college canteen at 9. a.m.

Correct form: We had breakfast in the college canteen at 9. a.m.

Explanation: The verb (ate) doesn't collocate with (breakfast). The correct collocation for this word is (had).

Example (4) I left the college in noon.

Correct form: I left the college at noon.

Explanation: The learner here uses the preposition (in) instead of using (at). Since the preposition (in) doesn't collocate with (noon), this is a collocation error. The collocation errors in the above examples can be related to the impact of the Arabic language in which the learner thinks in Arabic. These errors can also be attributed to the type of learning strategies used by the learners and to the lack of collocation competence.

##### **(c) Subject /verb agreement**

To have a subject-verb agreement in a sentence, the verb must match the number, person, and gender of the subject. Look at these examples:

Example (5) One of my colleagues invite us for snacks and tea in the college canteen.

Correct form: One of my colleagues invites us for snacks and tea in the college canteen.

Explanation: This sentence lacks subject-verb agreement because the subject (One) does not agree in number with the verb (invite). The learner fails to recognize that the word (One) in the expression (One of...) is a singular word, despite the fact it is subsequently followed by plural nouns.

Example (6) Everything (look) great.

Correct form: Everything (looks) great.

Explanation: Since the subject (everything) does not agree in number with the verb (look), this sentence lacks subject-verb agreement. The learner does not realize here that the indefinite pronoun "Everything" is usually singular and takes a verb form that ends in "s". Errors in examples 3 and 4 above can be related to learners' ignorance of rule restrictions.

##### **(d) Errors of Redundancy**

Gross (2020) defines redundancy as the unnecessary repeating of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or ideas. Redundancy is defined by Ghazala (2008) as "*the use of unnecessary extra words to express something*" (p. 253). Redundant words are those which add no meaningful content to a sentence. They can be words that repeat the same concept, indicate what is obvious, contradict one another, or are indicated by the context.

Example (7) I usually have my breakfast in the canteen with my (fellow) colleagues.

Correct form: I usually have my breakfast in the canteen with my colleagues.

Explanation: The word (fellow) in the example (7) above is redundant because it repeats the same meaning of the word (colleagues).

Example (8) The majority of (undergraduate) students live in Tanumah. -

Correct form: The majority of students live in Tanumah.

Explanation: The word (undergraduate) in the example (8) above is also redundant since it implies the same meaning as the word (students). These errors of redundancy can be attributed to the influence of the mother tongue and to students' low competence in English vocabulary.

#### **(e) Inappropriate usage of formal and informal words**

Formal English is used in "serious" publications and situations such as official papers, books, news reports, essays, business correspondence, or official speeches. Informal English is used in casual conversations and private correspondence.

Example (9) The idea is okay.

Correct form: The idea is acceptable or satisfactory.

Explanation: In this example, the learner uses informal language by employing the word (okay). Since this a formal context, the learner must use the words (acceptable or satisfactory)

Example (10) I live in Tanumah but my colleague lives in Abha.

Correct form: I live in Tanumah however my colleague lives in Abha.

Explanation: In this example, the learner uses informal language by employing the connector (but) to show contrast. The learner must use the connector (however) instead since the context is formal.

### **B. Analysis of Teachers' Interviews**

This section sheds light on the analysis and description of the structured interview. The participants' responses can be summarized as follows:

#### **(a). Causes of Word Choice Errors**

The participants see that many students commit word choice errors in speaking skills due to many factors. These factors can be summed up and summarized as follows:

- i. The students seemed to have less knowledge about the differences between written and spoken English.
- ii. Lack of vocabulary.
- iii. Lack of collocation competence.
- iv. Teacher's style in teaching and developing vocabulary.
- v. Interference of EFL university learners' first language.
- vi. Inappropriate vocabulary teaching techniques and approaches.
- vii. EFL learners have a limited vocabulary.
- viii. Students' inadequate mastery of appropriate English word usage.
- ix. Students' incomplete knowledge of the second language subject-verb agreement and word collocation.
- x. EFL learners' misunderstanding of the semantic differences between English language words.
- xi. EFL learners' Ignorance of the semantic differences between formal language and informal language.

#### **(b). Suggestions for Improving EFL Learners' Lexical Competence**

To overcome these errors, the participants propose the following points as suggestions.

- i. Teachers should encourage students to enlarge their vocabulary by reading magazines, articles, and books.
- ii. Teachers should vary their techniques and ways of teaching and developing students' vocabulary to suit the students' different proficiency levels.
- iii. Students should be encouraged to think in English to avoid lexical negative transfer of Arabic in writing.
- iv. There is a need for more effective teaching strategies to enhance vocabulary learning.
- v. Teachers should develop instructional materials that explicitly highlight the semantic difference between an English word and its Arabic literal translation.
- vi. Teachers should provide individual feedback on the students' specific linguistic problems.
- vii. Teachers should provide appropriate and accurate in-class group feedback with a special focus on common word choice errors.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study aims to investigate word choice errors in the spoken performance of Saudi EFL students at King Khalid University. The study focuses on five types of word choice errors: redundancy errors, literal translation errors, subject/verb agreement errors, collocation errors, and inappropriate usage of formal and informal words. The study relates these errors to a variety of variables, including the impact of the first language, ineffective teaching techniques and learning strategies, insufficient command of proper English word usage, students' restricted vocabulary knowledge, and lack of collocation competency.

Based on these findings, the study concludes with the following pedagogical implications and recommendations to help students overcome and minimize word choice errors, as well as to help teachers teach word choice in speaking skills:

- (a) More effective teaching practices are required to improve vocabulary learning.
- (b) Teachers should provide instructional resources that emphasize the semantic distinction between an English word and its literal Arabic counterpart.
- (c) Teachers should adapt their strategies and methods of teaching and developing students' vocabulary according to students' varied levels of proficiency.
- (d) EFL students should be encouraged to utilize dictionaries efficiently.

#### Suggestions for Further Study

Based on the study's findings, a few recommendations for further research are offered considering the study's limitations. First, this study has a small sample size and focuses primarily on the viewpoints of EFL teachers. To learn more about the reasons for word choice errors and obtain a full grasp of the problem, a larger sample study with an emphasis on students' views is required. Second, this study focuses on word choice errors in the spoken language of EFL university students. A further study concentrating on word choice errors in EFL university undergraduates' written language is necessary.

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# The Form and Meaning of *Pakdaengang* in the Makassar Ethnic Naming System

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**Abstract**—This paper discusses the naming system, form, and significance of *pakdaengang* in Makassar culture. The results indicate that *pakdaengang* is an inherited trait and a standard requirement for members of the Makassar ethnic group eligible to bear it. For some people who are not ethnically Makassar but have *pakdaengang* because of marriage, their services, accomplishments, or other contributions to the development of the region in which they reside, *pakdaengang* is inseparable from the embedding of words that are commonly categorized as "word classes" in linguistics. *Pakdaengang* comprises a single word. Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and numbers such as *pakdaengang* undoubtedly serve a specific purpose. In addition to using the basic form, many affixes consisting of the prefixes *ma-*, *pa-*, *ni-*, and *ta-* are also employed. In addition, the preposition *ri* is used in conjunction with the place-designating word "*pakdaengang*." Men and women can also participate in *pakdaengang*. *Pakdaengang*, in a masculine term, relates to words that mean activity or protective work. Women, on the other hand, are attracted to the connotations of beauty and gentleness. The *ma-* and *pa-* prefixes in *pakdaengang* are typically attached to men. Whereas women typically employ the prefixes *ni* and *ta*. In the names of objects, properties, activities, and locations, *pakdaengang* represents a wish or prayer for goodness and safety. In addition, there is a straightforward affirmation of *pakdaengang*.

**Index Terms**—anthroponomy, *daeng*, *pakdaengang*, Makassar, naming

## I. INTRODUCTION

Every individual, location, and object must have a nickname or designation. Names are significant for humans because they are not only a differentiator from others but also an indication of one's existence. A name is significant because it relates to the giver's prayers and aspirations. Names are the most straightforward, literal, and tangible identity symbols. However, just as straightforward, the names are also the most complicated. The investigation into the meaning of naming must go back to the first state of mind, the origins of language, the first knowledge, and most importantly, the ongoing mystery (Isaacs, 1993).

Naming is inextricable that affects human life. Naming is closely related to culture, social status, and even religion because some names can indicate a person's ancestry and region. A name is a descriptive term. One of the media documenting various cultural aspects is names. Naming can glean meaningful information about history, culture, and evolution. A name can represent ever-evolving ideologies and social identities (Pamungkas et al., 2021). Naming systems, mainly proper names, will continue to evolve following the prevailing times and fashions.



Indonesia, a country brimming with diverse regional cultures, has a unique and specific naming system for each region. The naming practices and philosophies of each ethnic group also vary. The Makassar ethnic in South Sulawesi Province, one of the Indonesian regions and cultures, has the characteristic of self-naming. It is widely known by the term *pakdaengang*, which means giving a *daeng* name. Not every Makassarese individual has a *pakdaengang* affixed to his name. In the association and social environment of the Makassar ethnic group, *pakdaengang* becomes more significant than the proper name.

*Pakdaengang* is one of the distinctive naming cultures practiced by the Makassarese ethnic groups for centuries. They have at least two names: a personal and a *pakdaengang*. A child is given the name *pakdaengang* before reaching adulthood. In *pakdaengang*, very intriguing linguistic phenomena can be discussed. *Pakdaengang* contains a wealth of information. In addition, the occurrence of social and cultural changes and shifts within the ethnicity of Makassar has impacted the existence of *pakdaengang*, as demonstrated by some research findings (Djaswadi, 2013; Hasjim, 2014, 2016, 2022; Tamrin, 2015). The social changes in *pakdaengang* of Makassarese ethnicity represent each generation and influence the choice of elements to be incorporated into *pakdaengang*. The research will describe the culture of naming and *pakdaengang*, the linguistic form of *pakdaengang*, the significance of *pakdaengang* in Makassar ethnic culture, and the historical context.

## II. LITERARY REVIEW

Several studies and articles on *pakdaengang* and naming in the Makassar ethnicity have been published. Several studies generally related to the social side of naming and *pakdaengang*, such as the swift change of Makassarese's names, the description of transformation occurring in naming and *pakdaengang*, and the factors that affect them (Hasjim, 2014, 2016, 2022). According to her, naming in the Makassarese culture almost does not have a pattern or system. People do not longer observe naming traditions, such as *pakdaengang*. Numerous individuals need help understanding the system and meaning of *pakdaengang* names. Currently, *pakdaengang* is only regarded as a labeling activity, a greeting, or a joke. It may result from the social changes occurring in Makassarese culture, which have implications for the degradation of the *pakdaengang* values. However, it should be emphasized that *pakdaengang* and *daeng* greetings are different. The *daeng* greetings are often used as a joke to someone. *Pakdaengang* itself is a cultural system and should not be a joke because it relates to the customs and culture of Makassar. Therefore, distinguishing between *pakdaengang* and *daeng* greetings is a must. In addition, the article proposes the pattern of *pakdaengang* in Makassarese ethnicity, depicting the form, meaning, and pattern of *pakdaengang*.

Meanwhile, similar researches discuss the expansion of the use of *daeng* greeting in Makassarese ethnic (Djaswadi, 2013; Tamrin, 2015). Their research discusses the expansion of *daeng* greetings in the Makassarese ethnic group. In their research, they demonstrate the different use of the title *daeng* in the past and the present in the social reality of Makassar society is due to three factors: historical flexibility of title *daeng* use, which causes the broad meaning of *daeng*; the weak cultural system of Makassarese ethnic in providing restrictions on the use of the title *daeng* in the community; and the absence of an appropriate designation or nickname to be used instead of *daeng*. Their research must clearly define the distinction between *daeng* as a greeting and *daeng* as *pakdaengang*. For this reason, in this paper, the affirmation of *daeng* and *pakdaengang* become the material that can clarify and complete the previous research.

Subsequent research examines the changing views on naming, including *pakdaengang*, in Makassarese Turatea ethnic, Jeneponto Regency. The research is more focused on the relationship of synonyms or antonyms between self-name and second name or *pakdaengang*. The paper reveals linguistic aspects lexically, semantically, and phonological changes because it focuses more on self-names. Thus, the writing involves the linguistic aspect of *pakdaengang*, especially affixation and morphophonemic process, and the implied meanings are elaborated (Mappau, 2019).

The related article provides a lexicographic analysis of various toponyms' terms. It employs information from contemporary newspapers about the meaning field of "violence" or "war" attached to the regional names of each element are dynamic suffixes such as "-iser," "-ifier," "-ization," and "-ification". It can be inferred from the countries, regions, or ethnicities experiencing conflict tend to add suffixes to their regional names by the country invading it or superior to it. These toponyms are typically disseminated via modern media (Toládano & Candel, 2002). In line with the study, adding elements to a name, such as an affix, indeed contains meaning and a specific purpose. Affixes are not used arbitrarily in a name; it still considers the rules of propriety and conformity with local culture as described in the research. This research can fill the gap in some research on *pakdaengang*, especially from linguistic aspects rarely discussed in detail by other researchers.

## III. LINGUISTICS, ANTHROPNOMY, AND MEANING

When it comes to naming, anthroponymy is unavoidable. Anthroponomy studies the structure, significance, and origin of names. Names are a component of the human communication system. It belongs to linguistics that studies human language (Radding & Western, 2010).

A name, as a word, plays a crucial role in human existence. Humans can express their emotions, communicate their hopes, articulate their ideas, and use various other language skills. Humans rely heavily on language, as evidenced by the names they give to objects and the names they attach to themselves. Discussing the concept of "word" will

undoubtedly involve morphology. Morphology systematically studies the relationship between word form and meaning or how morphemes combine to form words (Haspelmath & Sims, 2013). Naming *pakdaengang* is treated as a word that can be analyzed based on its form and meaning in this study.

On the other hand, onomastics must remember that proper names are integral to natural language. According to both onomastics and linguists, proper names are the most important words to learn in a language. Unfortunately, onomastics is distinct from linguistics. On the other hand, onomastics should be a part of linguistics in the broadest sense, necessitating a pragmatic element. Additionally, linguistics encompasses the interdisciplinary aspects of onomastics. It does not imply that some subfields of onomastics cannot concentrate on topics. For instance, diachronic toponymy is connected to the history and geography of the places where people have lived.

In self-naming, the reference is based on experience or knowledge passed down from generation to generation. People with the same name living in the past and the present are not a big surprise. Personal names have the fewest linguistic differences and the most different ways to assemble them (Langendock, 2007). This statement seems contradictory, but it is not. In fact, in the broadest sense of the word, unmarked categories, like prototypical ones, always have the most formal and semantic structure variation. Personal names, which point to the "typical" speaker, are likely the most common type based on experience.

Therefore, self-naming still refers to the existing models within each culture. Each region in Indonesia has its naming characteristics. Generally, the origin of a region can be deduced from a person's name. The name, as a component of the language used, becomes a signifier of someone's identity and reveals the culture of the name's owner (Sibarani, 2020). At the very least, by hearing a person's name, their religion, ethnicity, and the meaning behind their name can be predicted. The study of anthroponymy also permits reconstructing communities' genealogical history and tracing the evolution of mentalities, tastes, and values. A person's name is inextricably linked to his environment and can offer insight into a region's history, customs, and values (Juncal, 2018). This characteristic of the *pakdaengang* system of Makassar ethnicity is intriguing to study and investigate.

Most proper names have a rich derivation structure in terms of morphology. This complex morphosyntactic structure has a lot of meaning-classifying and emotion-expressing functions. Proper names are like unmarked subcategories because they refer to people. It gives them much meaning and formal variety. The subcategory "human" is called "unmarked" because it is often paired with other characteristics. People are social creatures who learn and grow from their interactions. Because of this, there is much use of proper names and the rise of social sub-classes (Langendock, 2007).

The difference between denotation and connotation in anthroponymy can be seen broadly (Bodenhorn & Bruck, 2006). Denotation is about what something is, while connotation is what it means. According to them, the connotation is not attached to names. They observe that proper names are connected to objects, not their attributes. The name's literal meaning needs to provide definitive information about the identity of the named entity. Proper names are the only substance names without any connotation. A proper name is nothing more than a meaningless symbol that someone attempts to associate with the mental image of the object. Until someone learns more about it, objects with proper names appear to be men and women wearing masks. It can be differentiated between them but not speculated on its actual characteristics.

In a linguistic sense, language reflects the events of human life. Language reflects worldwide human culture. Self-description is also included. Form and meaning analysis is essential to identify various linguistic phenomena by their proper names. In linguistics, these two components must coexist and cannot be separated. The approach to language should be based on both. Naming is a component of language conveying information and enabling function as a code. Naming must be analyzed as a reference to the individual and as words embedded in grammar that acquire meaning in the social world.

Further research is required to delve further into the meaning of *pakdaengang*. To investigate this, semantics as a branch of linguistics is one option. In addition to the denotation meaning, the connotation meaning must be disclosed to reveal the social and cultural significance of *pakdaengang* within the Makassar ethnicity. Connotative meaning results from the emotional association of the language used with the word. Therefore, connotative meaning is not limited to language. It also extends to other communication systems, which are unstable based on the intensity of the emotion and limitless (Chaer, 2003; Leech, 1974; Verhaar, 1999). When referring to people or locations familiar to both the speaker and the listener, proper nouns are loaded with various connotations. When taken out of context, proper names frequently do not have meaning (Ullman, 2009). Consequently, proper names like *pakdaengang* must exist within a culture's context and social situation, such as the Makassar ethnicity. Without its community, *pakdaengang* will function as an ordinary word without meaning.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative and descriptive investigation collected the Makassar speech in the Province of South Sulawesi. Information was collected via interviews, observations, and library study. The interview method is carried out to provide data related to the name of the *pakdaengang*, the meaning, and the basis of embedding it to someone. The interview was focused on informants from the Makassar ethnicity consisting of ten people over the age of 50 years. They were selected by considering extensive knowledge relating to the object of the study. Meanwhile, the observation

was conducted through direct observation at the research locus. This method aimed to describe the types and forms of *pakdaengang* used in social interactions in the Makassar ethnic area. Therefore, the collecting data was arranged through interviews and observation to obtain data in terms of types and linguistic forms of *pakdaengang*. The library data described the cultural system concerning Makassar's ethnic name and *pakdaengang*.

Before analysis, all available data from various sources, including interviews, observations, and documents or library data, were examined. The data was then reduced through abstraction and arranged unit by unit. The category and classification of units were done by coding. The final step was to verify the data's accuracy. The data interpretation phase was done once the analysis phase was complete (Moleong, 2017). Conclusions were equally important regarding the system, form, and meaning of *pakdaengang*. Throughout the research, the validity of the conclusions was confirmed. The veracity, accuracy, and suitability of various outcomes derived from data were evaluated through data validity.

Although the researcher used a data collection tool, he or she was also one of the most important data collection tools (Cresswell, 2016). Because members of the research team are of Makassar ethnicity and speak the language fluently, the researcher can observe and participate in social activities in the observation area while collecting data.

Several reference sources are used in this study as a foundation for writing the Makassar linguistic system. The works describe the form and meaning of the affixation system of the Makassar language (Basang & Arief, 1981; Manyambang et al., 1979). In the meantime, the foundation for writing and the meaning of a Makassar word is also done (Arief, 1995). For example, writing *pakdaengang* rather than *paqdaengang* or *pa'daengang* refers to these works.

## V. FORM AND MEANING OF PAKDAENGANG

Form and meaning emerge as a pattern in the *pakdaengang* in the Makassar ethnicity. Form and meaning are the primary considerations when assigning a *pakdaengang* to an individual. Because parents hope that the next generation will be beneficial members of society and religion, meaningful information about a person's gender, geographical origin, religion, or physical characteristics can be gleaned from the form and meaning of *pakdaengang*, this section defines *pakdaengang* based on its word class, affix usage, and meaning.

### A. Classification of Pakdaengang Based on Word Class

*Pakdaengang* can be classified as nouns, adjectives, and verbs based on the classification of word classes. It can also be stated in this discussion that there are different words for men and women. The noun class of *pakdaengang* can be found in *Daeng Bonto*, *Daeng Jarung*, *Daeng Bulu*, and *Daeng Lawa*. In general, these terms refer to solid objects resistant to damage. The people of Makassar believe that men are the protectors of the family. Unique male names refer to objects believed to reproduce, such as *Daeng Bunga* 'Flower' and *Daeng Bombong* 'banana shoot' *Daeng Rilangi*, *Daeng Lino*, and *Daeng Ngalang*. They are examples of feminine *pakdaengang* names with expansive meanings, such as "in the sky," "world," and "nature". These objects philosophically represent the values of a life that can provide shade, care for others, and ample space. Therefore, in Makassar's society, women typically serve as child and family caregivers. It includes conceiving, delivering, and breastfeeding. Therefore, these roles and responsibilities are enshrined in *pakdaengang* as a prayer that women can fulfill this obligation. Female-specific names also refer to attractiveness and gentleness, such as *Daeng Mawara*, *Daeng Ngintang*, and *Daeng Satting*. The objects in question strongly exemplify the female personality.

Next is the adjective-based classification. *Pakdaengang* is based on the hope that an individual will be conscientious, righteous, diligent, strong, wise, and gentle, among other positive characteristics. It is demonstrated by the names *Daeng Tutu*, *Daeng Tojeng*, *Daeng Gassing*, *Daeng Lewa*, *Daeng Kanang*, and *Daeng Gagga*, among others. Adjectives are the most common element in *pakdaengang* because they precisely describe the positive characteristics parents hope their children will possess.

In addition, *pakdaengang* also includes characters with distance-related meanings, such as *Daeng Bani*, which means "near," *Daeng Bella*, which means "far," and *Daeng Nakku*, which means "longing". The meaning of a name such as *Daeng Bani* is familiarity in forming brotherly ties. Similarly, *Daeng Bella* is pinned to a man from a distant location. A man from a distant land who marries a Makassar typically embeds its *pakdaengang*. *Daeng Nakku* is always expected to miss and be missed, miss goodness, and miss his family.

In *pakdaengang*, the adjective class also recognizes gender-specific uses—male-specific *pakdaengang* results in adjectives that describe masculine personalities. Even though the Makassar language does not distinguish between masculine and feminine words, several *pakdaengang* words are only pinned on males. These terms are *Tarang* 'sharp,' *Tutu* 'meticulous,' *Jarre* 'strong,' *Lewa* 'firm,' *Gassing* 'robust,' and *Siga* 'tenacious.' Typically, women use words associated with gentleness and cheerfulness. Some examples are *Daeng Sannging* 'pure,' *Daeng Sunggu* 'prosperous,' *Daeng Gagga* 'beautiful,' *Daeng Lukmu* 'delicate,' *Daeng Kebo* 'white,' *Daeng Manisi* 'sweet,' *Daeng Caya* 'light,' and *Daeng Rannu* 'happy'.

The next category is verb-based *pakdaengang*. The verbal discourse will inevitably pertain to actions. One of the *pakdaengang* characteristics in this category is that only men typically use it. The use of *pakdaengang* with the feminine verb category is minimal. For instance, it is only found in *Daeng Ngembong*, which means "rinsing laundry," and *Daeng Tanang*, which means "planting". Women in rural areas typically perform both activities. A second reason men are more likely to use the verb category is that, as the head and responsible party of the household, men should be

responsible for all activities and work. *Daeng Suro* means "to order," *Daeng Ngalle* means "to take," *Daeng Siam* means "to blend in, merge," *Daeng Ngerang* means "to carry," and *Daeng Lurang* means "to transport".

Concerning the preceding description, the Makassarese ethnicity views women as a symbol of family honor, which applies to all societal levels. Therefore, in the case of the Makassar, women who serve as a symbol of honor must be guarded, preserved, and fortified with extreme vigilance. This distinction comes with the duty to protect and defend. Their parents closely monitor a woman's behavior in the community and with close and distant relatives because it is related to preserving family honor. Occasionally, members of the woman's community are also directly or indirectly involved (Abdullah, 1985; Mustari, 2016).

Additionally, it should be noted that *pakdaengang* employs a numeral word class. However, the use of numerals is rare. It is exclusive to *Daeng Sekre* "one," *Daeng Siruwa* "two," and *Daeng Tuju* "seven".

### B. Affix Usage in Pakdaengang

In *pakdaengang*, people typically use simple words or words with suffixes. The decision between base words and affixes is made arbitrarily. The Makassarese ethnicity using either the base word or the affix does not have specific reasons. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to elaborate on this section.

The most common prefix utilized in *pakdaengang* is *ma-*. This prefix signifies to possess the qualities or to be as stated in the root word. The function of this prefix is to form verbs. Here are some examples.

- (1) *Daeng Puji* 'like' + {*ma-*} -- *Daeng Mapuji* 'to like'
- (2) *Daeng Kulle* 'able, can' + {*ma-*} -- *Daeng Makulle* 'enable'
- (3) *Daeng Tutu* 'careful, meticulous' + {*ma-*} -- *Daeng Matutu* 'to have conscientious'
- (4) *Daeng Kio* 'call' + {*ma-*} -- *Daeng Makkio* 'to call'

The *pakdaengang* is only applicable to males. In terms of embedding, options may be selected. According to Makassarese ethnic beliefs, the basic and the attached forms in terms of meaning are not different. However, when viewed from the perspective of lexical meaning, the affixed form emphasizes being more active in action.

For female *pakdaengang*, only the following form of information is available.

- (5) *Daeng Labbi* 'good' + {*ma-*} -- *Daeng Malabbi* 'having good character'

Next in the frequency of use is the prefix *pa-*. This prefix has multiple meanings, including a) expressing a person who does the work with the tool mentioned in the base word; b) livelihood/person who typically works in; c) a person who enjoys doing the work stated in the base word; d) make it as stated in the base word; e) referring to/place in; f) tool for; g) subjected to work; a tool for doing work; h) result of work (Manyaembang et al., 1979). When added to the base form, this prefix creates a noun. Examples of *pakdaengang* begin with the prefix *pa-*. *Daeng Bundu* 'war' + {*pa-*} -- *Daeng Pabundu* 'a person who usually war'.

- (6) *Daeng Solong* 'flow' + {*pa-*} -- *Daeng Pasolong* 'a person who can go with the flow'
- (7) *Daeng Rumpa* 'meet, can' + {*pa-*} -- *Daeng Parumpa* 'a person who finds'
- (8) *Daeng Lengu* 'block, drive away' + {*pa-*} -- *Daeng Pallengu* 'a person who drives away'

*Pakdaengang* is reserved for men only. In Makassarese ethnicity, the prefix *pa-* for women is deemed inappropriate because it is associated with people who perform physical labor. The attached *pakdaengang* emphasizes the actor's significance.

In *pakdaengang*, some affixes, such as *ni-*, are explicitly used for women. This prefix serves as a passive verb builder. Due to its passive form, the correct base form for this affix is the element *pakdaengang*, which is used exclusively for females. Consequently, *pakdaengang* without the prefix *ni-* is not used for men. Some data are presented below.

- (9) *Daeng Pati* 'starch' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Nipati* 'to be prioritized'

Everyone desires to become a valued and respected member of society. Incorporating *Daeng Pati* or *Daeng Nipati* as *pakdaengang* is a form of hope that the child will attain a prominent position in the field of life in which she is engaged so that she can exist as a person who is respected and relied upon by others.

- (10) *Daeng Sanga* 'slice of pandan leaves' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Nisanga* 'smells like pandan leaves'
- (11) *Daeng Sayang* 'love' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Nisayang* 'to be loved'
- (12) *Daeng Ngai* 'prefer' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Ningai* 'to be preferred'

Similarly, the affix *ta-* is exclusive to female *pakdaengang*. This prefix has the following meanings: a) indicating that the work has been completed; b) accidentally or suddenly struck; c) can be di-; d) can/come to; e) in each circumstance. Here are some examples of *pakdaengang* with the prefix provided.

- (13) *Daeng Bulang* 'moon' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Tabulang* 'radiated by moonlight'
- (14) *Daeng Keknang* 'you, all' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Takeknang* 'included in society'
- (15) *Daeng Cora* 'bright' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Tacora* 'enlightened'
- (16) *Daeng Lele* 'spread' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Talele* 'spread'
- (17) *Daeng Naga* 'dragon' + {*ni-*} -- *Daeng Tanaga* 'has dragon-like traits'

There are also *pakdaengang*, such as *ri*, that employ prepositions. The preposition *ri* is used to designate a location. Consequently, *pakdaengang* employing *ri* is always paired with a place. *Daeng Rilangi* means "in the sky," *Daeng Rigowa* means "in Gowa," *Daeng Rimoncong* means "in Moncong," and *Daeng Rimakka* means "in Makkah". The *pakdaengang* form is written as a series because it is treated as a single word.

### C. Sound Adjustment in Pakdaengang

*Pakdaengang* contains other linguistic events: the addition of sounds due to the presence of sounds is easily pronounced by the Makassarese language. The disputed sound is the addition of /ng/ between the word *daeng* and the following element. The excellent addition cannot be classified as an affix because it is not used in speech and does not exist in the structural makeup of the *Makassarese* language. Moreover, it lacks any significance. Only *pakdaengang* contains the sound. Consider the examples provided below.

- (1) *Daeng Ngasseng* is derived from the base word *asseng*, 'know'.
- (2) *Daeng Ngintang* is derived from the base word *intang*, 'diamond'.
- (3) *Daeng Ngalang* is derived from the base word *alang*, 'nature'.
- (4) *Daeng Ngalle* is derived from the base word *alle* 'take'.
- (5) *Daeng Ngerang* is derived from the base word *erang*, 'bring'.

According to the data, the nasal /ng/ sound is generally added to the element following the word *daeng*. Generally, it begins with a vowel sound. Thus, if the /ng/ sound encounters an element that begins with a vowel sound, the following element will adjust to the preceding sound by adding the /ng/ sound. *Pakdaengang* with *asseng* as the base form, such as *Daeng Asseng*, is unacceptable. The same holds for the preceding examples of base forms.

## VI. UNRAVELING THE MEANING BEHIND PAKDAENGANG

The literal or lexical meaning of *pakdaengang* has been presented alongside the word form, both the basic and the affix forms. However, *pakdaengang* contains or conveys an interestingly hidden meaning that is intriguing to uncover. In general, *pakdaengang* represents the parents' hopes, wishes, prayers, and *munajat* for their children. According to the Makassarese ethnic community, the use of primary or affixed forms in *pakdaengang* has little effect on the implied meaning of the language. Therefore, the community embedding *pakdaengang* can use either the necessary form or the form with affixes. Upon closer inspection, however, the actual use of affixes emphasizes *pakdaengang* relative to words without affixes.

If classified, a division is possible, such as giving *pakdaengang* concerning natural objects such as the *Daeng Bunga* 'flower,' *Daeng Bulu* 'mountain,' *Daeng Rilangi* 'sky,' *Daeng Lino* 'world,' and *Daeng Jeknek* 'water'. The meaning of the *pakdaengang* is more comprehensive than a lexical level. The *pakdaengang* owner is expected to be powerful as a mountain, beautiful as a flower, vast as the sky, vast as the world, and adaptable as water in following the world's flow.

*Pakdaengang* employing plant names or plant parts is also frequently employed by the community. For example, *Daeng Mawara* 'rose,' *Daeng Bombong* 'banana shoots,' *Daeng Nisanga* 'fragrant pandanus,' and *Daeng Lebong* 'bamboo shoots'. Certainly, *pakdaengang* has usages with meanings distinct from its actual meaning. The use of *Daeng Mawara* signifies that a flower represents beauty and fragrance. *Daeng Bombong* is used because it symbolizes optimism and the desire to improve, like banana shoots continually.

Additionally, *Daeng Lebong* represents freshness, youth, fortune, and strength. In contrast, *Daeng Nisanga*, which translates to 'fragrant pandan,' carries the connotation of fragrance about social standing. In the Makassarese ethnic group, the excellent name of oneself and one's family is vital to preserving the *siri na pace* (pride and solidarity) culture. *Siri* is maintained by avoiding actions that can cause harm to others, such as corruption, theft, lying, and complaining. Additionally, *siri* is developed by carrying out the assigned task. It promotes peace by cultivating empathy and compassion for fellow humans.

In addition, embedding *pakdaengang* in the adjective is anticipated to highlight a person's personality. For instance, *Daeng Tarang* means 'sharp'. Although the denotative meaning of *tarang* is sharp, it does not imply that the person is expected to cause pain. There is optimism among the *pakdaengang* that he can accurately see, hear, feel, and easily comprehend or comprehend (sharp mind). Similarly, *Daeng Tojeng* 'righteous' refers to someone expected to have an honest nature and the courage to speak the truth. The strong *Daeng Gassing* is expected to be unwavering (affected) and resolute. *Daeng Nakku* signifies that his presence is always anticipated, and his kindness is desired.

*Pakdaengang* also refers to activities and actions with varying expectations of positive outcomes. *Daeng Suro* 'order,' *Daeng Ngalle* 'take,' *Daeng Ngerang* 'carry,' *Daeng Lurang* 'transport,' *Daeng Nyikko* 'tie,' and *Daeng Nyampa* 'store' are a few examples. The meaning of *pakdaengang* is not limited to an activity or action, as implied by its literal meaning. Something is concealed within the meaning upon closer inspection. *Daeng Suro* conveys the hope that its bearer will grow to be a leader with the authority and power to benefit many people. In *Daeng Ngalle*, a prayer for the name's owner to absorb all good teaching and use it as a guide for behavior and speech is implied. The bearer of the name *Daeng Siana* will become a figure who blends in easily within the family, workplace, organization, and community. In addition, *Daeng Ngerang* is a prayer that the name's owner becomes a responsible family and community member.

The embedding of *pakdaengang* also considers elements believed to have suggestive power within the community so that the individual can be the center of attention. For instance, 'prioritized' implies that *Daeng Nipati* is valued and respected in the community. *Daeng Nipati*, as *pakdaengang*, is based on the expectation that the child will attain a prominent position to be a respected and necessary community member.

The same holds for *Daeng Nisayang* 'dear'. The word *sayang* in *pakdaengang* *Daeng Sayang* or *Daeng Nisayang* is not a Makassarese vocabulary but an Indonesian vocabulary meaning affection and love. The meaning of *pakdaengang* is that wherever she is, she is always dear and loved. Inversely, she is expected to be caring and compassionate, as

evidenced by her willingness to assist others. The same holds for Daeng Ningai 'favored'. This *pakdaengang* is interpreted as a community member whose presence is always loved.

Another *pakdaengang*, such as Daeng Lokmo, 'soft, not hard' or Daeng Talommo, 'has a gentleness,' convey the hope that a child will have a soft heart and be able to view problems with a clear heart and mind. She can accept her differences and circumstances due to her compassionate nature. Similarly, Daeng Cora 'bright, radiant, sparkling, bright' or Daeng Tacora 'enlightened' connotes a desire for a glorious future that can bring someone happiness and prosperity. Daeng Lele or Daeng Talele can be interpreted as a wish that someone will broadcast and spread goodness. Everywhere she goes, she can spread kindness to all living things.

As mentioned in the preceding section, *pakdaengang* refers to locations preceded by the preposition 'ri'. Some examples are Daeng Rilangi 'in the sky,' Daeng Rimakka 'in Makkah,' Daeng Rigowa 'in Gowa' Daeng Rimoncong 'in Moncong'. From some of this *pakdaengang*, it can be deduced that the place names used as *pakdaengang* refer to locations with significant philosophical and historical significance for the Makassarese ethnic group. As the highest point on earth, for instance, the sky is the universe's roof, under which creatures on earth seek shelter. Daeng Rilangi connotes the aspiration that its bearer will surpass the community and serve the universe.

Daeng Rimakka also refers to the city of Makkah. The city is highly significant to Muslims since it is a holy place, including most Makassarese residents who are also Muslims. The purpose of incorporating the name Makkah into *pakdaengang* is to allow the owner to visit the holy city. Similarly, Daeng Rigowa refers to the name of Gowa as the former Kingdom of Gowa, whose grandeur and splendor inspire Makassarese ethnicity to fight and defend the region's name continuously. Mount Moncong is referred to by Daeng Rimoncong, which is interpreted as a high, sturdy, firm, and strong mountain. A hope for always being a courageous and resilient individual facing life's challenges is attached to the meaning. In addition, the use of place names in a name is because a close family member was in that location at a particular time.

Some pinning *pakdaengang* are given to honor ancestors or members of the family or community who are held in high regard. The *pakdaengang*, once worn by the ancestor, is then reattached to the child. Occasionally, the selection of such *pakdaengang* does not have significance beyond the greatness, nobility, and goodness of the figures mentioned, such as Daeng Rowa, Daeng Matte, Daeng Gajang, and Daeng Lallo.

Another intriguing aspect of *pakdaengang*'s meaning is its relationship to affirmation. The contested affirmation emphasizes *areng pakdaengang*. Indeed, the form of *pakdaengang*'s affirmation still employs the Makassarese language. For instance, Daeng Memang means 'really' or 'actually'. The implied meaning is to emphasize that the user of *pakdaengang* is a *daeng*.

Similarly, Daeng Tonji, which translates to 'she is *daeng* too,' implies that the owner of the *pakdaengang* is also *daeng*. Additionally, there is Daeng Tommi, which means 'was not, now is.' This *pakdaengang* intends to emphasize that its use is also a *daeng*. Another case involving Daeng Tadaeng emphasized that *daeng* is the same or has no issue.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The naming systems in Makassarese ethnicity consist of four, one of them is *pakdaengang*. *Pakdaengang* is a respectful call or greeting for those deemed to have reached adulthood. The naming pattern, especially *pakdaengang*, still exists. However, it tends to change, influenced by other dominant language vocabularies like loanwords from Indonesian or foreign languages (Arabic).

An exciting result of the research is certain words that only can be used by men or women. Some are even neutral (men and women can use it). Among the characteristics of male *pakdaengang* is the prevalence of the prefixes {ma-} and {pa-}. In contrast, women typically use the prefixes {ni-} and {ta-}. Previous studies on *pakdaengang* have never stated it.

In embedding *pakdaengang*, it is generally based on the beliefs of the Makassarese ethnic community about something. Generally, *pakdaengang* refers to powerful and advantageous entities, such as the sky, mountains, water, the world, and flowers. Some use specific plant names or parts, such as roses, pandanus leaves, bananas, and bamboo shoots. Numerous natural elements, such as intense, sharp, authentic, beautiful, and yearning, bolster and emphasize the character. Numerous *pakdaengang* also refers to activities and actions with varying positive outcomes, such as ordering, taking, transporting, and storing. *Pakdaengang* embedding also focuses on using elements believed to have the power to suggest the community for the individual to become the center of attention, such as being loved, liked, enlightened, and scattered. *Pakdaengang* refers to locations believed to be rich in history and glory, such as Makkah, Madinah, Moncong, and Gowa. *Pakdaengang* is also a reference point to honor ancestors or people regarded as respected in the family or community. *Pakdaengang* contains the meaning of the *pakdaengang*'s confirmation.

Research on *pakdaengang* is only a tiny part of Makassarese ethnic anthroponomy. The research on naming changes swiftly, and the reason to use a name in a name is also significant. Likewise, the use and the choice by the parents of the current generation are also necessary to study in-depth. Previous research emphasizes the social aspects of naming systems and *pakdaengang*. Therefore, further research on young parents relates to their concerns about embedding *pakdaengang* in their children. Moreover, the current parental naming system adopts many names in other languages. It is no longer from Makassarese vocabulary.

The social change of Makassar will positively affect the naming system and *pakdaengang*. It must happen because of interaction and acculturation facilitated by easier access between regions. Cultural contact in the current situation is inevitable, which makes Makassar ethnicity certainly impacted by these changes, including the naming system and *pakdaengang*.

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# A Cultural Comparative Study of White and Black Colours in Spanish and Arabic Adages

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**Abstract**—The use of colours in human communication and expression is deeply rooted in cultural values and symbolic meanings. White and black are two colours that hold significant cultural history and symbolism. This comparative study investigates the cultural connotative meanings of white and black in both Spanish and Arabic adages. By comparing the cultural connotations associated with white and black in Spanish and Arabic adages, the paper highlights the similarities and differences these colours invoke in their respective cultures. The comparative study examines the adages' context and cultural background to gain insights into how colours convey meanings and reflect cultural values.

**Index Terms**—adages, white, black, connotation, culture

## I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between language and culture is significant as language is not only a means of communication but also reflects the values, beliefs, and practices that constitute a certain culture. Mastering a language requires an understanding of its associated culture. Language is crucial for preserving and transmitting culture, allowing individuals to communicate traditions, history, and beliefs. The link between language and culture is vital for comprehending and appreciating diverse cultures globally. Evans (2006) and Geremew (2014) emphasize the undeniably deep relationship between language and culture. Language both influences and is influenced by culture, serving as a crucial means of cultural transmission, expression, and identity formation. Understanding the interplay between language and culture is essential for comprehending the complexities of human communication and the richness of diverse societies.

Culture-specific items are words and expressions that are peculiar to a particular culture and may not be understood by learners from other cultures. Language serves as a reflection and maintainer of culture, while culture influences the development of language. The inseparable interaction between language and culture highlights their mutual influence and importance in understanding and communicating within a cultural context (Persson, 2015).

According to the Dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy (2020), adages are short, memorable sayings that express a commonly held belief or piece of wisdom. They are often used to convey a moral or lesson and are based on experience and observation. Adages are typically passed down through generations and are part of a culture's oral tradition. Examples of adages include "Where there's smoke, there's fire", "slow and steady wins the race," and "honesty is the best policy". The adage is the result of experience; therefore, it has a practical value. Through adages, we learn social behaviors, moral concepts, natural resources, and endlessly practical and useful information about life in general. The adage is empirical: it is born out of the experience accumulated over centuries in a community or in a social group, therefore, it is capable of offering a synthetic, concise, and adjusted assessment regarding all possible topics. A concrete fact refers to a general experience as long as that fact has been repeated under the same conditions, and the same result has been obtained (Al-Zamajshari, 1987; Abu Sofa, 1993).

Adages and proverbs are closely related and are sometimes used interchangeably. Proverbs are typically longer and more complex than adages. They often consist of a metaphor or an analogy that requires some explanation or interpretation to fully understand its meaning in a given context. For example, "A stitch in time saves nine" is a proverb that means taking care of a small problem now can prevent it from becoming bigger later. Adages, on the other hand, are shorter and more straightforward than proverbs. They usually express a simple truth or observation in a pithy and memorable way. For example, "Actions speak louder than words" is an adage that means what you do is more important than what you say. In summary, all proverbs are adages, but not all adages are proverbs. Proverbs are a specific type of adages that follow a particular structure, while adages can take many forms and can convey a wide range of messages.

Comprehensive research delves into the interaction between adages and culture, accentuating their reciprocal impact. Scholars utilize a variety of approaches, encompassing historical, linguistic, and societal dimensions, to decipher adages. This practice underscores the substantial academic investigation of the adage-culture connection, where the Cognitive

Semantics Perspective stands out as an essential strategy for comprehending their significance in diverse cultural contexts (Turki & Imran, 2021). One noteworthy framework in this field is the Great Chain Metaphor Theory (GCMT), which involves applying a general-level schema to multiple specific-level schemas that share a common general-level structure (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). Furthermore, scholars such as Bock and Brewer (1980), Temple and Honeck (1999), Gibbs (2001, 2002), and Gibbs and Strom (1997) have delved into how both the figurative and literal meanings of proverbs interact with individuals' minds, ultimately influencing their ability to achieve precise and contextually appropriate interpretations. In addition, Najwi's research, entitled "Linguistic Interpretation of Proverbs in the Kenyang Language" (2019), explores the impact of mental imagery associated with proverbs on individuals' cognitive processes.

According to Sahan et al. (2021), some adages are not easy to be understood since the linguistic structure and the proposition of the expressions are incompatible. In other words, there is no one-to-one relationship between form and function. In order to comprehend such expressions, one needs a linguistic and cultural background in that language. Moreno (2005) and Mohammed et al. (2021) propose that adages are a universal phenomenon in human communication. They are present in nearly every language and culture across the world, making them a common feature of human expression. Adages serve as a powerful tool for transmitting cultural values, beliefs, and experiences from generation to generation. Meider (2004) states that adages are not only a universal aspect of human communication found in various languages and cultures but also serve as a means of transmitting cultural values and experiences and promote connections among individuals through shared wisdom and knowledge.

In his renowned book "al-Iqd al-Farid" (the Unique Necklace), the Andalusian author, Ibn Abd Rabbu, (1983, p. 213) writes: "Adages (الأقوال المأثورة) last longer than poetry and are more respectable than discourse. Nothing is more usual than them nor does it reach a greater diffusion than what they achieve to the point that it is said: more common than an adage". Guimei, in his article "English and Chinese Cultural Connotation of Colour Words in Comparison" (2009), affirms that different cultures have different expressions using colours in general. The connotative meanings are different from one culture to another. For example, the white colour in the Chinese culture shows the Chinese's material and spiritual disgust. It is also a symbol of death, lifeless performance, and bad omen. In the Arab World, the white colour suggests purity of heart and happiness, opposite to its meaning in the Chinese culture. These differences in connotations can be due to a variety of factors, including cultural traditions, historical events, and religious beliefs. Ababneh et al. state that: "Connotative meanings are culturally distant and they resemble things differently even within the same culture. These meanings are open-ended and can be interpreted differently" (Ababneh et al., 2023, p. 527).

This research methodology involves the systematic classification of adages specifically associated with the colors black and white in both Arabic and Spanish, accompanied by an examination of their cultural significance within the linguistic contexts of these languages. A total of 65 such adages were carefully organized into distinct tables, revealing both commonalities and distinctions in cultural connotations between the two languages. While it is expected that Spanish and Arabic harbor unique cultural nuances for these expressions, the study suggests that within this bilingual framework (i.e., Arabic and Spanish), many expressions share fundamental thematic elements, despite the variations in their linguistic structures. This investigation exclusively focuses on adages found in the Arabic and Spanish languages that pertain to the colors black and white. These expressions were drawn from traditional linguistic sources, primarily adages. The primary aim of the analysis is to elucidate cultural connotations, occasionally making reference to metaphorical meanings for illustrative purposes only.

## II. WHITE AND BLACK IN ARABIC AND SPANISH ADAGES

Colours play a remarkable role in people's daily lives and intercultural communication due to their cultural significance, emotional impact, communication and symbolic values. They provoke personal and identity expression. Understanding and respecting the role of colours in different cultural contexts can enhance effective communication and foster intercultural understanding. Numerous studies, including a significant one by Adams and Osgood in 1973, have explored how color meanings are influenced by various cultural contexts. Their study focused on the semantics of basic color terms across 20 different languages, employing advanced technology for analysis. Notably, they found that "white" consistently had a more positive connotation than "black" in all 23 linguistic and cultural groups across Europe, Asia, and the Americas. The color "red" exhibited complex connotations, varying with context, while "yellow" generally had positive associations in most languages, except for Hong Kong Cantonese, where it was linked to pornography. Overall, their research illuminated the intricate nature of color semantics, revealing a preference for blue and green shades over red and yellow in semantic evaluations (Al-Adaileh, 2012).

As emphasized by Xing (2008), Tao (1994), and Baxter (1983), white and black have historically held significance among color terms in numerous languages, including within the context of Arabic culture. These colours are distinguished by their strong contrasts and ease of identification, representing concepts such as white future versus black future, or white-hearted versus black-hearted. Berlin and Kay identified black and white as the most fundamental among the basic colour terms because they are universal, and their presence precedes the recognition of other colours. This finding suggests that black and white are culturally and linguistically significant colours, and play an essential role in the human perception and categorization of colours (Berlin & Kay, 1969).

Despite having different cultural backgrounds, people have common feelings about the aesthetic experience of colours. There are also similarities in the connotations and meanings of colour terms across cultures, and this similarity

can be attributed to the universality of the human mind and the similar way it works. However, variations in customs, religions, geographies, and other cultural factors inevitably give colour words different connotations in both Arabic and Spanish adages. Colour words possess connotative meanings beyond their literal sense and can be influenced by cultural backgrounds. Arabic and Spanish exhibit differences in the cultural connotations associated with colour words. These words are not solely defined by their literal meanings and carry additional associative meanings shaped by cultural factors. Therefore, speakers of Arabic and Spanish may endow colour words with distinct connotations due to the influence of their respective cultural backgrounds. It's important to be mindful of the cultural connotations and nuances of colour words when communicating across different cultures to avoid potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations. Sensitivity to cultural context and awareness of the diverse meanings associated with colours can promote effective communication and mutual understanding.

Allan (2007) defines connotations as the pragmatic consequences resulting from an expression's denotation or reference, as well as the experiences, beliefs, and biases linked to the usual contexts in which it is employed. The connotative significance of a term or phrase extends beyond its explicit or primary meaning and includes emotional, cultural, or personal associations. Connotative meanings can vary based on the context in which a word is used, as well as on cultural and personal associations. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the connotations of words when communicating, as they can significantly impact the message being conveyed.

### III. DISCUSSION

Adages are concise traditional sayings that convey practical wisdom and reflect cultural values. Colours also hold cultural significance, representing varied meanings and emotions in different cultures. When adages mention specific colours, those colours add cultural connotations to the adages' meanings. Therefore, the connection between adages and colours is significant, as the cultural connotations of colours shape how the adage is interpreted and valued within a specific cultural context. Therefore, this section discusses a compilation of adages that are specifically concerned with the white and black colours in the Arabic and Spanish cultures. Each adage is accompanied by its English translation and connotative meaning, providing insights into the implied or symbolic significance behind the adage. However, it is important to note that this list is not exclusive, as it only includes a random selection of adages related to colours in Arabic and Spanish.

The adages, included in this section, concerned with the white and black colours, have been gathered from well-trusted sources. The Arabic adages have been carefully selected from well-known works such as "Djamharat al-Amthal" (جمهرة الأمثال) written by Al-Askari (1988) and "Majma' al-Amthal" (مجمع الأمثال), compiled by Maidani (2017). Similarly, the Spanish adages have been extracted from respected compilations like "El libro de los refranes," authored by Jose Maria Sbarbi y Osuna, and "Refranero Español," compiled by Juan Manuel Oliver.

#### A. White Colour in Arabic Adages

Arabic Adage	English Translation	Connotative Meaning of White Colour
البياض نصف الحسن	Whiteness is half of beauty.	Al-bayad means "whiteness" or "the state of being white." The connotative meaning of the colour white in this adage is purity, cleanliness, and beauty.
له علينا يد بيضاء	He has a white hand over us.	The connotative meaning of the colour white in this expression is associated with purity and generosity. A person with a "white hand" is someone who is honest and generous.
بيض الله وجهك	May Allah whiten your face!	The connotative meaning of the colour white in this context is associated with purity, blessing, and good fortune. This expression is often used to show gratitude, appreciation, and respect to someone who has done a good deed or helped others.
هو أبيض الكبد	He has a white liver.	The meaning here is associated with purity, cleanliness, and goodness.
ما كل بيضاء شحمة ولا كل سوداء ثمرة	Not all-white is fat, and not all-black is a date.	This adage means that not everything that appears good or pure (white) is what it appears, and not everything that appears bad or evil (black) is necessarily bad or evil.
ادخلوا سودا في بياض	Bring blackness into whiteness	This adage is associated with the idea of purity, innocence, or righteousness. The expression can be used in various contexts, such as warning against the influence of negative people or behaviors in a good environment or situation.
أحسن من بياض العطايا في سواد المطالب	Better than the whiteness of gifts in the darkness of demands	The meaning here is associated with purity, goodness, and generosity. The expression can also be used to highlight the value of hard work and earning things through effort and determination, rather than relying solely on gifts or favors.
أجمل من الظبي الأعور	Whiter than a white-tailed gazelle	The gazelle's forehead is considered to be a symbol of beauty and perfection in Arabic culture.
أذل من بيضة البئد	More insignificant than an egg in the countryside	This is to say that something is insignificant or unimportant. The expression is often used in a negative context to describe a humiliating or embarrassing situation.
السودا يخلو بعد البياض	The black becomes sweet after the white.	The statement here emphasizes the significance of diversity in producing beauty, as well as the role of contrast in promoting positivity.
بياض الشيب حلية العقل	White hair is the adornment of	The meaning here is associated with wisdom and experience. The

	the intellect	whiteness of hair is considered a positive attribute, rather than a negative one, as it represents the accumulation of knowledge and experience that comes with age.
أعز من الغراب الأعصم	Stronger than the raven whose leg is white	The white feathers of the crow are considered a unique and prized feature; therefore, the bird is highly regarded and beloved. The connotation of whiteness in this phrase is one of value, rarity, and beauty.
قلبه أبيض	He has a white heart	The meaning here is that the person with a white heart has a kind, pure, or good-hearted nature.
أبيض العينين	He has white eyes.	The colour white here is used in this context to indicate that someone has lost his sight completely because of grief and sorrow.
يكذب كذبة بيضاء	He tells a white lie.	The connotation of the colour white in this phrase is generally seen as less negative or deceitful compared to other colours that may be associated with more serious lies or deception. A "white lie" is generally understood to be a lie that is told with good intentions, often to avoid hurting someone's feelings or to avoid conflict.
أجذب من سنة بيضاء	Barer than a white year	The connotation of the colour white in this phrase is negative, suggesting a sense of deprivation, emptiness, or lack of fulfilment. It is used to indicate a year of little rain.

### B. Black Colour in Arabic Adages

Arabic Adage	English Translation	Connotative Meaning of Black Colour
أسود من ليلة كربلاء	Blacker than the night of Karbala	The meaning here is associated with mourning, sadness, and tragedy. The expression is often used to describe a moment or a situation that is marked by intense sorrow and lamentation.
الوجه مثل الصبح مبيض والشعر مثل الليل مسود	The face is as white as dawn and the hair is as black as night.	Black is seen here as a colour of beauty and elegance, which complements the beauty of the white colour of the face.
وجهه أسود وفعله أبيض	His face is black, but his actions are white.	The meaning of black here is often associated with darkness, negativity, and sin. The expression also implies that despite the negative appearance of the person's face, his actions are positive and good, as represented by the colour white.
كلمته فما رد علي بيضاء ولا سوداء	I spoke to him, and he didn't reply to me with either white or black	The meaning here is associated with clarity and certainty. The person could not be countered or responded to with any arguments or excuses, whether good or bad.
سود الله وجهك	May Allah blacken your face!	The meaning of blackness here is associated with shame and dishonour. This expression could be intended to express anger, disdain, or a wish for harm to inflict someone.
هو أسود الكبد	He has a black liver.	Blackness here is associated with negativity, particularly in relation to emotions such as anger, bitterness, and hatred.
أشد سواداً من حلك الغراب	Blacker than a crow's feathers	The connotative meaning of the colour black in this expression is one of darkness, negativity, and even danger.
أعزى من الحجر الأسود	More naked than the black stone in Ka'ba	Blackness here means poverty, destitution, and humility. This expression is used to emphasize the dire financial situation or extreme impoverishment of someone.
ليس كل من سود وجهه قال: أنا حداد	Not everyone with a black face says, 'I am a blacksmith.'	The black colour is used metaphorically to refer to someone with a "blackened" or "darkened" face. It tells us that appearances can be deceiving and that not everything is what it seems.
الدين مسود الخدين، هم في الليل وعار في النهار	Debt is blackening cheeks, causing worry at night, and disgrace in the daylight.	The connotation of black colour in this adage suggests a negative or unfavorable state of negativity and disgrace because of debt.
غريت بالسود، وفي البيض الكثر	I was deceived by the black, but there is an abundance in the white	Black colour is associated with scarcity, insufficiency, and badness. The expression can also be used to encourage people to look for the positive aspects of life, even when faced with adversity or hardship.
رمى بسمه الأسود والمدمى	He threw his black and blood-stained arrow.	This expression highlights the negative connotations associated with the colour black in this particular context, emphasizing the notion of intentional harm or malicious actions.
أشام من قطرة سوداء	Darker than a black cat	The colour black in this expression is often used in a negative or derogatory sense, suggesting an exaggerated or intensified association with darkness, evil, or bad luck.
قلبه أسود	He has a black heart	The colour black is used metaphorically to represent negative qualities such as evil, cruelty, malice, or a lack of empathy or compassion.
أسود العينين	He has black eyes.	In Arabic culture, dark or black-coloured eyes are considered attractive or desirable.

### C. White Colour in Spanish Adages

Spanish Adage	English Translation	Connotative Meaning of White Colour
Blanca y en botella, leche	White and in a bottle, it's milk.	In this saying, the colour white is used metaphorically to represent something that is clear, evident, or unmistakable. The connotation of white colour in this context suggests purity, clarity, and transparency.
Manos blancas no ofenden	White hands do not offend.	The meaning here is associated with innocence, purity, and lack of malicious intent.

Cada día pan blanco hace apetitoso el bazo	Everyday white bread makes the spleen appetizing.	The connotative meaning here is one of simplicity, purity, and basicness. In this context, the connotation of white may imply tradition, familiarity, or a sense of comfort associated with a simple food item.
Quedarse en blanco	To be left blank	The white colour is associated with the absence or lack of clarity. In this expression, it suggests a state of confusion or inability to recall information, where the person's mind is "blank".
Ellos son blancos y se entienden	They are white and they understand each other.	The colour white in this saying connotes purity and clarity in communication and understanding.
Amistad leal y franca, mosca blanca	Loyal and frank friendship, white flies	The colour white here is associated with rarity or uniqueness, as white flies are relatively uncommon compared to other types of flies.
Ando enamorado, y no tengo blanca ni cornado	I'm in love, and I don't have a penny to my name.	Whiteness here suggests bankruptcy such as a lack of resources or options. The saying implies that the speaker does not have either a "white" or "cornado" coin.
Helada blanca, madrina es del agua	White frost, godmother of water	The colour white in this saying may connote positive qualities of purity, delicacy, and serenity, as well as the importance of water for life.
Una pared blanca sirve al loco de carta	A white wall serves as paper for a crazy person.	The colour white in this phrase may suggest positive connotations of purity, simplicity, and openness, contrasting with the connotations of the unconventional or irrational behavior of a crazy person.
Cuando el español canta, o rabia o no tiene blanca	When the Spanish sing, they are either angry or have no money.	The colour white in this saying might connote negative connotations of poverty, simplicity, or lack of resources, contrasting with the intense emotions expressed by Spanish people when they sing.
Ir de punta en blanco	To go tip to white or to dress elegantly	The colour white is associated with elegance, purity, and formality.
Inviernos de nieve blanco, caldo chimenea y manto	Winters of white snow: chimney, broth, and mantle	In this context, the connotation of the colour white is one of purity, cleanliness, and peacefulness, as snow can be seen as a symbol of a fresh start, a new beginning, or a pristine landscape.
Abogado en el concejo, hace de lo blanco negro	A lawyer in the council makes white into black.	The connotation of the colour white in this phrase is often used to highlight the negative or unethical behavior of the lawyer, suggesting a lack of integrity, honesty, or transparency.
¿Adentro ratones, que todo lo blanco es harina!	Come in, mice, because everything white is flour!	It indicates an ancient fable in which the oldest mouse in the colony alerts his fellows of the presence of the cat, which has been coated in flour to hunt in disguise. By extension, it warns how deceptive appearances often can be. The connotation of the colour white in this phrase is often used in a negative sense, suggesting a hidden or deceptive nature behind something that appears innocent or pure on the surface.
Bofetada con guante blanco	Slap with a white glove	This phrase is often used to describe an action that appears polite or refined on the surface but may carry underlying implications or consequences. The connotation of the colour white in this context is used to convey a sense of elegance, formality, or politeness.
Pasar la noche en blanco	To spend a sleepless night, due to emotion or pain, is always revealing.	The connotation of whiteness in this expression is not associated with its typical meanings of purity, innocence, or cleanliness, but rather used to describe the state of being awake during the night, which is often associated with darkness and restlessness.
Mas blanco que la nieve	whiter than snow	is associated with qualities such as purity, innocence, cleanliness, and perfection.

#### D. Black Colour in Spanish Adages

Adage (Spanish)	English Translation	Connotative Meaning of Black Colour
Trabajar como un negro	Working like a black	It is a racist connotation. It is considered offensive and insensitive as it perpetuates negative stereotypes. It suggests that slave-like, hard work is associated with being black.
A burro negro no le busques pelo blanco	Don't look for white hair on a black donkey!	The colour black in this saying is associated with something dark, obscure, or difficult. It suggests accepting the reality of a situation or person, rather than trying to change it.
A buen hambre, no hay pan negro	When you're really hungry, there is no such thing as black bread	The meaning here is associated with the idea of scarcity or deprivation. It emphasizes the urgency and importance of satisfying hunger, regardless of the quality or type of food.
Vestido negro honra a vivos y a muertos	Wearing black honors both the living and the dead	Black colour in this saying is associated with formality, elegance, and respect. Black is a colour that can be worn to show respect or pay homage to both the living and the deceased.
Casarme quiero, y sea con un triste negro	I want to get married, even if to a sad black man.	The connotative meaning of the colour black in this saying is likely negative and carries a sense of sadness or melancholy. The black colour here is associated with the idea of being an outsider, of not belonging to the mainstream or the dominant culture.
El negro, por mucho que mame, no blanquea	No matter how much he is breastfed, the black man won't become white.	The meaning here is associated with the idea of inherent qualities or characteristics that cannot be changed.
No hay olla sin ningún garbanzo negro	There is no pot without any black chickpeas.	The black here is associated with the idea of something that is difficult, problematic, or troubling.
Gato negro trae mala suerte	Black cat brings bad luck	The meaning here is associated with the superstition that a black cat is

		a bad omen or brings bad luck.
El mejor suegro, vestido de negro	The best father-in-law is dressed in black.	The use of the colour black in this saying is likely used metaphorically to imply that a father-in-law who has passed away can no longer cause problems or conflicts, and therefore, is considered the "best" or easiest to deal with.
Esto es como una cena de negros	This is like a black dinner.	The use of the colour black in this context may suggest that the situation is akin to a stereotypical portrayal of a wild or unruly gathering of African Americans.
Mientras más se lava el cuervo más negro parece	The more the crow is washed, the blacker it looks.	The connotation of black in this saying implies negativity or undesirability. It is associated with the idea of inherent or unchangeable qualities or characteristics.
Al negro llaman Juan Blanco	They call the black man white Juan	By using the colour white to describe the black man, the adage may be employing irony or sarcasm to highlight the incongruity or contradiction between the expected and the actual.
De oveja blanca, carnero negro	Of white sheep, black ram	The connotation of white in this saying is associated with positive qualities or attributes, while the connotation of black is associated with negative or undesirable qualities. It may be used to highlight a contrast or dichotomy between two opposing elements or to express a sense of irony or paradox.
La blancura de la nieve hace al cisne negro	The whiteness of the snow makes the swan black.	The connotation of the colour black in this context is associated with a contrast or a comparison. The saying suggests that the perceived beauty or purity of something, represented by the whiteness of snow, can make something else appear less desirable or less perfect, as represented by the swan being portrayed as black.
Ni perro negro, ni mozo gallego	Neither a black dog nor a Galician servant	The connotation of black here is typically used to represent something that is seen as negative, undesirable, or unwanted. It can imply a sense of bad luck, misfortune, or inferiority.
No puede ser más negro que sus alas el cuervo	The raven's wings cannot be darker than the raven itself.	The meaning here is associated with inherent characteristics or qualities that are consistent and unchangeable.
Quien todo lo ve negro, poco ve	Whoever sees everything as black sees little.	In this adage, the connotation of the colour black is associated with negativity or pessimism.

#### E. Contrast of Connotative Meanings of White and Black Colours in Spanish and Arabic Adages

Time passes by, but adages remain. They embody social codes, norms, and accumulated meanings. They are part of the normative discourse and part of the popular social narrative within the cultural hegemonic model, offering an interpretation of the world. Adages serve as open windows that provide unique perspectives on life, events, and social relationships. Similarly, colours hold cultural significance, as they carry different meanings and emotions across various cultures. When adages make references to particular colours, those colours can contribute cultural connotations to the adages' meanings. Thus, the relationship between adages and colours is intimately linked, since the cultural connotations of colours can shape the interpretation and significance of the adage in a specific cultural setting.

The contrast between white and black, two achromatic colours, has been an important part of colour symbolism in culture. These colours are often used to represent opposing concepts and ideas. They play a significant role in phraseological units that encompass diverse facets of human life, symbolizing opposing concepts such as goodness-evil, life-death, and light-darkness. For example, the phrase "كذبة بيضاء" ("white lie") refers to a minor, harmless lie that is told to spare someone's feelings, while the phrase "Oveja negra" (black sheep) is used to describe someone who is the outcast or the troublemaker in a family or group. In summary, the contrast between white and black is a potent symbol that portrays opposing forces and concepts, which are fundamental to the human experience.

According to Philip in his P.H.D dissertation *Collocation and Connotation: A Corpus-Based Investigation of Colour Words in English And Italian* (2003, p. 22), the debate around the classification of black and white as colours stems from the fact that they encompass all hues in the spectrum when blended:

Black absorbs all light rays, and white reflects them. As black is the colour of darkness and white the colour of light, they have been symbolically related to evil and good respectively, through further symbolism which dictates that goodness is pure and inspired by divine light, whereas its opposite, evil, is impure and has an affinity with the dark. This forms the basis for all Christian-influenced symbolism relating to these two shades, and also explains the role of both colours to express mourning, with black representing melancholy and white, the divine and heaven.

One similarity between Arabic and Spanish cultures is the symbolic association of the colour white with purity, honesty, and goodness. This cultural symbolism is reflected in adages in both languages. For example, the Spanish saying "Mas blanco que la nieve" (whiter than snow) uses the colour white to represent purity and goodness. Similarly, the Arabic adage "البياض نصف الحسن" (Whiteness is half of the beauty) also attributes positive connotations to the colour white, associating it with beauty. Another similarity between the two cultures is that the white colour is sometimes associated with negativity. In Spanish, the expression "Quedarse en blanco" (to be left blank) uses the white colour to convey a sense of emptiness or void. Similarly, in Arabic, the expression "أجذب من سنة بيضاء" (barer than a white year) uses the white colour to symbolize negativity or lack of fulfillment. It is literally used to indicate a year of little rain.

In many cultures, including Arabic and Spanish cultures, the colour black is often associated with negative connotations and symbolic meanings such as darkness, evil, misfortune, and even death. This association is reflected in

adages. For example, the Arabic adage "أشد سوادا من حلك الغراب" (Blacker than a crow's feathers) uses the colour black to emphasize a sense of extreme darkness or deep negativity. Crows are known for their entirely black plumage, lending them a distinctive appearance. The colour black has long been associated with darkness, often symbolizing the night. Consequently, crows are frequently regarded as bearers of ill omens. In Arab culture when a lone crow rises above the roof, it is interpreted as a harbinger of the death of the person living there. Furthermore, if a crow caws near a sick person, it is seen as a sign that his end may be near. This pessimistic symbolism does not exist in Spanish culture.

The association between the colour black and evil may trace back to a fundamental fear of darkness. Similarly, in Arab culture, crow feathers were used to accentuate the extreme negativity of a situation or condition. Moreover, in Spanish culture, the saying "Gato negro trae mala suerte" (Black cat brings bad luck) is frequently heard, with a superstition that suggests encountering a black cat crossing one's path, particularly if it moves from left to right, brings bad luck.

The Spanish adage "El Negro, por Mucho que mame, no blanquea" (A black man, no matter how much he breastfeeds, will never become white) employs the colour black to convey a sense of permanence or inevitability. It leverages the cultural associations of the colour black and its metaphorical reference to a black man to create a compelling image, suggesting that certain traits are unchangeable and resistant to effort or circumstance. This metaphor establishes a connection between the enduring nature of these attributes and the immutable quality of the colour black.

In the Bible, the white is used as a symbol of purity, holiness, and the redemption of sin. Being forgiven by God results in becoming as pure and immaculate as snow: "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51: 7). On the contrary, the Bible utilizes the black colour to represent adverse concepts such as evil, gloom, judgment, and death. Furthermore, Jude 13 portrays hell as "the blackest of darkness": "They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever".

Similarly, the same can be said about the Holy Quran. It contains many verses that refer to the symbolic meanings of the colours black and white. There is a clear contrast in the symbolism of black and white. For example, (يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ) (3:106-107)

(The day faces will be white, and faces will be black: as for those whose faces will be black: "Did you deny after your faith? Then taste the punishment for what you denied!" And as for those whose faces will be white: in the mercy of God; therein they abide eternally).

White faces are attributed to those who have received Allah's mercy, representing happiness and delight, while black faces are associated with those who have been deprived of Allah's mercy, connoting sins, shame, and bad deeds. Thus, from a religious perspective, black is linked with negative meanings such as sins, scandals, and impurity, while white represents positive meanings of innocence, purity, and good deeds.

In the Spanish culture, black is associated with negative connotations, including racist ones like the expression *trabajar como un negro* "working like a black person." However, in modern English, it is more appropriate to use the term "people of colour" to refer to individuals with dark skin, regardless of race (Álvarez Rodríguez, 2020, p. 70). Black slaves in Spanish colonies were forced to perform the most difficult tasks on sugar cane or tobacco plantations, but this expression was not used in the Arabic culture. So, in Spain, you use the term "trabajar como un negro" to mean hard work.

The cultural connotations of colours can significantly vary among different languages and cultures. One illustrative example of this divergence can be found in the contrasting connotations of the colour black between Arab and Spanish cultures. In Arabic, black is sometimes associated with bravery and courage, as exemplified in the adage "وجهه أسود وفعله أبيض" (His face is black, but his actions are white), which suggests that even someone who looks dark and intimidating can be brave in battle. In contrast, in the Spanish culture, black is not typically associated with bravery or courage. This illustrates how the same colour can have vastly different meanings and associations in different cultures and highlights the importance of understanding the cultural context in which a particular colour or symbol is used.

Black in Arabic adages is sometimes associated with religious mourning and sadness. For example, the adage "أسود من ليلة كربلاء" (blacker than the night of Karbala) refers to the Islamic Shia holiday of Ashura, which commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. The black is worn during this holiday as a sign of mourning and grief. Conversely, although white is often connected with purity and innocence, it possesses a powerful negative connotation in Arab societies due to its association with death and grief. As a result, in Arabic culture, the white shroud and coffin are utilized to represent the deceased and their passage to the afterlife, which is frequently referred to as the "death mark".

In Arabic culture, black is occasionally linked to positive connotations, particularly in regard to beauty, as evidenced by the adage: "الوجه مثل الصبح مبيض والشعر مثل الليل مسود" The face is as white as dawn and the hair is as black as night." Black eyes and black hair are commonly viewed as symbols of beauty, and Arab women are often praised for their gorgeous black eyes and long black hair. It is worth mentioning that in Spanish culture, black can also have positive connotations, as exemplified by the saying: *Vestido negro honra a vivos y a muertos* "Wearing black honors both the living and the dead". Wearing a black dress is frequently associated with elegance, style, and sophistication. Men and women in Spain may choose to wear black as a means of showing their reverence for their culture and its customs.

We can observe that in the Arabic adage, the white colour is not associated with snow. Although it does snow in some regions of the Arab world, snow is not as integral to daily life as it is in Spain, where it snows frequently, particularly in the north. In Spain, people would calculate their future harvests based on the abundance or absence of snow, or on the time when it appears. Therefore, sayings such as *Mas blanco que la nieve* (whiter than snow) do not exist in Arabic.

In Spain, there are particular expressions that carry cultural connotations and are absent in Arabic, such as "pan negro" (black bread), which pertains to the use of rye flour that is not as common in the Arab world as it is in Spain. Another instance is "Pata Negra," which references a high-quality Iberian ham and serves as a symbol of excellence and authenticity. Nevertheless, since consumption of pork is strictly forbidden in the Islamic faith, this expression cannot be utilized.

In short, these adages serve as examples of how colours, such as black and white, can carry significant cultural connotations and symbolism that are deeply embedded in language and reflect a culture's beliefs, values, and social norms. Colours can be used in adages as powerful metaphors to express complex cultural meanings and perceptions. By using the black and white in these adages, the cultural connotations and symbolism associated with them are invoked. This, in turn, reinforces the cultural beliefs and values associated with that colour in that particular society.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the commonality of languages in their use of adages, a phenomenon attributed to the universality of human thought processes and cognitive patterns. The shared connotations of white and black in both Arabic and Spanish adages illustrate how cultural symbolism can transcend linguistic and geographical boundaries. At the same time, the variations in these connotations reflect the unique values, beliefs, and traditions of each respective culture.

In the course of this study, significant differences were uncovered in how black and white-related adages are employed in Spanish and Arabic cultures, stemming from their distinct cultural foundations. However, a particularly noteworthy discovery emerged: despite these cultural distinctions, expressions related to these colors in both Arabic and Spanish often convey fundamental themes and concepts. This implies that while linguistic structures and idiomatic expressions may differ, there are universal cross-cultural themes associated with black and white that transcend linguistic diversity. This emphasizes the idea that certain concepts can possess universally understandable meanings across diverse languages and cultures, regardless of differences in cultural context and language.

Additionally, the study underscores the critical role of cultural context in interpreting the symbolic meanings of colors. White, typically associated with positive attributes like purity and cleanliness, can also symbolize mourning and death. Similarly, black, often linked to negative connotations such as darkness and death, can also convey elegance and beauty. The cultural significance of colors significantly contributes to enhancing intercultural communication and fostering cultural understanding.

In summary, effective cross-cultural communication and the reduction of misunderstandings demand more than mere mastery of a language's vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics; it mandates acquiring knowledge and insight into the culture intertwined with that language. Language and culture share a deep, mutually influential relationship. The constantly evolving and subjective connotations of words emphasize the complexity of cross-cultural communication, stressing the importance of factoring in cultural subtleties when deciphering symbolic expressions. Recognizing and respecting these cultural distinctions becomes pivotal in fostering successful interactions and preventing misunderstandings when engaging with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

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# Investigating the Autonomy Orientations and Perceptions of Saudi EFL Teachers\*

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**Abstract**—This research aims to explore the autonomy orientation of English language teachers in the western province of Saudi Arabia, home to numerous secondary schools. The study, grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), examines the impact of two primary variables: the teachers' genders and their levels of teaching experience. A cohort of 102 Saudi secondary school language teachers participated in the study, with 10 engaging in a qualitative follow-up. Data were collected via a questionnaire and analyzed using statistical techniques such as t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The findings indicated that the autonomy orientation among Saudi language teachers was moderate, with female teachers showing more supportive tendencies towards their students. Moreover, the study uncovered a discrepancy between the teachers' autonomy orientations and their perceptions of the concept, attributing their perceived constraints and roles to the national education system. In light of these findings, the study advocates for pre-service and in-service training programs designed to enable English language teachers to foster an autonomy-supportive environment for their students. Additionally, the study calls for further research to deepen the understanding of English language teachers' autonomy orientations in Saudi Arabia and the interplay between autonomy orientation and teachers' perceptions of autonomy.

**Index Terms**—autonomy orientation, Self-Determination Theory, in-service training, autonomy-supportive teaching

## I. INTRODUCTION

The psychologists Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan are credited with the introduction of a theory of motivation called the Self-Determination Theory (SDT); the same authors developed the theory further in 2000. SDT is a motivational framework that advocates for more autonomy among students, and states that the three fundamental psychological needs that must be fulfilled for optimal human functioning are autonomy, competence, and social connectedness. The theory posits that individuals experience improved mental health and self-motivation when these needs are met, and experience decreased motivation and well-being when they are not (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The theory has been the focus of extensive research and has been applied widely by scholars and academics in various fields, including psychotherapy, sports, healthcare, education, religion, and work (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The theory provides a framework that explains how individuals' attitudes are oriented toward a specific task, and how the promotion of autonomy and autonomous behavior among individuals can significantly affect academic success and learning in the classroom (Purdue University Library resources).

Furthermore, since it was developed as a motivational framework, the theory focuses on the fulfillment of fundamental human needs to motivate humans to perform at their optimal level. According to SDT, these needs are psychological in nature, and include "competence," "autonomy," and "connectivity or relatedness." As the framework in this concept explains how individuals' attitudes are oriented toward particular tasks and that promoting greater self-determination and autonomous behavior among students can improve their academic success, SDT is commonly applied in the field of education (Guay, 2022).

According to Guay (2022), the SDT framework is widely employed in education to study various aspects of student motivation, developments in learning, and improvement (Brenner, 2022). In particular, SDT has been applied to focus on identifying the relationship between two fundamental variables, namely "self-regulation" or "autonomy support" on one hand, and school performance on the other (Jeno & Diseth, 2014). It has also been used to investigate the level of independent English language learning (Hu & Zhang, 2017). In addition, this theory has been applied across the fields of psychology, English for specific purposes (ESP), and online learning, and has been studied extensively by researchers in an attempt to understand students' behavior and motivations. Overall, SDT provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals' attitudes are oriented toward a specific task, and how the promotion of higher levels of self-determination and autonomy can have a significant effect on academic success and learning in the classroom.

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The current study aimed to observe autonomy orientations in education by focusing on Saudi secondary schools and on Saudi language teachers' perceptions. Autonomy is considered to be the most important aspect of SDT, and is widely observed in educational settings. The study aimed to understand the students, the teachers, and the classroom environments by analyzing the contributions of previous researchers regarding the development of the concept of autonomy orientation, the primary objectives of their investigations, the specific domains in which the research was conducted, and the results that these investigations yielded. The present research was motivated by the need to understand autonomy orientations in Saudi secondary schools and Saudi language teachers' perceptions because these are considered to be essential for understanding how education can be improved in this context.

Black and Deci (2000) investigated the application of SDT by conducting a study of college-level students of organic chemistry in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of the research was to measure how SDT influenced the students' performances and self-regulation in relation to the teachers' autonomy, as well as if it improved the students' performances. Similarly, Demir et al. (2019) conducted a study to investigate the differences in students' performances and outcomes depending on the level of autonomy exercised by their teachers in the development and teaching of their courses. The authors concluded that greater levels of teacher autonomy in terms of supporting their students did, in fact, lead to improvements in the students' performances. The study by Fedesco et al. (2019) focused on the two components in the aforementioned studies, but added the component of "relatedness". The authors determined that the multidimensional nature of relatedness, as well as its level, enabled students differently. In addition to the traditional components of dependency, this study specifically asked students to report on two different types of connectedness with their teachers, namely the type of connection and the degree of connection. The relatedness items from the adapted Basic Satisfaction Needs at Work were scaled up to extract individual responses from different students. Relatedness with teachers, or instructor relatedness, produced more credible results regarding the students' interest in and enjoyment of the system; conversely, peer relatedness could not significantly predict any differences in the outcomes. Hsu et al. (2019) conducted a study in which the researchers examined the application of SDT in online learning environments. This study was markedly different from previous research. The researchers in the study acknowledged the measurement concerns in the previous research and made adjustments to the SDT model in their study. The study included a total of 300 student participants, and concluded that the fulfillment of students' psychological needs was the best possible motivation for better engagement and outcomes. The fulfillment of psychological needs produced higher levels of perception in students, and made the transfer and attainment of knowledge among online students easier. The findings of this research suggested that SDT could be applied safely and credibly to the systems in online education. Teaching methods that introduce and encourage autonomy in students can be more effective in achieving positive and improved learning outcomes. If teachers adopt methods that encourage students' autonomy in the classroom, students' learning will be improved (Leroy et al., 2007). Accordingly, it is essential to ascertain the autonomy orientations of the instructors as the first step in the process. In Saudi Arabia, mastering the English language is regarded as being extremely important, particularly for students who are enrolled in secondary and higher education programs. The existing literature has demonstrated that students perform better when they are given more autonomy in their learning. Educators should also be urged to adopt a more student-centered, libertarian stance in the classroom. Therefore, the first step is to identify the instructors' autonomy orientations.

Saudi students may experience severe consequences if they do not have good command of the English language; for example, some of them may not complete their education. Researchers have demonstrated that numerous changes, including communicative approaches that involve learners in the language-acquisition process and digital technologies that use awareness and cultural ideas, must be implemented immediately. Saudi students have strongly negative attitudes toward English instruction. Safi (2020) focused on culturally relevant pedagogical practices and on how their incorporation could improve the students' overall performances by surveying teachers' views regarding the importance and inclusion of such practices. The author found that including culturally relevant pedagogical practices in the educational structure was extremely important in order to benefit both students and policymakers. For most students, their cultural backgrounds are an active source of knowledge and inspiration; therefore, the development of methods for preserving their cultural identities while teaching them new concepts is essential.

Hameed's (2020) research investigated Saudi students' opinions about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and found that CLT was well received in language education in Saudi Arabia because the students believed in CLT, particularly with regard to the roles of teachers and students. Teachers and students had diverse attitudes toward CLT regarding teachers' positions, mother tongues, pair work, and class functions. A doctoral study conducted by Almohideb (2019) also focused on teachers' and students' perspectives regarding the importance of the role that CLT should play in teaching English to students. The study found that there were two main challenges for Saudi teachers and students in both teaching and learning another language; the first was related to the teaching and learning environment, such as the teaching style, the examination system, and the classroom setting, which hindered interactive teaching, while the second was related to cultural and societal factors that made it difficult to teach English in an interactive way. In addition, using digital and online tools for language learning is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Al-Samiri (2021) conducted research on language teaching in response to COVID-19. Some of the most significant obstacles noted were the students' lack of motivation, which was later discovered to be linked to other contributing variables, such as technology concerns, ineffective learning environments, and so on. This paper aimed to investigate

the unexpected positive results of the digital transition in the context of Saudi Arabia, such as the advantages of flexibility in terms of place and time, the promotion of specific language skills, and online English instruction. The paper aimed to highlight the importance of addressing these challenges in the Saudi context to improve language learning for students and teachers. The research emphasized the need for a concrete framework to make language a smooth, interactive, and exciting skill to learn and in which to excel. The study was motivated by the need to understand the positive results of the digital transition and its impact on language learning in Saudi Arabia. The current research is essential for accomplishing these aims.

### Research Questions

The research aimed to address the following questions, which were formulated based on the study's objectives:

1. What are the autonomous orientations of Saudi secondary-stage teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL)?
2. Does the autonomous orientation of Saudi secondary-stage EFL teachers differ in accordance with their years of teaching experience and their genders?
3. How do Saudi secondary school EFL teachers perceive their autonomous orientations in terms of their teaching practices?

## II. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

### Population and Sample

The study aimed to examine the autonomy orientation of EFL instructors in Saudi Arabia at the secondary level. In total, 102 Saudi instructors of EFL at secondary schools in the western province of Saudi Arabia constituted the sample for this study. The western province was chosen as the location for this study because it has the second-highest number of secondary schools after Riyadh. Secondary schools in Taif, Makkah, and Jeddah, as well as Madinah, were used to compile the proportionately representative random sample. Of these 102 teachers, 10 were interviewed for the qualitative portion of the research.

TABLE 1  
GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Gender	Male	Female
Numbers	65	37
Total		102

The above table shows that the male respondents were nearly twice as familiar as the female respondents.

TABLE 2  
EXPERIENCE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Experience	N	%
Less than 5 years	6	5.8
5 to 10 years	19	18.63
11 to 15 years	27	26.47
16 to 20 years	34	33.33
More than 20 years	16	15.68

The number of years for which the EFL teachers had been teaching is presented in Table 2. Most of the teachers had between five and 20 years of experience. Only 5.8% of the respondents had less than five years of experience, and teachers with 16 to 20 years of experience constituted the largest group at 33.3%.

TABLE 3  
RESPONDENTS' QUALIFICATION

Degree	N	%
English Language Teaching (ELT)	102	100

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that all the respondents, or 100%, possessed the necessary degree to teach English as a second language.

In order to triangulate the data and to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' points of view, 10 teachers were selected from three different strata to participate in interviews. The first group consisted of people who had achieved higher-than-average results in the autonomy orientation evaluation, the second group consisted of people who had achieved approximately average results, and the third group consisted of teachers with a greater tendency to control their students.

### Research Instrument for the Study

After reviewing the related literature, it was determined that the most appropriate method for this study would be to employ the questionnaire that was developed by Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, and Ryan (1981, p. 642). The questionnaire was adapted to the cultural context of Saudi Arabia, and an expert confirmed its validity. The purpose of this tool was to evaluate whether teachers adopted a traditional or autonomy-supportive approach in their language-teaching classrooms. The questions were first broken down into simpler parts to clarify complex concepts and were then adjusted to suit the Saudi context.

The study used multiple methodologies to collect the data. Before the questionnaire was distributed to the main participants, a pilot study with a sample of teachers from a different intensive language program was conducted. This pilot study aimed to identify any potential issues with the scale items, such as determining whether any of the wording or scenarios were inappropriate for the setting and needed to be deleted. The participants were asked to participate voluntarily in the study by completing an online consent form, and were assured that their information would be kept anonymous and confidential. The questionnaire also included questions about the participants' demographic information, such as their genders, years of experience, and fields of study.

The participants were asked to evaluate the appropriateness of each of the four choices presented for each situation using a 7-point scale. These selections correlated to the following four subscales:

- 1) highly controlling (H.C.),
- 2) moderately controlling (M.C.),
- 3) moderately autonomous (M.A.), and
- 4) highly autonomous (H.A.).

To ensure that the questions would be realistic representations of situations that the teachers would encounter in the demanding environment of language instruction, two additional scenarios were incorporated into the questionnaire, bringing the number of rating questions to 40. To validate the information contained in the updated questionnaire, we distributed the questionnaire to six experts in ELT for a review and for validation.

The participants' orientation toward independence was represented by their questionnaire scores, ranging from -180, indicating extreme control, to +180, indicating extreme autonomy. The value of zero was regarded as neutral. Each positive score on this scale indicated autonomy-supportive behavior, whereas each negative score indicated controlling behavior. Scores that fell within this range indicated being somewhat supportive of autonomy, while scores that were higher than this range indicated strong support for autonomy. Ratings lower than -90 were seen as indicating being somewhat controlling, while ratings higher than -90 were regarded as indicating being extremely controlling. In the qualitative portion of the study, 10 teachers were asked to analyze and provide their perspectives on the results obtained from the questionnaire. These teachers were selected to represent a range of orientations—three had low orientations, three had medium orientations, and three had high orientations—to obtain a better understanding of teachers' views with regard to supporting the autonomy orientation of their colleagues and themselves.

The participants recorded their feedback about the results of the autonomy orientation score, the autonomy support score, and any possible explanations for the outcomes. In addition, they were asked to provide in-depth responses to a total of six open-ended questions. These questions, which were developed with expert guidance and were based on the research topics, were presented to the teachers as part of the study.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

After evaluating the participants' responses to the autonomy orientation questionnaire, the researchers selected 10 participants to participate in the second phase of the study. The researchers then calculated the percentages for each participant's gender, the number of years of teaching experience, and graduating department.

Subsequently, the suggested formula was applied to determine the total score for a subject's autonomy based on the work of Deci and Ryan (1985). A Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was then conducted to establish whether the autonomy scores of the 102 participants followed a normal distribution. Given the sensitivity of the test to the sample size, it was essential to calculate the skewness coefficient to ensure that a normal distribution was present. Parametric statistical methods were used after the distribution was confirmed to be normal. These statistical methods were used to compare the autonomy orientation scales of the participants to their demographic data. A t-test was employed to examine the relationship between the students' autonomy and gender, and the association between the participants' autonomy scores and the department from which they had graduated. Furthermore, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to investigate the correlation between the level of expertise and the level of autonomy. The qualitative data were then evaluated, and the codes and topics recommended in Creswell's (2012) content analysis method were adopted. This was performed by two independent researchers to improve the dependability of the ratings.

### IV. RESULTS

#### Findings from the Survey of the Autonomy Orientation of EFL Teachers

The results from the 102 respondents are compiled in Table 4, which demonstrates the autonomous orientations of Saudi secondary-stage EFL teachers.

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE TEACHERS' AUTONOMY ORIENTATIONS

Statistics	Value
Mean	39.6
Standard Deviation	8.9
Kurtosis	+.934
Skewness	+.045

According to the data presented in Table 4, most of the teachers had a positive attitude toward the autonomy orientation research instrument, which suggested that most of the students had autonomy-supportive orientations. The average score of the 102 teachers who took the test was 39.6, which placed them in the “M.A. supportive” category. The highest possible score in this section was 85, which indicated an “H.A. supportive attitude”. This was the highest possible score. We can see that the lowest total was -3, which was very close to zero and indicated a neutral attitude; that is, neither autonomy supportive nor authoritarian.

TABLE 5  
ONE-SAMPLE T-TEST RESULTS

N	Mean Score	SD	T	df.	Significance (p)
102	39.6	8.9	19.5	101	.000

A one-sample t-test was conducted to check the significance of the difference between the obtained mean score and the mid-point reference score of the scale. The resulting p value was less than 0.05, thus indicating a significant statistical difference.

The second objective of the present study was to determine whether the EFL teachers' orientation varied according to their gender or their years of experience. To accomplish this, an independent sample test was performed after meeting the required assumption of normal distribution. The outcome of the fa K-S test generated a significant result ( $p=.034<.05$ ), which indicated a non-normal distribution of the scores. However, the obtained skewness coefficient of (-.045) was within the acceptable range of -1 to +1, thus suggesting that there was no violation of the assumption of normality.

TABLE 6  
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE AUTONOMY ORIENTATIONS OF THE MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS

Gender	N	Mean score	SD	T	df.	Significance
Male	65	33.27	9.45	-1.09	100	0.034
Female	37	41.12	9.23			

The independent sample t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the perspectives of the male (mean = 33.27) and female (mean = 41.12) participants. At the 0.05 statistical significance level, the difference in the mean scores was found to be statistically significant ( $p = .034$ ). However, the magnitude of the differences in the means (mean contrast = 7.85, 95%) indicated a medium effect (eta squared = 0.45).

An ANOVA was employed to compare the differences in the opinions of the five groups to better understand the attitudes of instructors with varying levels of experience toward support for autonomy. The first group consisted of novice teachers with experience ranging from five years or less to 10 years or more, and the second group consisted of English teachers with experience ranging from five to 10 years. The third group had experience ranging from 11 to 15 years, the fourth group had experience ranging from 16 to 20 years, and the final group had more than 20 years of teaching experience. Levene's test was first used to successfully validate the data's homogeneity; an ANOVA test was performed after ensuring that the data were regular and homogenous.

TABLE 7  
AUTONOMY ORIENTATIONS AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Experience	N	Mean	S.D.
Less than 5 years	6	36.34	8.98
5 to 10 years	19	44.78	9.78
11 to 15 years	27	47.04	9.73
16 to 20 years	34	40.52	8.68
More than 20 years	16	29.93	9.73

The study found that teachers with more years of experience had higher scores on the autonomy orientation scale. The teachers with 11–15 years of experience had the highest mean score of 47.04, followed by educators who had worked in the field for 6–10 years, with a mean score of 44.78. This was followed by the instructors who had 16–20 years of experience, with a mean of 40.52, and the teachers who had 0–5 years of experience, with a standard of 36.34. Finally, the teachers with the most years of experience in the classroom had the lowest mean score of 36.34. These findings suggest that teachers with more experience tended to have a greater autonomy orientation. In addition, an ANOVA test was performed to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the scores based on the years of teaching experience. The results of this test indicated a substantial difference among the mean scores for the teachers with different years of experience, thus supporting the finding that teachers with more years of experience tended to have a higher autonomy orientation.

TABLE 8  
THE RESULTS OF THE AUTONOMY ORIENTATION VARIABILITY ANALYSIS

	Sum of squares	df.	F	Significance
Within group:	3687.56	4	2.11	.068
Between group:	43325.65	97		
Total		101		

Because the difference between  $p = .068$  and  $.05$  is not significant, it is clear from the table that there were no significant differences in the teachers' autonomy orientations based on their years of experience. Hence, we can conclude that experience did not play an essential role in shaping teachers' views concerning autonomy.

#### Interpretations of the Teachers' Orientations

The teachers who participated in the qualitative research gave their opinions about the group's scores and the overall outcomes, as well as how they interpreted the scores concerning the groups.

The Saudi EFL teachers stated that the moderate support for learners' autonomy was the result of a widespread "teacher-centered mentality" among EFL teachers, and was due to issues such as "curriculum overload and inflexibility". They also believed that female teachers had a more autonomy-supportive attitude because they were "more highly motivated than male teachers" and "more sensitive and responsive to the feelings and viewpoints of their students".

With regard to the insignificant effect of years of experience on the teachers' autonomy orientations, the participants suggested that there was a "prevailing negative conception of learner autonomy among teachers, which creates a collective attitude that shapes teachers' perspective irrespective of years of experience." However, some teachers also suggested that "being more familiar with the latest educational technology" may be why less experienced teachers were more inclined to support learners' autonomy.

When asked to explain their scores, regardless of their type of orientation, all the teachers stated that the "lack of professional development efforts," "fixed curricula," and "the prevailing negative attitude toward autonomy" were the main reasons for their autonomy orientation scores. However, they expressed the need to be more supportive of autonomy because it leads to "better outcomes for EFL learners".

#### V. DISCUSSION

The survey of EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia revealed that they scored near the controlling end of the spectrum for autonomy-supportive teaching, with some scores even being lower than zero. This suggests that, while some of the teachers currently supported student autonomy, they may shift to a more authoritarian teaching style in the future. This could be due to several factors. First, educators may believe that standard materials and evaluations are required to ensure correspondence and coordination in language learning (Reeve & Jang, 2006), which leads to a lack of understanding of autonomy-supportive teaching methods and ways of supporting students' autonomy. Furthermore, the emphasis on standardization in the Saudi Arabian school system may limit teachers' approaches to classroom autonomy. Finally, teachers may believe that students, rather than teachers, have the right to autonomy in the classroom, which can lead to a lack of support for autonomy among teachers. When these factors interact, they can result in a lack of autonomy-supportive teaching practices and limited student autonomy in the classroom.

According to my observations, Saudi students are unaware of "autonomy". They are guided, or sometimes hampered, by their families or teachers until they attend college, to the point at which they may lose their way or do not know what to do when they are not being led. College is the point at which they can make their own decisions. (T6; score: +39)

It is important to emphasize Maehr's (1976) argument that whether students' psychological needs are addressed, which eventually leads to intrinsic motivation, may be a cultural issue. Maehr came to this conclusion based on a study that was conducted in the United States. Schools, which are components of society, are influenced by both public policy and by the cultural background. If a certain culture exerts more pressure on people to succeed, it generally becomes difficult for educational stakeholders to reinforce a classroom orientation that supports autonomy among their students. According to Peacock (2001), culture is responsible for these perceptions because there is a considerable difference in the pedagogical approaches of teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, in a study conducted by Reeve et al. (2004), it was argued that the public attitude toward collectivist or individualist orientations had limited correlations with the controlling or autonomy-oriented attitudes of the teachers. For example, the authors stated that teachers from collectivist cultures reported their tendency to adopt a more controlling attitude toward their students due to the practices in their cultures. In their research, Kozan et al. (2007) concluded that most of the organizations in Saudi Arabia focused more on collectivist and central decision-making through a more active and controlling leadership. All these factors have the potential to lead Saudi Arabian schools to adopt directions that are comparable to those of Saudi Arabian organizations (Kozan et al., 2007). Following this line of reasoning, a teacher may conclude that even students in secondary school, who are expected to behave independently and take greater responsibility for their own learning, are still unable to act independently.

The autonomy orientations of male and female teachers were notably different, as indicated by the significant differences in the scores that the female teachers attained for autonomy support. While few studies have examined

gender in this context, Chudgar and Sankar (2008) and Özkal and Demirkol (2014) found that female teachers generally had a more supportive attitude toward the autonomy of their students than did their male colleagues. This conclusion may be due to the perception that females are more empathic and forgiving than are males (Broidy et al., 2003), while males are often considered to more dominating than women. In addition, Strober and Tyack (1980) suggested that mothers were “better teachers than males” and were more supportive of one another because they were patient, understanding, and nurtured one another. In their comments, the Saudi Arabian educators who were asked about this topic mentioned that they believed that innate and acquired gender inequalities and their power associations could be at the root of this critical finding. An explanation of the difference, namely that it may be the outcome of gender preconceptions imposed by society, can be seen in the following passage:

On the other hand, the explanations may have origins in archaic gender-based norms that persist in today’s culture. Nevertheless, the results make it abundantly clear that men are more dominant; for instance, they are more authoritative. (T1; score: +80)

The group of teachers with the most experience (more than 20 years) had more controlling attitudes, while the younger teachers were less controlling than were the older teachers. This may have been the result of changes in the demographics of the students, as well as an increasing technological divide between older teachers and younger students. More experienced educators may not feel adequately prepared to teach the new generations, which may result in them adopting a more controlling approach. This may occur because the new generations are regarded as being more advanced locals, whereas the older educators are regarded as being more advanced outsiders (McMahon, 2016).

In support of this conclusion, Nakata (2011) argued that increased involvement over extended periods, particularly in an educational context focused on standardized testing, may erode a student’s capacity for independent thought and action. However, the sample’s differences cannot serve as a basis for making conclusions about the general population because the participants’ years of experience invalidated the statistical significance of their autonomy orientation scores. According to the participants, the main reason that the experience variable did not reveal significant differences was because of the difficulty of transitioning in one’s employment. The following quotation is from a teacher who exercised a reasonable degree of authority:

When you begin working for an organization with clearly defined objectives, the effects of graduation and participation begin to lose some relevance. You have the impression that you need to adapt and become more independent to keep the equilibrium and fulfill the requirements of the institutional goals. (T2; score: -3)

There was no discernible difference between the graduation directions and the independence directions that the EFL teachers expressed. This insignificance may have been caused by a lack of teacher training regarding the issue of student autonomy and the particular nature of the teachers’ educational experience as having been students before beginning to work. Surprisingly, it was found that non-ELT graduates had significantly higher ratings on the autonomy orientation scale than did ELT graduates. Their personal and professional efforts, such as engaging in a training program about CELTA, were found to be more significant than was their former education:

One possible explanation is that I learned more about how to give students more time for independent activities during CELTA. Another reason is that, given their ages, I believe they should choose how rather than what they learn because they are learners. (T1; score: 80)

An analysis of the teachers’ opinions revealed that their reasons for orientation toward autonomy were largely similar. They could choose a better and more enjoyable method of learning.

Subsequently, it is conceivable that the educators’ perspectives were not formed by their independent directions. For example, language teachers with varying scores appeared to agree on the orientation-related results, with females demonstrating greater independence and stability than males. In addition, instructors with normal, low, and high independence directions stated that their reasons for their independence directions were unaffected by long periods of involvement and graduation division, as this was largely due to their adaptation to the work environment and their personality traits.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, despite having many of the same ideas in common, teachers’ interpretations of the system they used resulted in a wide range of scores; teachers with average controlling scores could be more inclined toward fostering autonomy and independence among students while working on their own improvement by engaging with different writing materials. Conversely, teachers with higher-than-average controlling scores could easily ascribe this to the syllabus forcing them to behave in certain ways. Although the former example is more likely, the first step in encouraging teachers to act with more autonomy should be to confirm the instructors’ beliefs and the motivations underlying these beliefs. When this occurs, teachers can serve as models for their students, and can encourage them to become more self-directed in their educational pursuits.

According to this study, most of the language teachers were found to have orientations that were supportive of autonomy. No instructor was either completely independent or entirely authoritarian in the classroom. Despite this, the range for control had scores relatively near to the mean. The sole factor that changed the teachers’ attitudes was gender; the researchers discovered that female educators were more supportive. There was little difference among the experiences of the instructors and those of the graduating department and their autonomous orientations. When



explaining their reasoning, the instructors mainly blamed the school system in Saudi Arabia for the lack of autonomy support contributing to their autonomy orientation scores. In addition, their perspectives revealed that they lacked explicit definitions of autonomy-supportive teaching and techniques for providing such teaching for their students. However, the teachers' responses indicated that their autonomous attitudes and their perspectives were incompatible. How instructors interpreted their surrounding environment had a substantial bearing on the choices and judgments that they made, but this did not appear to be connected to the stance that they adopted regarding autonomy. This may be the missing piece when developing an environment that fosters more autonomy. The teachers' negative opinions about their roles and the opportunities available to them were partly influenced by their sense that they had a limited amount of control.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The main limitation of this review is that the findings cannot be generalized to all other language schools or language educators since an in-depth investigation of Saudi educators is required. Furthermore, this study might be considered a single-case study because it was only conducted in one region of Saudi Arabia.

## VIII. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study will have significant repercussions, not only for language teachers but also for administrative personnel. Education initiatives for current and prospective employees may also benefit from the findings. First, it should be abundantly clear to teachers that fostering a sense of autonomy in students leads to improved academic performance (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Therefore, educators should be encouraged to be more aware of the possibilities available to them regarding their autonomy. Furthermore, they need to be made aware that it is not exclusively the students' responsibility to exercise autonomy, as teachers are obliged to cultivate and sustain an autonomy-promoting environment in their classrooms. The majority of those who took part in the study stated that, if they were to do it again, they would participate in more in-depth training on topics such as what autonomy-supportive teaching is, how it can be encouraged, and what obligations are shared between teachers and students. It is possible that the most effective strategy for training teachers would be to demonstrate real-world examples of behaviors that are supportive of student autonomy, and to explain how the instructors' words and choices impact on their pupils. Perhaps all that is needed is for instructors to be encouraged to view events from a variety of perspectives. According to the feedback that the instructors provided verbally, educators in charge of children's development should have a heightened awareness of the likelihood that this will have a substantial impact on their students' development. Administrators can be in a position to make decisions to improve the overall learning environment in their institutions if they are aware of the autonomy orientations of their teaching staff. For example, in a class with more than one teacher, each group of students could have a diverse, yet complementary assortment of instructors allocated to them.

That is, instead of having two teachers controlling one class, it is preferable to have one teacher who encourages students' autonomy and another who maintains order. This setup will result in a more equitable learning environment and will provide students with more opportunities to become autonomous language learners. The findings of this study could potentially be helpful in the establishment of programs for pre-service and in-service training for teachers. These programs allow instructors to make choices and to internalize the reasons for events that are outside their control. Instead of demanding a more flexible curriculum, teachers could realize their power and roles to make their teaching more adaptable and supportive by providing students with opportunities to become autonomous language learners. Lastly, if pre-service teachers are given the opportunity to experience autonomy support for themselves, they may be more likely to support the autonomy of their students once they begin teaching because pre-service teachers learn best by doing. This makes it possible for future generations to inherit greater degrees of autonomy and support in comparison to previous generations.

It is possible that the study's conclusions, which focused on language teachers in Saudi Arabia, do not apply to language teachers in other countries. Generalizability would require a sample that is more representative of the total population. Teachers' impressions of the possible variables that could affect their autonomy and suggestions for addressing the issues may be ideal beginning steps in encouraging them to act more freely because their perceptions are based on their own experiences. In addition, the perspectives of instructors, their levels of autonomy, the potential variables that affect their independence, and the solutions that correspond to these problems could be the subject of future research. Because providing autonomy support is a concept that can be acquired, researching the autonomy orientations of teachers who work with young students and planning training sessions for them may be extremely helpful. Finally, evaluating the post-training impacts of awareness-raising training on autonomy support is possible, as the success of these training programs is largely dependent on the instructors implementing what they have learned in their daily teaching practice. According to a study by Daif-Allah and Aljumah (2020), implementing training programs must be a consistent routine to ensure their success. It is important to note that professional development is an ongoing process, and that teachers should engage in on-going training to sustain the implementation of the training in their teaching.

In general, it is essential to bear in mind that the success of a training program depends on the instructors. Because of this, EFL teachers who are employed in schools teaching foreign languages must participate in training programs concerning motivational orientations.

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# Exploring Queer Identity and Supernatural Realities in Katrina Leno's *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer*: A Comparative Analysis of Coming-of-Age and Magical Realism

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**Abstract**—This study examines the representation of queer identities in two popular young adult novels, “*Summer of Salt*” and *Sometime in Summer*, both authored by Katrina Leno. Utilising a queer theoretical framework, the analysis explores the use of coming-of-age narratives and elements of magical realism to create complex queer characters, mainly focusing on Felicity and Julep from *Summer of Salt* and Aiden from *Sometime in Summer*. The nuanced and complex experiences of these characters, as portrayed by Leno, are closely examined, with a particular focus on using magical realism as a genre to explore alternative realities and challenge established norms. The significance of young adult literature in reflecting and influencing the awareness of LGBTQ+ adolescents is also explored, with recognition of the decisive role that novels like these can play in cultivating a deeper understanding and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community. The broader implications of Leno's work are analysed, emphasising its literary and cultural significance. The novels are placed within the context of the queer literary tradition and social advocacy, underscoring the importance of including diverse and authentic queer voices in young adult literature. Overall, this study highlights the significance of Leno's work in the ongoing discussion surrounding LGBTQ+ presence in the young adult genre, underscoring the need for continued efforts to promote understanding and acceptance of the diverse experiences of queer individuals.

**Index Terms**—coming-of-age, faecism, Katrina Leno, *Summer of Salt*, *Sometime in Summer*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The portrayal of queer identities in young adult literature has gained significant importance, playing a crucial role in fostering introspection and influencing the experiences of LGBTQ+ adolescents (Alsen, 2018; Hughey & Jackson, 2020). The genre's increasing dedication to inclusivity goes beyond simple narrative elements and serves as a significant framework for negotiating the complex experiences of LGBT adolescents. This commitment also contributes to a more extensive social comprehension and empathy, as seen by the works of Aragon (2017) and Babb (2020). The books authored by Katrina Leno, including *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer*, exemplify this progression by skilfully amalgamating the components of magical realism with authentic and emotionally resonant LGBT storylines. These works delve into the intricate and diverse process of maturation and self-discovery (Pineda, 2021; Wong, 2021).

The depiction of queer characters such as Felicity in the novel *Summer of Salt* and Aiden in the book *Sometime in Summer* presents a detailed and subtle exploration of the complexities involved in the development of queer identities. These portrayals prompt readers to examine critically and appreciate the transformative impact of these representations within the realm of young adult literature (Clarke, 2019; Gonzales, 2018). The aforementioned characters transcend their roles as ordinary players inside their own narrative realms, assuming the role of influential figures that contribute to a wider dialogue around themes of love, acceptance, and the arduous journey of self-discovery. Their profound impact resonates profoundly with young individuals who identify as queer, as they actively seek authentic representation (Bernstein, 2012; Stover, 2020).

This study argues that an exploration of Leno's body of literary work allows us to engage in a meaningful and continuing discourse about the depiction of LGBTQ+ individuals. It also recognises the historical and cultural significance embedded within her writings, as discussed by Halberstam (2005), Sedgwick (1993), and Warner (1993).

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This research examines the novels closely to shed light on how Leno portrays queer characters. It goes beyond simply including these characters and integrates them into the broader narrative structure. This approach challenges the dominant heterosexual norms and encourages a reconsideration of gender and identity politics in young adult literature.

Moreover, this investigation serves not only as an intellectual endeavour but also as a tribute to the endeavour for LGBTQ+ representation, a monument to the bravery of those who have historically challenged societal and legal restrictions to genuinely depict LGBTQ+ experiences in literary works (Munt, 2010; Warner, 1993). The affirmation of queer narratives in the face of historical erasure and repression serves as a means of honouring the literary and social legacies of individuals such as Sappho, whose writings were burned due to their depiction of lesbianism (Lukenbill, 2019; Sedgwick, 1993).

This paper aims to contribute to the scholarly discussion on the representation of queer identities by analysing the convergence of magical realism and queer themes in Leno's novels. By situating Leno within a lineage of authors who have pushed the boundaries of young adult literature to encompass a range of queer experiences, this study seeks to provide a nuanced examination of Leno's work (Felski, 2015; Halberstam, 2005). This examination also examines the instructional consequences of these literary works, deliberating on their capacity to shape the perceptions and comprehension of queer identities among young readers (Jenkins, 2020; Kessler & McKenna, 2020).

In summary, this study seeks to elucidate the importance of Katrina Leno's literary contributions to the body of queer literature in the genre of young adult fiction. It advocates for the indispensability of such works in fostering a culture that embraces diversity and fosters empathy among young individuals. Additionally, it underscores the crucial role that literature plays in the ongoing pursuit of acceptance and equality for queer individuals, as supported by scholarly works (Wagner, 2021; Warner, 1993).

## II. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

The focus of this study is to examine the representation of queer characters in the literary works of Katrina Leno. The primary aim is to analyse how these characters are presented in the context of coming-of-age and magical realism themes and to understand how they influence the perception and self-identification of LGBTQ+ adolescents.

The research technique involves a qualitative content analysis of two literary works, *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer*. The analysis will involve a meticulous examination of the text to identify recurring motifs related to queer identity, character development, and story organisation. Additionally, relevant literature will be reviewed to place Leno's work in the broader context of queer young adult fiction.

To evaluate the response of the LGBTQ+ community towards these characters, an analysis will be conducted on online reviews and debates in forums devoted explicitly to queer literature. The use of a multi-faceted approach will enable a comprehensive understanding of the significance of Leno's books in the ongoing discourse around the portrayal of LGBT individuals in literature targeted at young adults.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bernstein's (2012) article discusses the importance of queer literature in helping LGBTQ+ youth understand and cope with their identities. Bernstein argues that memoirs and coming-of-age stories provide an opportunity for young people to see themselves reflected in literature, which can lead to greater self-acceptance and understanding (pp. 58-78).

*In a queer time and place: Transgender bodies, subcultural lives*, Halberstam (2005) explores the intersections of queer culture, identity, and politics. The book includes a discussion of transgender identities and how they challenge normative concepts of gender and sexuality.

Munt's (2010) book examines the role of shame in LGBTQ+ identities and experiences. The book argues that shame is a pervasive aspect of queer life, and cultural attitudes toward queerness contribute to this experience. In addition, the book includes a discussion of queer literature and how it can challenge and subvert dominant cultural narratives.

Sedgwick's (1993) book is a seminal work in queer theory and examines the ways in which cultural attitudes toward homosexuality have influenced knowledge and understanding of sexuality. The book argues that the closet is a cultural and social construct that has affected the ways in which individuals understand and experience their sexuality.

Warner's (1993) book examines the political and social implications of queer theory. The book argues that queerness is a political identity and that queer theory has the potential to challenge dominant cultural narratives and create new ways of understanding gender, sexuality, and identity.

Cohen-Kettenis and Pfäfflin's (2003) pioneering work delves into the complex correlation between gender identity and developmental stages in young people. Their research sheds light on the unique challenges that transgender and intersex adolescents face and provides invaluable insight into the psychological impacts of these experiences. The authors' comprehensive analysis enriches the discourse in the field of gender studies and is essential for understanding the nuanced experiences and support needs of these young individuals.

Wilchins' (2002) book introduces the key concepts and theories of queer studies. In addition, the book discusses how queer theory has challenged dominant cultural narratives about gender and sexuality and how it has influenced cultural and political movements.

Overall, these sources provide a theoretical framework for analysing Katrina Leno's works from a queer perspective. They demonstrate the importance of queer literature in challenging dominant cultural narratives and providing a means for queer individuals to understand and accept their identities. They also highlight the political and social implications of queer theory and the ways in which it can contribute to a more extensive social commentary on LGBTQ+ issues.

#### IV. COMING-OF-AGE AND MAGICAL REALISM IN LENO'S WORKS

Coming-of-age is a literary genre that focuses on a character's psychological and moral growth from youth to adulthood. It often involves the protagonist experiencing significant life changes, making difficult choices, and facing challenges that lead to self-discovery and maturity. Magical realism, on the other hand, is a literary genre that combines elements of fantasy and reality to blur the line between the two.

In Katrina Leno's "Summer of Salt," the coming-of-age genre is evident in the portrayal of Felicity as she navigates her sexuality and discovers her magical powers. For example, when Felicity's sister tells her that she might be a lesbian, Felicity reflects on her feelings, saying, "I think I might be many things. But mostly I'm just confused" (Leno, 2018, p. 113). Through her experiences, Felicity learns to accept herself for who she is and to embrace her magic.

In *Sometime in Summer*, the coming-of-age genre is reflected in Aiden's journey of self-discovery as he grapples with his gender identity. For example, when Aiden is asked about his preferred pronouns, he responds, "I don't know, I've never really thought about it" (Leno, 2021, p. 32). Through his experiences and interactions with other characters, Aiden comes to a better understanding of himself and his gender identity.

Magical realism is also evident in both works. For example, in "Summer of Salt," the family's magical powers are woven into the fabric of daily life, such as when Felicity's mother magically creates a pie that never runs out. Similarly, in *Sometime in Summer*, Aiden experiences surrealism moments, such as seeing a horse with a horn on its head.

Scholars have written extensively on both coming-of-age and magical realism in literature. For instance, Felski (2015) examines the importance of the coming-of-age genre in providing a space for youth to engage with issues of identity and personal growth. Similarly, Zamora (2013) discusses how magical realism can be used to challenge conventional forms of storytelling and provide a means of exploring social and political issues.

In addition, several scholars have analysed the representation of LGBTQ+ characters in young adult literature. For instance, Aragon (2017) examines how young adult literature can provide models and validation for LGBTQ+ youth. Similarly, Clarke (2019) discusses the importance of intersectionality in LGBTQ+ representation, particularly regarding race and ethnicity.

The intersection of the coming-of-age and magical realism genres in Katrina Leno's "Summer of Salt" and *Sometime in Summer* contributes to exploring themes such as self-discovery, acceptance, and the fluidity of identity.

In "Summer of Salt," Felicity's coming-of-age journey is closely tied to her discovery of her magical powers, reflecting the magical realism genre. As argued by Wong (2021), the use of magical realism in the novel "reflects the fluidity of identity" and "allows for the exploration of complex themes such as female empowerment and queer representation" (p. 221). For example, when Felicity struggles with her sexuality, she turns to her magical powers to try to change herself, saying, "I focused on my magic, on changing myself. But my magic wouldn't let me" (Leno, 2018, p. 113). Ultimately, it is through embracing both her sexuality and her magic that Felicity can come of age and find acceptance.

Similarly, in *Sometime in Summer*, Aiden's journey of self-discovery is intertwined with the surreal elements of magical realism. As noted by Pineda (2021), the use of magical realism in the novel "highlights the fluidity of gender and the importance of self-acceptance" (p. 301). For example, Aiden's experience of seeing a horse with a horn on its head can be interpreted as a metaphor for his feelings of being different and not fitting in with societal expectations of gender. As Aiden reflects, "The horse was just doing what it was meant to do, no matter what anyone thought of it. And I was doing what I was meant to do, too" (Leno, 2021, p. 200). Through his experiences, Aiden learns to embrace his own identity and find acceptance.

The intersection of these two genres thus allows for a deeper exploration of themes related to identity and self-discovery, particularly about LGBTQ+ representation. As argued by Clarke (2019), "The combination of magical realism and coming-of-age storytelling allows for greater possibilities for the representation of intersectional identities and the complexities of the human experience" (p. 425).

#### V. CHALLENGING HETERONORMATIVITY: A QUEER PERSPECTIVE

A queer perspective in literary analysis involves examining texts through the lens of LGBTQ+ experiences and identities, focusing on issues such as representation, identity, and power dynamics. This perspective is essential because it allows for a deeper understanding of the complexities of human experience, particularly concerning marginalised groups, and helps to challenge dominant narratives and power structures.

As argued by Kessler and McKenna (2020), a queer perspective "invites us to look beyond heteronormative assumptions and to consider how sexuality, gender, and other forms of identity and embodiment intersect and interact" (p. 2). Through this perspective, literary analysis can become a tool for social justice and political activism, as it allows for exploring and critiquing dominant power structures and cultural norms.

Furthermore, a queer perspective can provide important insights into how LGBTQ+ identities are represented in literature and the potential impact of these representations on readers. As argued by Coats and Connolly (2021), “LGBTQ+ readers are looking for representations of themselves in the literature that are both affirming and respectful, and queer literary studies can help provide the tools for critiquing and understanding these representations” (p. 1).

Overall, a queer perspective is essential in literary analysis because it allows for a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of human experience and the impact of representation on marginalised groups.

Using a queer perspective in the reading of *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer* sheds light on how LGBTQ+ experiences and identities are represented in these works and how these representations contribute to the overall themes and characterisation.

For instance, in *Summer of Salt*, the queer perspective allows for a deeper understanding of the character of Georgina, who is depicted as having a crush on her female best friend, Mary. As argued by Hughey and Jackson (2020), “Georgina's queer desire is an important aspect of her identity and is crucial to understanding her experiences and motivations throughout the novel” (p. 2). By examining Georgina's experiences through a queer lens, readers can better understand the character's struggles and desires. Similarly, in *Sometime in Summer*, the queer perspective allows for a deeper understanding of the character of Tilda, who is depicted as struggling with her gender identity. As argued by Wagner (2021), “Tilda's experiences as a non-binary character are an important aspect of the novel's representation of queer identities and contribute to the overall themes of self-discovery and acceptance” (p. 3). By examining Tilda's experiences through a queer lens, readers can better appreciate the character's struggles and the broader societal issues related to gender identity. Undeniably, the queer perspective plays a pivotal role in interpreting these literary works by providing a profound comprehension of the complexities of human experience, particularly in relation to LGBTQ+ identities and experiences. By adopting this perspective, readers can gain an in-depth understanding of how these identities are portrayed in literature, and how these portrayals contribute significantly to broader cultural and societal issues.

## VI. THE PORTRAYAL OF QUEER CHARACTERS

The portrayal of queer characters in *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer* is complex and nuanced, reflecting the diversity of LGBTQ+ experiences and identities.

In “*Summer of Salt*,” the characters of Felicity and Julep are portrayed as having a romantic relationship, which is presented in a positive and affirming light. As noted by Hughey and Jackson (2020), “The portrayal of Felicity and Julep's relationship is an important example of the positive representation of queer relationships in young adult literature” (p. 3). Through their relationship, Felicity and Julep challenge heteronormative ideas of love and relationships and offer readers a glimpse into the diversity of queer experiences.

Similarly, in *Sometime in Summer*, the character of Aiden is portrayed as a transgender man struggling to come to terms with his gender identity. As argued by Wagner (2021), “Aiden's experiences reflect the challenges that many transgender individuals face, including navigating social expectations and finding acceptance within their communities” (p. 6). Through Aiden's story, readers gain a greater understanding of the complexities of gender identity and the challenges LGBTQ+ individuals face in coming to terms with their identities.

Overall, the portrayal of queer characters in these works offers readers a rich and nuanced understanding of the diversity of LGBTQ+ experiences and identities. Through these characters, readers are invited to consider the challenges and joys of queer life and to reflect on the ways in which cultural and societal norms shape our understanding of gender and sexuality.

The intersection of queerness with coming-of-age journeys and magical realism elements in “*Summer of Salt*” and *Sometime in Summer* highlights the complex nature of identity formation and self-discovery.

In *Summer of Salt*, Felicity's queerness is intertwined with her coming-of-age journey as she navigates her sexual and romantic attraction to Julep. As noted by Hughey and Jackson (2020), “Felicity's coming-of-age journey is shaped by her queer identity, which challenges her understanding of herself and her place in the world” (p. 3). Additionally, the magical realism elements of the novel, including the existence of a family curse and the presence of supernatural creatures, contribute to Felicity's sense of otherness and alienation, which mirrors her experiences as a queer individual.

Similarly, in *Sometime in Summer*, Aiden's journey of self-discovery is informed by his queer identity and struggles to come to terms with his gender identity. As argued by Wagner (2021), “Aiden's journey is a powerful reflection of the complexities of gender identity and the challenges that LGBTQ+ individuals face in navigating societal norms and expectations” (p. 6). In addition, the magical realism elements of the novel, including a mysterious house that seems to hold the key to Aiden's past, highlight the transformative and often surreal nature of identity formation.

Overall, the intersection of queerness with coming-of-age journeys and magical realism elements in these works offers a rich and multifaceted exploration of identity formation and self-discovery complexities. Through their queer characters, these novels challenge normative understandings of gender and sexuality and invite readers to consider how societal and cultural expectations shape our sense of self.

## VII. THEMES OF LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE

In the novel *Summer of Salt*, Felicity's unwavering confidence and determination to embrace her true identity and find true love and acceptance is truly inspiring. She confronts her mixed emotions for Georgina and overcomes her fear of rejection from her family and society. Her journey of self-discovery serves as a reminder of the importance of staying true to oneself and persevering through adversity. The following quote exemplifies Felicity's resilience and determination, inspiring readers to do the same: "I loved Georgina in a new and overwhelming way and made my chest ache. It was like my heart was opening up and making room for something else, something that I wasn't quite sure I was ready for yet" (Leno, 2018, p. 58). Felicity's journey to self-acceptance and her relationship with Georgina demonstrate the transformative power of love and acceptance.

It's clear that Aiden's character in *Sometime in Summer* reflects the struggles that many trans individuals experience when it comes to acceptance and finding their true identity. The portrayal of his journey through transitioning is incredibly poignant, as it shows the numerous obstacles that he had to overcome, including being misgendered and facing discrimination. However, it's heartening to see that through his friendship with Julep, he was able to find a sense of belonging and acceptance that he had been searching for. This is perfectly demonstrated in the following quote: "For the first time since school started, I felt like someone saw me. Not just saw me, but understood me" (Leno, 2021, p. 62). Aiden's journey to self-acceptance and his friendship with Julep emphasise the importance of acceptance and support for LGBTQ+ individuals.

"Summer of Salt" unequivocally challenges traditional notions of romantic love through the relationship between Georgina and Felicity, highlighting the idea that love transcends gender and societal expectations. This is clearly evident in the following quote: "I didn't care if we were both girls or if Felicity had never even kissed someone before. It didn't matter. I loved her" (Leno, 2018, p. 315). The novel masterfully depicts a profound and unbreakable bond of love and acceptance between two characters, defying societal norms that tend to enforce heteronormativity.

"Summer of Salt" and *Sometime in Summer* powerfully convey the themes of love and acceptance through their queer characters. These novels unapologetically emphasise the significance of creating an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals through love and acceptance. The journey of self-acceptance and relationships of these characters strongly reinforce this message, making it clear that it is essential to support and celebrate the LGBTQ+ community.

In *Summer of Salt*, Felicity embodies the struggles that come with coming out as a lesbian in a society that values heterosexuality. Lenore Leno's thoughtful exploration of this topic shines a light on the challenges that many LGBTQ+ youths face, including the fear of rejection from those they love. "Through Felicity's journey towards self-acceptance and her love for Georgina, we are reminded of the importance of being true to ourselves, even in the face of difficulty.?" (Leno, 2018, p. 173). This quote highlights the reality of the challenges that many LGBTQ+ youth face when trying to live authentically in a society that does not always accept them.

Moreover, *Summer of Salt* offers a broader social commentary on acceptance and love. The novel explores the idea that love is not limited to traditional gender roles or societal expectations. This idea is exemplified in the relationship between Georgina and Felicity, which challenges conventional notions of romantic love. In the novel, Georgina says, "I didn't care if we were both girls or if Felicity had never even kissed someone before. It didn't matter. I loved her" (Leno, 2018, p. 315). This quote emphasises that love transcends gender and societal expectations and that everyone deserves to love and be loved.

In a similar vein, *Sometime in Summer* explores the experiences of queer youth through the character of Aiden, a trans boy who becomes Julep's friend and confidant. The novella highlights the importance of acceptance and support for LGBTQ+ youth and underscores the detrimental effects of societal rejection. For instance, Julep expresses her concern when she learns that Aiden has been compelled to use the girls' bathroom at school. It is crucial to create a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation. "How is that even legal? How can anyone treat someone like that?" (Leno, 2021, p. 63). Discrimination can have a devastating impact on individuals and society as a whole. It is imperative that we take the necessary steps to create inclusive and supportive environments for everyone. This quote serves as a reminder that we must work together to eliminate discrimination and build a better world for all.

Katrina Leno's works, *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer*, provide a compelling and thought-provoking commentary on the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community. Leno's portrayal of complex and nuanced queer characters, along with her exploration of the universal themes of acceptance and love, demands that readers reflect on the importance of creating an inclusive and accepting society. Through her writing, Leno boldly advocates for a future that is constructive, optimistic, and where everyone is free to be themselves and embraced by a supportive community. The impact of Leno's works on promoting the rights of the LGBTQ+ community and driving change towards a more equitable and just society can be significant and constructive.

## VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The chosen topic for this study has revealed many queer aspects and concepts within the narrative of a fairy tale. However, the research process has faced certain limitations as there are few theories that support this kind of novel.



None of them are specific enough to pinpoint the exact concepts of the novels that fall under queer studies and magical realism. The study's limitations can be attributed to the inability to incorporate the vast knowledge on the topic. A specific study, under the light of a suitable theory, would be more beneficial for the study.

## IX. CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, Katrina Leno's novels, *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer*, are ground-breaking works in the realm of young adult literature that brilliantly convey queer narratives through the lens of magical realism. The paper at hand has meticulously scrutinized the adeptness with which Leno's books navigate the complexities of LGBTQ+ identity, "revealing the layers of intersectionality that define the queer experience" (Clarke, 2019). Leno's exceptional portrayal of queer characters, including Felicity and Aiden, transcends mere representation and delivers a nuanced perspective. His performances not only uplift the queer community but also inspire audiences to embrace diversity and inclusivity. Leno's commitment to bringing diverse voices to the forefront of entertainment is commendable "it creates a dialogue about identity, belonging, and the transformative nature of love and acceptance" (Aragon, 2017) and also sets a positive precedent for future generations.

The significance of representation within queer young adult fiction cannot be overstated. According to Alsen (2018), this genre holds the potential to create a positive impact on the future of LGBTQ+ youth by providing a safe and inclusive space where the diverse spectrum of identity is recognized and embraced. The narrative universe crafted by Leno offers readers an opportunity to explore the richness of queer lives with empathy and authenticity, as highlighted by Hughey and Jackson (2020). These stories of self-discovery and empowerment play a vital role in the ongoing conversation surrounding LGBTQ+ inclusivity in literature and society, as emphasized by Lukenbill (2019).

Leno's work is a powerful force, extending far beyond the pages of her novels to shape the broader landscape of queer representation. Her literary affirmation echoes the cultural politics of queer visibility and identity, inspiring us to challenge heteronormative assumptions and embrace the full spectrum of human experience. By interweaving themes of magical realism with the lived realities of queer individuals, Leno's novels contribute to a larger narrative that seeks to normalize queer experiences and celebrate the beauty of diversity. Her work reminds us that through art and literature, we have the power to change the world.

Leno's work is a powerful force, extending far beyond the pages of her novels to shape the broader landscape of queer representation. Her literary affirmation echoes the cultural politics of queer visibility and identity, inspiring us to challenge heteronormative assumptions and embrace the full spectrum of human experience. By interweaving themes of magical realism with the lived realities of queer individuals, Leno's novels contribute to a larger narrative that seeks to normalise queer experiences and celebrate the beauty of diversity. Her work reminds us that through art and literature, we have the power to change the world.

The artistic merit of *Summer of Salt* and *Sometime in Summer* recognizes their important role in promoting a more inclusive and empathetic society. Through Leno's work, we are reminded of the importance of queer representation in literature, and we are guided towards a future where all narratives are equally valued and respected. Let us continue to strive towards a world where queer individuals are seen with dignity and depth in the stories they read.

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# Professionalizing Legal Translator Training: Prospects and Opportunities

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**Abstract**—Legal transactions have permeated every aspect of our life. Much of this is accomplished through legal translators who, by their outputs, impact our personal and professional future. That said, this article seeks to tackle the challenges and opportunities in preparing legal translators for professional practice. The article is a quality review in its nature which adopts the descriptive approach. The interactionist perspective is adopted in this present article to examine the challenges faced by and the opportunities offered to legal translators under training. This examination is placed within the context of the rapidly evolving translation industry and its related interdisciplinary research, which covers the technology and legal translation, quality in legal translation, and training pathways for legal translators. The subjective perspective is acknowledged as the human experience is involved to explain the individual phenomena within broader context of legal translation profession. The article draws that there is a need to make changes in the legal translation status because we need to improve the translator's perception of their role. Moreover, training models adopted to prepare legal translators have to be updated by revising the outdated practices of legal translation, and integrating the social role to face the new challenges as the translators are the intercultural mediators who facilitate the international legal communication.

**Index Terms**—legal translation, training models, legal translator training, translation profession

## I. INTRODUCTION

Making withdrawals from an ATM or downloading an app requires agreeing to terms and conditions, which are just a few examples explaining how law permeates every aspect of our lives. Our lives are largely consumed by paperwork and administrative categorization, which ultimately shape the decisions that impact our personal and professional futures. The legal system of any country, as well as the law itself, is a reflection of the nation's cultural, political, and historical development. Sadioglu and Dede state that legal texts are a reflection of the intricate systems as they represent the legal, administrative, political, and social complexity (2016). Legal jargon, even in our native tongue, can be perplexing, using complex and archaic language to describe even the most elementary of concepts. It is clear, with globalization and the movement of populations on the rise, that the role of legal translators is becoming increasingly more valuable.

In discussing the vital contribution of legal translators in attaining effective communication, this article commences with a brief synopsis of legal translation's past. Legal translation today faces challenges associated with multicultural situations where individuals come from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Legal translators, who are integral in bridging communication gaps, have been undervalued in the communicative process, which has led to low professional esteem and inadequate recognition. Innovation in legal translator training has yet to achieve full integration despite its recognition in translation studies and substantial academic research. The article is a quality review in its nature which adopts the descriptive approach. The interactionist perspective is adopted in this present article to examine the challenges faced by and the opportunities offered to legal translators under training. This examination is placed within the context of the rapidly evolving translation industry and its related interdisciplinary research, which covers the technology and legal translation, quality in legal translation, and training pathways for legal translators. The subjective perspective is acknowledged as the human experience is involved to explain the individual phenomena within broader context of legal translation profession. Current translator competence models are being expanded by groundbreaking approaches like critical discourse analysis, complexity theory, and techniques for decision-making and problem-solving (Way, 2014, 2016), all of which are preparing legal translators to tackle the challenges of professional practice.

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## II. LEGAL TRANSLATION EXPLAINED

The misconception that exists around the job of legal translators means they often have to go into detail about what they do. This can be a frustrating part of their day-to-day. Despite what some believe, legal translators aren't teachers or wizards. They cannot wave a wand and translate instantly while also listening to arguments in court. When faced with legal documents, such as ones for constructing sports facilities or proving child custody, legal translators can't rely on mythical buttons. They may have to put in extra hours to finish their work.

The existence of legal translators may be unknown to those who have never utilized their services. This is attributed to the fact that interpreters are more visible in legal proceedings due to their physical presence, while legal translators often work behind the scenes. This raises concerns regarding the oversight of their work and the qualifications necessary to become a competent legal translator. While court translators, interpreters, and those employed by organizations like the United Nations receive more recognition for their professional abilities, legal translators remain largely unseen. Legal translators have been honing their skills for centuries, but it's a challenging field for freelancers and agency employees dealing with daily citizen documents. The profession's scattered nature and lack of exposure fuel the current situation.

The origins of legal translation are ancient, dating as far back as the translation of the Egyptian peace treaty of Hittite in 1271 B.C (Kobus, 2022). The 6th century witnessed a significant development in the field with the translation of Emperor Justinian's *Corpus Iuris Civilis* into Greek. The need for translation and interpreting arose as empires expanded and new cultures were governed. Despite this rich history, research on legal translation's origins is scarce (Chan, 2020).

As the populace became more transient, legal and administrative systems adapted. The monitoring of crucial life events was accomplished through civil registers, marking an era of increased bureaucratic oversight. Such measures generated a greater need for translated official paperwork. A clear example can be found in the European Union, where the Directorate-General of Translation expended around €1 billion in 2013 to translate over 2 million pages across 24 official languages for EU inhabitants (European Commission, 2023). Research in the field of legal translation was not commonly conducted until the late 20th century, despite a high demand for it. But in the 21st century, this area has seen a noteworthy proliferation and is flourishing.

Despite its crucial importance, legal translation has been rather overlooked, leaving us to ask why. As it deals with the law and the exact wording of it, legal translation is often equated to Bible translation. In the past, translators were required to strictly adhere to a literal translation, there has been a gradual shift towards more functional translation and even co-drafting of legal texts. Despite early debates on translation fidelity, subsequent research has shown that translators prioritized linguistic issues rather than broader communicative functions. Fortunately, as translation studies have evolved, there has been greater emphasis on conveying the original text's intended message over strict adherence to its wording. This recognition that accuracy pertains more to content than words has been a positive development, with scholars such as Nord advocating for this shift (1997).

Translation was traditionally viewed as a linguistic pursuit with little consideration for social factors until the advent of the poly-system theories in the 1970s, skopos-functional theories in the 1980s, and post-colonialism in the late 1980s and 1990s. The role of translation agents was not always a prominent topic in discussions on equivalence, potentially leading to their exclusion from the translation process. The prevailing discussions on faithfulness and linguistic fidelity often ignored the needs of agents in social contexts. The conventional notion of translation entailed an accurate reproduction of linguistic equivalents, with any other form of translation, such as adaptation or summary, being classified as counterfeit. Ultimately, the human translator is the final arbiter in all translations and draws from their own familiarity and proficiency, regardless of the translation strategies offered by translation theory. Legal translation has been inadequately examined owing, in part, to the confidential nature of a substantial portion of legal translation tasks, which makes it challenging to amass a substantial corpus for conducting research. Consequently, earlier research was concentrated mostly on public international laws.

The cultural implications of translation necessitate code switching between languages. Nowadays, the need to cater to this demand has intensified as there is a surge in population mobility and languages that are not conventionally taught in undergraduate or secondary programs, primarily in translation degrees. The need is most apparent in legal proceedings, where a dearth of interpreters can lead to immigrants' rights being trampled upon. Limited government action is a common issue with languages utilized mostly by immigrant communities, as these populations may not be economically or politically influential. Although good intentions are present, they are seldom translated into action. This was exemplified in a report written by Erik Camayd-Freixas, wherein the rights of immigrants were violated due to the absence of translators. However, a solution to this problem has been attempted via organizations such as FITISPos, a research group at Alcalá University, Spain. FITISPos has been offering courses on community interpretation and translation since 2002.

As insufficient translation services in legal proceedings become more pressing, the European Union has taken notice and created two directives: "The Right to Information in Criminal Proceedings, Directive 2012/13/EU," and "the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings, Directive 2010/64/EU". Both seek to solve the problem by setting up listings of proficient translators and interpreters nationwide, encouraging ongoing education, and guaranteeing exceptional services, even for less common language pairs. Nonetheless, the financial predicament in the EU has resulted in these endeavors being weakened. Governments are frequently hesitant to allot funds for translation

services, despite the fact that international accords and many national laws assure the right to have an interpreter or translator. It is imperative for the governments to comprehend that lacking translation services can lead to a more substantial expenditure in the future (Leal & Ó Riain, 2023).

Deep comprehension of both the languages and legal systems represented by them is necessary when taking on the highly intricate task of legal translation. The legal aspects present in this type of translation make it a truly distinctive challenge when compared to other kinds. Translators in this field must deftly manage differences among legal systems, which frequently do not align with countries. For instance, while it forms the bedrock of the legal systems in the US, Wales, and England, Common Law does not apply to Scotland, which has its own unique legal system. French influence has resulted in a mixed legal system in Louisiana, and Australia has established its own unique sociocultural framework for common law utilization. The federal and state law division in the United States presents an additional challenge. Furthermore, the impact of history and sociocultural factors contributes to the intricate nature of legal translation. Legal systems can be tough to comprehend, especially when you consider how far-reaching they can be. Take Roman law, for instance. It once spanned from Spain to many parts of South America. Even though the language is shared, each country's system evolved differently, meaning there are numerous linguistic variations to contend with. This situation highlights the importance of legal terminology, which can be easily overlooked. Legal translators, therefore, must be able to understand not just the language, but also the legal concepts and systems that said language represents.

In the realm of legal translation, matters become even more intricate due to the frequent use of outdated language, including Latin and other antique tongues along with technical vernacular. Additionally, legal vocabulary often lacks precise translations in other languages and in situations where corresponding words may exist, their meaning could vary depending on the legal systems present. It is vital that legal translators possess adequate proficiency in comprehending this intricate terminology and possess extensive knowledge of the legal procedures and customs associated with the translation. Legal translators are tasked with possessing both language proficiency and a comprehensive comprehension of legal jargon. Timeliness and precision are key, as these experts must perform their duties with efficiency due to the time-sensitive nature of legal papers.

Translating legal text is no easy feat due to the vast disparities between legal systems and countries. This complexity poses an even greater issue for English, Spanish, and Arabic, which are languages that span many legal boundaries. The complication is magnified by the use of English as a universal legal language, which forces translators to decipher discrepancies not only among legal systems, but also between legal tongues. Necessitating translations for commercial documents from Portugal to China may require consideration of legal English as well as differing legal systems. In order to overcome these obstacles, the EU is trying to create a new legal culture and language that applies uniform concepts, free from limitations of Roman or common law systems.

From environmental agreements to legal correspondence, legal translation isn't just limited to laws and international pacts. Aside from legislative texts, legal translators usually devote more time to administrative translation. The reason behind this demand is due to the surge in population movement this century. These documents are universal in content and can touch on matters that impact people personally and professionally. They're utilized as a source of information by authorities to guide decisions that affect their everyday lives.

Administrative documents incorporate various record types, including court documents, legislative texts, and administrative, commercial, and financial texts. Their applications span across multiple fields, ranging from environmental treaties to court proceedings in terms of personal communication, and may seem ordinary. With the heightened mobility of people nowadays, there has been a higher demand for administrative document translations for various authorities. The initial step in creating administrative documents consists of collecting data through a solicitation process, followed by processing the information in a way that is suitable for the relevant authorities. The decision-making in these cases is influenced and supported by the administrative categories in use, which may differ across different cultural backgrounds. Typically, the author and recipient of these documents are the same, and the manner in which the information is processed shapes their impression of the translated version. Only nominally included or overlooked altogether in the legal text classification within the field of translation studies, administrative documents serve as documentary evidence of administrative acts that officials issue or receive, effectively intervening the daily lives of people to outline and define social identities. These documents' structure corresponds with the institutional role they perform (Salet, 2018).

Perusing administrative documents may seem simple enough, but it actually conceals varying societal conceptualizations, differing degrees of significance, and diverse social realities. Recent critical discourse analysis indicates that citizens' administrative construct may not necessarily align with the reality of their situation. Thus, when it comes to translating these documents across linguistic and cultural divides, there are numerous challenges. This is because administrative documents are culturally specific creations that are intended for receivers from the same cultural background, closely tied to administrative structures.

Throughout history, translators were viewed as outcasts in the dialogue between the writer of the source material and the reader of the converted text. Nevertheless, that perception is now obsolete and translators have become an indispensable component in the communication routine. Nowadays, translators operate in a sociocultural framework and their degree of significance fluctuates depending on their liaison with other members such as the author, customer,

and reader. Due to cultural and linguistic differences, communication can present challenges that translators are uniquely positioned to manage. By actively participating in these processes, translators can increase their visibility in society and improve their social capital. While their primary focus is on their work, they also rely on relationships with other agents in social contexts. For translators to gain legitimacy as social agents, accurately translating is not enough; they must engage with other participants in these social processes.

Many believe that translation falls behind other professions, such as law, in terms of hierarchy. Even in present times, there are those who hold the view that translators do not receive the respect they deserve. Despite being a long-standing practice, only in recent years has translation been acknowledged as an academic field. However, it continues to face difficulty in gaining acknowledgement from other fields. Translation is often misconstrued with language education, which adds to this struggle. As Friedberg observed, "translators labored in anonymity. Their names went unmentioned, a reflection of the lack of respect for their profession" (1997, p. 188).

Viewing translation as a subordinate profession, particularly in the legal industry, has sparked initiatives to alter this perception. A legitimate venture was carried out involving law and translation undergrads, revealing that the initial opinion of law students was that lawyers with multilingual capabilities were better prepared to handle tangible duties pertaining to global private law. Nevertheless, following their interaction with translation students, the students of law acknowledged their vital role in achieving the task at hand. Translation has often been seen as a less important profession, which has led to a negative public opinion about it. But, once a project was completed, 95% of translation students noticed an improvement in the perception of the profession. Due to these efforts, there are now talks about creating combined degrees in law and translation, which signals a changing attitude towards the translation profession in the legal sector.

### III. LEGAL TRANSLATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

20.2% more employment opportunities in the US for translators and interpreters are expected between 2021 and 2031, as per the US Bureau of Labor Statistics' report from December 2021. This rising trend shows no signs of stopping. Indeed, because of the unregulated nature of the industry, it is challenging to pinpoint the precise portion of translation services that relate to the legal domain. Nonetheless, a survey conducted by the American Translators Association's Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey found that out of the translators surveyed, 55% of them specialized in legal translation. Similarly, the International Standing Conference of University Institutes of Translating and Interpreting conducted a survey in 2014 and discovered that legal documents made up approximately 40-50% of the texts translated by those who participated (American Translators Association, 2022; CIUTI, 2022).

With various factors at play, the translation industry for legal documents has observed a growing demand. One of the causes behind this trend includes cross-border trading on the rise. Additionally, complicated financial transactions and the escalation of white-collar crimes on an international scale have also contributed to this growth. The emergence of global litigation strategies, a surge of patent and intellectual property cases with worldwide effects, multilingual legislation, and increased mobility and migration also play a significant role.

#### A. *Technology and Legal Translation*

In today's digital world, numerous translation companies are shifting their focus from the conventional project-based approach to a real-time translation process. However, this new methodology may only be suitable for legal translators working at multinational organizations or managing extensive translation tasks. Meanwhile, translators who work majorly with hard copy authentic documents, which are authorized and stamped, may not have access to a computer-based translation tool or translation memory, thus lessening its benefits. Despite any reservations, incorporating IT tools into their work is vital for legal translators to keep up with modern communication. They must overcome their reluctance towards technology while acknowledging the limitations thereof. It is obvious that machine translations will not entirely substitute humans, so there is no need to fear IT tools. Rather, translators should take advantage of them when used correctly and effectively. This can greatly streamline their work and simplify the translation process. In the domain of legal translation, there are three primary categories of automated translation technologies. The initial group is for expert legal translators designed as assistive programs. Accessible to the general public are automated translation technologies, such as Google Translate, which make up the second group. Meanwhile, the third group consists of automated systems customized for lawyers, including patent translation engines that are intended primarily or secondarily (Katan et al., 2023).

Gone are the days of word-processing tools for legal translators. Translation Environment Tools (TEntTs) or Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools have taken their place. These software programs, available as either desktop or cloud-based platforms, enable translation experts to import text of varying formats and utilize electronic glossaries and termbases, resulting in quicker translations and pre-export quality checks. Companies occasionally utilize automated or machine translation tools for fast and easy translation solutions. Amidst the available types of translation technologies, one needs to exercise caution when using one that utilizes artificial intelligence. This approach poses a great danger to confidentiality, as most people are unaware that even just a few lines being fed to the tool can already compromise their non-disclosure agreements. Additionally, automated translation programs often make serious mistakes that result in translations that are either laughable or completely incomprehensible. As such, companies and

institutions may benefit more from bespoke systems that are tailored to their specific needs and functions. These systems are a part of the third category of translation technology options. Developed by Google for the European Patent Office (EPO), Patent Translate is a bespoke system that excels at handling large volumes of informational texts. Other patent authorities also offer similar tools for this purpose.

Specialized niches within the translation industry can be created through technology, leading to higher demand for specific translation types. Expertise and experience in areas such as international litigation or patent law can be very valuable to legal translators in this scenario, as they require a high level of accuracy and specialized terminology that not all translators possess. This means that opportunities may arise for those with these specific skills and knowledge to thrive in the industry. Adaptation is crucial when it comes to succeeding in legal translation – it's not just about accepting that technology might reduce the demand for some services, it's about opening your mind to the vast possibilities that technological advancements provide. Staying informed and flexible enough to adjust to market fluctuations is essential for those eager to stay ahead of the curve in this field.

### *B. Legal Translation as a Profession*

In today's world, being a translator is no longer just about having knowledge, but also about being an expert in information management and mining. The ability to efficiently find and use trustworthy information is critical and outweighs simply possessing a vast amount of knowledge. Translators in the legal context, who have been practicing this for centuries, are fortunate because they are experts in various fields and cultures. Professionals are expected to be able to handle any field in various languages and cultures. To elevate their role beyond just legal translation, legal translators must tap into their full range of skills. They must become intercultural mediators, capable of stepping in to improve communication and deliver effective solutions on behalf of clients. It's no small task, but the effort will pay off. As noted by Way, legal translators must actively shift their approach, moving from passive waiting to proactive outreach (2004). This change in mindset is essential if they want to broaden their impact and maximize the value they contribute to their clients. Compared to other professions, translators have historically eschewed self-promotion and held a less-than-favorable perception of themselves. This sense of self-deprecation has been compounded by their relative solitude in scenarios that necessitate translation. Such isolation is frequently brought about by a lack of exposure - in scenarios where in-person communication prevails, interpreters are frequently favored over translators who specialize in writing (Kelly, 2005). This disadvantage is exacerbated in legal contexts where confidential documents are common, particularly those that pertain to corporations or individuals. As a result, those who work in legal translation are often unnoticed and overlooked. The common misinterpretation is that legal translators solely operate in international associations such as the European Union or the United Nations. Nevertheless, most legal translators work as autonomous professionals, either for clients directly or through translation agencies acting as intermediaries.

In the field of legal translation, professionalization is being hindered by a multitude of agencies and associations, as per a recent study. These organizations seldom regulate entry to the profession, and tend to vie for members in countries such as Italy, the UK, and Poland. Additionally, they vary in size and background, and do not always represent specific fields like law. Globally, there are over two hundred translation associations, and some may not meet the standards of "professional bodies" that other professions, such as architects, doctors, surveyors, and lawyers, hold themselves to. Despite having achieved equivalent status to "chartered" for some professional bodies and associations, legal translators continue to lack visibility in their field in comparison to professions like architects, lawyers, and doctors. Even though legal translators often have to obtain similar, if not higher, levels of qualifications to enter the field, their profession is unrecognized. Although there have been attempts by professional bodies and associations to improve the situation, there has been little tangible progress.

## IV. THE NEED FOR PROFESSIONALS AND THE QUALITY IN LEGAL TRANSLATION

Legal translators must provide precise translations as mistakes can result in serious repercussions. "Quality" and "excellence" are terms used frequently in business and professional arenas. The task of legal translation is difficult and demands knowledge in multiple areas including intercultural communication and legal terminology. The issue of defining a quality legal translation while guaranteeing its quality has been the center of debate. The question of who is capable of evaluating the quality of legal translations is also a topic of discussion. The European Committee for Standardization stated that legal translation requires different standards from regular translations (2006). Despite efforts such as the EN 15038:2006 standard for providers of translation, important factors that are crucial in legal translation are not accounted for. Unlike linguistic concerns, legal translation requires a thorough understanding of the legal context to ensure adequacy and accuracy. As such, quality benchmarks unique to legal translation's communicative situation should be established. The incorporation of these benchmarks into legal translator training and methodology is necessary. In the realm of corporate and financial law, the effects of erroneous legal translations can be quite damaging. Legal texts written in a single language can also pose issues, even if they are clear and concise. It is crucial to hire legal translators who exhibit a comprehensive grasp of the law. To make this point clear, the author will provide only two instances since space is limited.

From the *Frugalment Importing Co. v B.N.S. International Sales Corp.*<sup>44</sup> case as noted by Steven, it became evident that relying on expert translators in legal matters was vital, and translating on one's own accord could be costly (2023). In this instance, a Swiss firm had requested frozen chickens for both roasting and frying from a New York-based poultry wholesaler. A disagreement arose over the meaning of the term "chicken". The plaintiff held that "chicken" meant only broilers or fryers, whereas the defendant believed that it referred to stewing fowl as well. Assuming "chicken" meant "young chicken," the plaintiff used the English word in its German correspondence with the parties. The German language was the communication medium between them. However, the defendant claimed that "chicken" consisted of all birds that meet the contractual weight and quality standards, including stewing chickens. The dispute could have been avoided if a professional translator had been involved in identifying the potential terminological discrepancies.

Furthermore, a *Commodity News Service* report about a possible acquisition of an American bank by a Japanese bank in 1994 started some rumors. Unfortunately, when that report was translated into Japanese, the meaning of the word "rumors" was lost and translated as "disclosure" (Fight, 2003). Because of this, the wrong information was released, and people started to panic, leading to a run on foreign deposits. The Federal Reserve had to perform an \$8 billion bailout of Continental Illinois, which shows that translating texts by people who are not experts can have serious consequences. This situation underlines the importance of seeking out professional translation when it comes to important information.

## V. TRAINING PATHWAYS FOR LEGAL TRANSLATORS

In the 21st century, legal translation faces a major hurdle with the need for capable and highly skilled translators. Recent progress in translation studies, particularly in the last ten years, has put an increased focus on training translators (Šveda, 2021). Many researchers have sought out novel tools and methods for improving this training, often by using diverse formats for translator capabilities. Although there was scant attention given to legal translator training prior to the 1990s, subsequent investigations have demonstrated that effective training can be provided even for those without expertise in law. A considerable amount of literature has accumulated since the claim made by G énar in 1979 that legal translators can be taught. In his research, Sparer discovered that legal expertise was not necessary for the training of legal translators (1988). Scott stresses that translators can be taught the legal discourse as lawyers do when they start their learning path (2019).

Addressing the challenges of legal translator training is paramount, and these obstacles are closely integrated into the program. But what follows are the necessary tenets for tackling legal translation and the lingering anxieties that plague students: indecision and ambiguity.

In order to stimulate trainees to blend together all their skills during the advanced levels of training, the researcher suggests two techniques: A method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (see Way, 2012; Schäffner, 2002) and an approach to Decision-Making (Way, 2014, 2016; Schäffner, 2002). These methods have been merged into a self-directed, task-driven routine that oversees the growth of each translator's abilities.

Introducing legal translation students to the laws they will be working with poses difficulty for trainers as they typically come from non-law backgrounds. These students often lack familiarity with the legal discourse community and the texts they are required to translate may not have any relevance to their previous experiences or social practices.

Indeed, many students majoring in legal translation have little or no social practice experience such as attending court hearings, buying houses, and signing contracts. As a result, they lack confidence in translating legal texts in unfamiliar fields. As such, they tend to rely heavily on familiar sources and immediately search for unfamiliar terms to understand the original text. However, legal texts, especially administrative texts, contain references and assumptions to practices of social nature that students may have never experienced, meaning that their quest to reach correct searches is often unsuccessful and it is difficult to distinguish possible solutions. In his research on decision-making and dictionary use among Danish master's students, Dam-Jensen states that students often make irrational decisions that they do not fully believe (2012). That said, a new technique was chosen to handle such challenges that may emerge during training and to make students aware of an approach that they can apply when dealing with new subject areas and texts. The use of CDA in translation studies is not a new concept. In fact, it has been applied in various translation fields as a means of structuring areas of knowledge or social practice. It works by including descriptions of texts, explanations of discursive practices (production, transmission, and reception of texts), and explanations of how discursive practices relate to society process. Furthermore, it explores the relationship between these three elements and translation, which is introduced in the process as a new element.

Students will acquire the tools to develop a structured analytical process when translating legal texts. Traditionally, translation courses have focused on the text to be translated, especially jargons and terminology that cause problems for trainees. In this model, a step-by-step guidance is offered to students through a process in which texts are first integrated into social events and social processes. By locating texts within discursive practices (text production, text distribution, consumption of the text), students then become familiar with the internalized structures and social conventions that dominate the text and allow them have an access to what is called "membership resources" (Fairclough, 1995). When this information and the social practices are combined in the text being addressed, elements of the text that seemed



unclear immediately become clear. The process is then applied to the TL and target culture to find out whether there are social practices and parallel discourses that produce similar or parallel texts (Way, 2014, 2016).

Applying discourse analysis through the three-step approach gently guides trainees through the main difficulties mentioned before. Familiarity with the social practices and discourse surrounding the source text (ST) and parallel processes in the target culture can remove many of the initial underlying problems that students see in the ST. This overcomes the barrier of lack of significant experience; the integrated approach largely eliminates the need to search for unfamiliar terms, as the research mitigates the lack of familiarity with the terms and the required discourse. Finally, the instant habit of looking up a dictionary has become an old-fashioned approach.

The translation process is a complex task that requires decision-making power. Scholars such as Darwish (1995, 1999), Jumpelt (1961), Levy (1967), Toury (1985, 1995) and Holmes (2000) have studied different transformational decision-making perspectives. More recently, the focus has been on developing a translation competency-based decision-making framework that trainees can adapt and refine to their own competencies during training and professional practice. However, legal translation trainers often find it difficult to help trainees develop a comprehensive decision-making framework instead of focusing on the specific decision-making process of individual translation issues. The framework should utilize different sub-capabilities to problem solving and provide the necessary techniques and strategies for the translation process. Put differently, decision making is an important aspect of translator performance and final translation quality. In fact, the success or failure of translation depends on the translator's decision-making ability, which should be evaluated by various evaluation methods. While the shift towards a process-oriented approach in education places more emphasis on evaluating the decision-making process rather than just the final product, both aspects depend heavily on the translator's decision-making skills. As stated by Wilss, decision making and problem solving are interrelated and require both theoretical and practical knowledge (1998). As Butterfield argues, problem solving requires decisions (2016).

Translation studies are primarily concerned with the decision-making of individual translation problems rather than developing a comprehensive decision-making framework. Unsatisfied with the current state of research, the authors turned to other areas where decision-making plays a crucial role. Based on decision theory, the authors propose to organize translation problems by classifying decision situations. Snowden and Boone have developed the Cynefin execution framework which is a useful tool for organizing translation problems into five different contexts based on causality: simple, complex, complex, chaotic, and disordered (2007). While leaders should diagnose the situation and take appropriate action in the first four scenarios, the fifth disruptive scenario presents significant challenges in determining which of these categories to be applied from the first four.

If the aforementioned categories are applied to translation, we find that simple contexts belong to stable problems with clear causality. This means that cases where a translation specification or acceptable behavior can be used are classified as simple contexts. In such cases, decision-makers must identify or consider the problem, categorize it, and use established translation practices to resolve it. However, simple connections can be more complicated than they first appear, as decision makers may fail to properly understand the problem or become complacent with seemingly familiar issues. This may be due to innate thinking or conditioned responses acquired through previous experience or training. On the other hand, in complex cases, where there may be multiple correct answers to a question, decision makers must analyze different probable solutions before we implement them, which could be time-consuming. Therefore, these complex issues require higher diagnostic skills and expertise, which should be gradually introduced into the translation curriculum. Complex environments involve problems with a large number of dynamic and nonlinear interacting elements, where small changes can have disproportionately large consequences, making prediction of outcomes difficult. Solving these problems often requires creativity and an innovative approach, and although occasionally encountered, these problems, in translation, are less common than in interpretation. A chaotic environment is characterized by a constantly changing environment that creates a large degree of uncertainty. These situations involve multiple decisions and high tension and, like interpreting, are often time-bound. Finally, Snowden and Boone compared the chaotic context to the events of 9/11, which was characterized by a lack of predictability that made it extreme and unpredictable (2007).

By using the taxonomy described above, translation questions can be gradually selected during training, which gives a room for the trainer to raise the complexity of the questions asked. Trainers can also emphasize the risks of making decisions only based on previous patterns of failure or success, rather than using a clearly defined framework of decision-making. For instance, in introductory legal translation courses, students often make extensive use of glossaries of terms understood as static equivalence lists without contextualization. However, terms that have been used successfully in other contexts can be misused without careful reflection on the original text and purpose. Therefore, developing a guiding decision-making framework is crucial, especially in the early stages of legal translation training. Courses of legal translation are usually organized in accordance with the level of abstraction of legal concepts and terms that describe texts as more or less specialized. However, the proposed framework provides a ranking pattern of increasing difficulty that depends on the activation of all sub-competencies, not just subject/topic competencies. A translation coach can help students develop a decision-making framework that enables them to gradually internalize strategies of problem-solving through controlled, structured training. These processes are automated in some way, making their translation work more efficient and increasing their level of trust. Students must learn to internalize

specific mechanisms to come up with solutions as habits or reflexive behaviors and minimize the burden of their decision-making, uncertainty, and lack of trust.

## VI. CONCLUSION

While legal translation has historically faced challenges, the legal background has placed more external pressure on the industry than in other fields. However, the 21st century presents enormous opportunities for legal translators, who are increasingly viewed as skilled cross-cultural communicators. The challenge is to raise awareness of the translator's role in order to achieve an acceptable balance for all actors involved in social processes that require the translation of legal documents. Historically, translation has been viewed as a secondary service, but in the 21st century, this perception has the opportunity to change and legal translators can take a more active role in social processes involving two or more cultures and languages. To achieve this goal, legal translation education must anticipate future challenges and consolidate education as the foundation for building a high-quality, ethical legal translation practice. Legal translation occupies a unique position in international legal dissemination and can serve as a cross-cultural mediator and play an active role in communication between cultures. In order to fulfill this responsibility, it is necessary to face the new challenges of the 21st century and revise outdated translation practices to meet the requirements of legal translation in today's society.

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# Immediate Processing of Sentences in Language Communication

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**Abstract**—Sentence processing is a fundamental and critical area of inquiry within the field of language processing, as it plays an essential role in facilitating effective communication. The present study focuses on the immediate processing of sentences in English language communication. The article begins by providing an overview of the basic principles underlying sentence processing. It then delves into the various parsing strategies, including the late closure strategy and the minimal attachment strategy. The modular and interactive models of sentence processing are also presented and discussed. Additionally, the relationship between sentence processing and meaning is explored, with an examination of the role of factors such as presupposition and plausibility in language communication process. Finally, the role of prosody in language processing is expounded upon. The paper draws several conclusions regarding the nature of immediate sentence processing in language communication.

**Index Terms**—sentence processing, parsing, modular model, interactive model, language communication

## I. INTRODUCTION

In everyday communication, individuals encounter numerous sentences and are capable of comprehending them instantly and without hesitation. When processing a sentence, people rely on their extensive knowledge and information about various linguistic factors, such as syntax, lexicons, semantics, pragmatics, and other multimodal aspects (MacDonald et al., 1994). Parsing, which involves assigning the elements of a sentence's surface structure to linguistic categories, is often the first step in understanding a sentence during communication (Kimball, 1973). This allows individuals to determine who or what is doing what to whom or what. Such relationships can be represented using a tree structure or phrase marker. In the case of simple sentences like *Students read the book*, the constituent or phrase structure of the sentence can be readily identified. For instance, *Students* is a noun phrase (NP), *read* is a verb (V), and *the book* is another NP. However, more complex sentences like *Tom knows the fact that keeping clothes clean is necessary surprises Marry*, are more challenging to process due to the presence of embedding elements. In such cases, people may find themselves revising their initial analysis as different parsing strategies and ways of understanding language may be preferred in actual communication.

In addition to syntax, sentence processing requires consideration of other factors. At a semantic level, people need to recognize the semantic or thematic functions fulfilled by different words within the sentence (Stowe, 1989). For instance, in the sentence *Students read the book*, *students* are the agents, and *the book* is the recipient of the action. At the pragmatic level, individuals possess knowledge about the real world, which can help them understand the sentence's meaning. For instance, the sentence may describe a typical classroom scene where students are required to read their textbooks. Furthermore, multimodal factors can also influence the way individuals comprehend a sentence. Given the amount of knowledge and information individuals must consider when encountering a sentence immediately, a question arises regarding the patterns and types of information processing involved, specifically whether syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge are simultaneously employed in sentence comprehension. Alternatively, certain factors might take priority at various stages of comprehension. In this regard, two hypotheses of sentence processing patterns have been proposed: the modular model and the interactive model, which will be discussed in detail below. Moreover, the paper researches whether prosody can help language processing. This paper is organized as follows. In the first section, parsing is introduced, including how to identify the syntactic structure of a sentence, followed by a discussion of various parsing strategies. Next, the role of semantic and prosodic factors in language comprehension is explored, along with two models of sentence processing. The paper then elaborates on the role of multimodal factors affecting sentence processing and concludes by summarizing the nature and features of sentence processing.

## II. PARSING

### A. Surface and Deep Structure

In language communication, Chomsky (1957, 2014) proposed that sentences can be divided into two levels: deep structure and surface structure. Deep structure represents the abstract syntactic properties of a construction, while surface structure corresponds to the structural organization of a construction actually produced. Simple sentences can be easy to comprehend, while complex sentences with more intricate structures may require additional processing time. It was argued that sentences that had undergone derivational changes are more difficult to process, which is generally called Derivational Theory of Complexity by scholars, among which, one derivational process in this grammatical framework produced passive sentences, such as sentence (1) and (2) below. Sentence (2) is derived from an underlying or logic form that expressed the basic idea of the sentence (1). It suggests that passive sentences were further removed from this underlying form than active sentences. As a result, it is considered that passive sentences are more challenging to comprehend than active sentences, and the comprehension of sentence (2) requires greater cognitive resources than the comprehension of sentence (1).

(1) The teacher saved the file.

(2) The file was saved by the teacher.

Likewise, sentence (4) was anticipated to be more challenging than (3) due to the inclusion of a negative transformation.

(3) It is raining.

(4) It is not raining.

Research has demonstrated that relative clauses are more challenging to process than other derivational structures due to the presence of a relative pronoun as the object of the embedded verb, as exemplified in (6) below. In comparison, the relative pronoun as the subject in (5) is less challenging to comprehend. This is because the constituent order of the elements in the relative clause in (5) is identical to the logical form of the clause, whereas the surface order of the relative in (6) does not correspond with the logical structure but the deep structure. As a result, individuals need to exert more cognitive effort to process the relative clause in (6).

(5) The man who looked the waiter went home.

(6) The man who the waiter looked went home.

### B. Parsing

After knowing the surface and deep structure of sentences, it is necessary to introduce Parsing in the process of language communication, which is the issue of complicity of the surface structure influencing sentence processing. Parsing can be regarded as the initial stage in comprehending a sentence, involving the allocation of elements from its surface structure to specific linguistic categories (Kimball, 1973). Then people have an internal representation of the linguistic relationships within a sentence through parsing, which is represented by a tree structure or phrase markers as figure 1 below. For example, the sentence *Some kids enter the room*. It is regarded that *some* as the determiner, which signals the beginning of the NP. Typically, an NP consists of a determiner, an adjective, and a noun. Upon encountering the determiner *some*, individuals search for the potential adjective or noun. Then, the subsequent word, *kids*, is identified as a noun and added to the NP. The following verb phrase (VP) comprises the verb *enter* and the object *the room*. And the latter is another NP composed of the determiner *the* and the noun *room*. The tree structure of the sentence is presented in Figure 1 below.

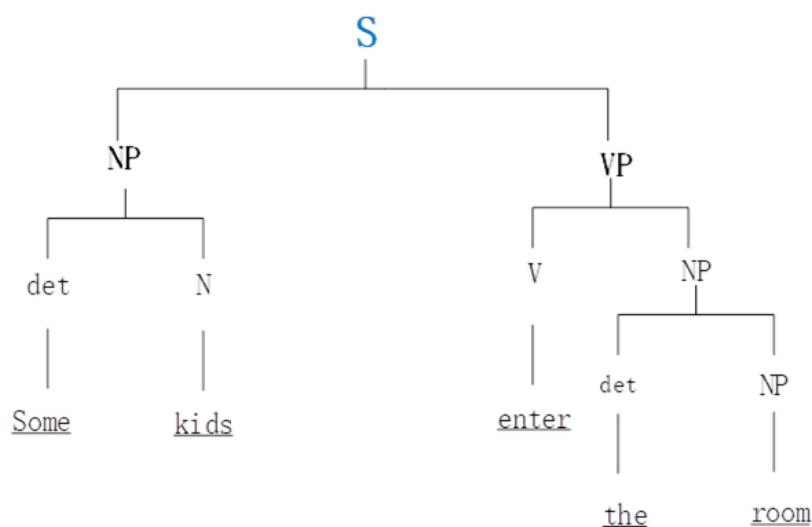


Figure 1. Sentence Tree Structure

### C. Two Principles of Parsing

Upon understanding that individuals categorize sentence elements into linguistic categories during language communication, an inquiry must be answered: are these elements categorized immediately or later in the sentence processing? This question is explored through two distinct principles proposed by Carroll (2004): the Immediacy Principle and the Wait-and-See Principle. By examining these principles, the process by which individuals comprehend language in real-time can be better understood.

The Immediacy Principle, the first principle proposed by Carroll (2004), suggests that when encountering a word for the first time in a sentence, people retrieve its meaning from their long-term memory, recognize its probable reference, and integrate it into the syntactic structure of the sentence (Daneman & Carpenter, 1980). In contrast, the Wait-and-See Principle postpones interpreting a word phrase until it is clearer where a sentence is going (Carroll, 2004). While the Immediacy Principle is considered more reliable with greater empirical support, the Wait-and-See Principle is less supported as delaying decisions may increase working memory load and hinder later processing (Frazier, 1979; Gibson, 1991; MacDonald et al., 1992). On the contrary, immediate decision-making does not occupy many cognitive resources and ensures efficient processing, as demonstrated by the parsing of sentence (7) below.

(7) Tom and Mary argued for the ball.

Sentence (7) presents an example of an ambiguous sentence, which can be interpreted in various ways. The first interpretation suggests that Tom and Mary debated over a toy ball. The second interpretation implies that Tom and Mary argued with their father to purchase a ball for them. The third interpretation suggests that the term *ball* refers to a party, and Tom and Mary debated over who could attend the party or who could host the party. These diverse interpretations illustrate the complexity of natural language processing. Given the vast amounts of information in language communication, individuals must make rapid decisions, or else their working memory will become overwhelmed. If the Wait-and-See Principle is applied, individuals may struggle to keep up with the sentence's unfolding meaning and become lost in the processing. Therefore, rapid decision-making is crucial for efficient language comprehension.

In most cases, people apply immediacy principle in sentence processing of language communication, which may lead to misunderstandings. For example, consider the sentence (8) below:

(8) The man stood by the wall fall down.

When encountering a sentence in English language communication such as *The man stood by the wall fall down*, individuals may initially assume that *stood* is the main verb phrase, followed by *the wall fell down*. However, both interpretations are incorrect. In reality, the sentence is an embedded relative clause. The difficulty in comprehending this sentence lies in the fact that the reduced relative clause is not signaled by a relative pronoun, as in sentence (8). This lack of a relative pronoun makes it challenging for individuals to recognize the reduced relative clause. As individuals tend to apply the immediacy principle in language processing, they often misunderstand sentences and become surprised when they see the entire sentence. If individuals postpone interpretation until further context is available, they may more reasonably interpret the sentence as a noun phrase modified by a reduced relative clause.

## III. PARSING STRATEGIES

During language communication, individuals encounter linguistic information word by word. Therefore, it is important to address parsing strategies, which involve categorizing linguistic elements and constructing sentences from the input words. Numerous studies have examined parsing strategies in sentence processing. In general, two types of strategies are typically discussed:

### A. Late Closure Strategy

The first is called Late Closure Strategy, which means that people prefer to attach new items to the current constituent in the process of language communication, as it is a saving action for working memory (Frazier & Fodor, 1978; Frazier, 1987; Kimball, 1973). For example, in the sentence (9) below:

(9) Tom bought the book that I'd been trying to find for Jack.

When processing a sentence, it is common for individuals to interpret it as *I try to find a book for Jack*, rather than *Tom bought the book for Jack*, even though the latter interpretation is also possible. This preference for assigning close elements to the current constituent is known as the late closure strategy and occurs automatically in language processing. Although this strategy may result in ambiguous or problematic interpretations, individuals often fail to detect such ambiguity. Only upon revisiting the sentence may individuals realize the possible alternative interpretation.

In accordance with this preference, discontinuous constituents are difficult to process. Compare the sentence in (10)-(12) (Warren, 2013). The more elements that intervene between *range* and *up*, the more difficult it is to comprehend the sentence.

(10) Lily rang her friend up.

(11) Lily rang her friend in the Outer Hebrides up.

(12) Lily rang her friend in the Outer Hebrides that she hadn't seen since their trip together to Japan the summer before last up.

The aforementioned example sentences are hypothetical and serve as illustrations of a linguistic phenomenon. The difficulty with these sentences lies in the lack of semantic coherence between the word *up* and the preceding clause,

making it arduous for individuals to integrate them. The greater the syntactic distance between the constituents, the more substantial cognitive resources, such as working memory, are required for comprehension. It appears that constituents are bundled into cohesive units during the process of reading or listening, and *up* is no longer associated with a unified constituent. Therefore, such sentences are generally avoided in practical usage.

(13) He read the paper that he received yesterday.

In language communication, there are two ways of interpretation of the adverb *yesterday* in the sentence (13) (Altmann, 1998). The first one suggests that *yesterday* is attached to the subordinate clause, namely *he received the paper yesterday*. The other one is that *yesterday* is attached to the main clause, namely *he read the paper yesterday*. In accordance with the late closure strategy, individuals are more likely to favor the former interpretation, as this strategy dictates attaching new elements to the current constituent, conserving working memory capacity.

(14) She gave him a gift...

(15) She gave him a gift for Tom...

(16) She gave him a gift for Tom in London.

Sentences (14) - (16) provide examples of ambiguous sentences. The gift was initially thought to be given to the speaker, but later on, individuals discovered that the gift was meant for Tom. Adding to the confusion is the adverbial phrase *in London*, which could either modify the main clause *she gave me a gift* or the noun *Tom*. However, in line with the late closure strategy, individuals are more inclined to adopt the latter interpretation, thereby attaching the adverbial phrase to *Tom*. This sentence underscores the immediacy principle, which posits that individuals tend to construct mental representations of sentences incrementally, in real time.

Additional evidence can be gleaned from an experiment involving the fixation of the eyes on two comparable sentences. Eye fixation serves as a critical measure of eye movements, which is thought to mirror the extent of psychological or cognitive processing that a visual display demands (Rayner, 1975). Therefore, it can provide insights into the ease or difficulty of processing sentences. Measurements of eye movement are founded on fixations and saccades. Fixations denote the duration during which the eyes remain stationary, and prolonged fixations may suggest challenges in processing (Duffy et al., 1988). An increase in the number of fixations indicates a less efficient search strategy for processing. The two sentences, (17) and (18), appear comparable but differ in structure to test the proclivity for late closure strategy.

(17) Mary knows John well.

(18) Mary knows John left.

In sentence (17), John is interpreted as the object of the sentence; however, in sentence (18), John functions as the subject of the object clause, rather than as the object of the verb *knows*. Consequently, the initial parsing requires revision, which in turn induces the garden path effect, a phenomenon that can be investigated via eye-tracking experiments (Frazier & Rayner, 1982; Rayner & Frazier, 1987). Although the two sentences are of equal length and contain the same number of words, readers exhibit significantly longer fixation times on the word *left* compared to *well*. This finding aligns with the late closure strategy, which suggests that readers persist with the structure of sentence (17) as they parse sentence (18).

#### B. Minimal Attachment Strategy

In addition to the first strategy, the second strategy is known as the minimal attachment strategy. According to this strategy, we tend to attach new elements to the phrase marker being constructed by using the fewest syntactic nodes that comply with the language's rules (Frazier & Fodor, 1978). This strategy also conforms to the principle of working memory economy. An illustrative example is presented in (19) below (Baver, 1970):

(19) The horse raced past the barn fell.

When encountering the sentence *The horse raced past the barn fell*, individuals initially construe *the horse* as the subject and *raced* as the predicate verb, as the SVO structure is the most straightforward sentence structure in our minds. In accordance with the minimal attachment strategy, this interpretation requires the fewest constituent nodes. It is only upon encountering the word *fell* that individuals realize their initial parsing was incorrect and must revise their understanding. They reanalyze *raced* as the verb in the subordinate clause and *fell* as the main predicate verb, resulting in the sentence *The horse fell*. This sentence provides evidence for the minimal attachment strategy. Sentence (19) is one example of a garden path sentence, wherein individuals initially interpret a sentence in a specific manner only to realize near the end that they have made a misinterpretation (Pritchett, 1992). This experience of being led astray and having to backtrack provides further support for the immediacy principle; had individuals not committed to an immediate interpretation, they would not have found themselves in this predicament.

### IV. MODULAR MODAL AND INTERACTIVE MODAL

#### A. Modular Modal

In language communication to comprehend sentences, there are other factors need to consider, including syntax, semantics, context and so on. Some scholars claim that syntax is the priority in sentence processing and it is independent of other factors (Breedin & Saffran, 1999), which has been demonstrated by Chomsky school. According to this view, one sentence processing modal called modular modal is proposed in which parsing is carried out by a

syntactic module that remains uninfluenced by higher-order contextual variables at the first time, such as the sentence's meaning or broader world knowledge (Frazier, 1990). In this modal, the syntactic factor plays a decisive role of parsing independent of other factors, while other factors influence the parsing (Frazier, 1987). The dependence can be illustrated by the following sentences (20) (Chomsky, 1957) and (21) below.

(20) Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.

(21) Love enlarges cloth in the language.

The two sentences above are very weird for they are syntactically well-formed but semantically anomalous. In essence, native speakers commonly acknowledge these as grammatically correct sentences, despite struggling with the interpretation of their meanings. Even though the meaning is strange, native speakers would try to use their imagination to attach meaning to them as if they are poetic sentences.

For the view that syntactic factors are independent and more important than other factors in sentence processing, supporters of modular model give more evidence (Caramazza & Berndt, 1978; Marin et al., 1976). This model does not negate the importance of other factors in sentence processing; rather, it emphasizes the separation of syntactic information from other information at the initial stage of sentence processing. One sentence is parsed into different syntactic elements which is the first step of sentence processing. Subsequently, a comparison with a semantic interpretation produced by an independent thematic processor becomes essential. Should the semantic interpretation conflict with the initial syntactic analysis, revisiting and amending the interpretation becomes imperative (Caramazza & Berndt, 1978).

According to the modular modal theory, the initial stage of syntactic analysis should be conducted independently of the meaning or plausibility of a sentence. So, in behavioral patterns in sentence comprehension, such as investigations of eye movements during reading, reading times during initial analysis should be primarily influenced by syntactic factors, as evidenced by the observed slowdown in reading when encountering a garden path sentence (Clifton et al., 2016). Non-syntactic factors, on the other hand, are expected to exert their influence during later stages of analysis, such as when readers engage in regression to revise their initial syntactic interpretation (Frazier & Rayner, 1982; Dempsey & Christianson, 2022). However, the latency of regressions is still determined by syntax, as it results from words that do not conform to the reader's initially preferred analysis.

A series of studies (Ferreira & Clifton, 1986) began by examining eye-movement patterns observed in individuals while they read sentences containing reduced relative clauses, such as the following sentences (22) and (23) below (Trueswell et al., 1994):

(22) The defendant examined by the lawyer turned out to be unreliable.

(23) The defendant that was examined by the lawyer turned out to be unreliable.

According to the minimal attachment strategy, individuals tend to interpret the word *examined* as the predicate verb rather than the past participle form of an embedded clause upon initial reading of the sentence. However, as they progress through the sentence and encounter the word *by*, it becomes clear that the sentence is a garden path sentence, where *examined* is a modifier element of *defendant*. Consequently, individuals realize that they are on the wrong path of processing and must backtrack to revise their parsing. Nonetheless, sentence (23) avoids this ambiguity by explicitly indicating the structural formation of the relative clause, specifically through the presence of the word *that*.

To determine whether plausibility or syntactic factors take precedence in the parsing process during language communication, researchers examined the subject of the sentence. To manipulate plausibility, they altered the noun preceding the verb in the subsequent sentences (24) and (25), as noted by Trueswell et al. (2021):

(24) The evidence examined by the lawyer turned out to be unreliable.

(25) The evidence that was examined by the lawyer turned out to be unreliable.

Both sentence (24) and the garden path sentence (22) share identical syntactic structures, and thus, the garden path effect would still be expected at the syntactic level. However, their interpretations are markedly different. In the sentence (22), it is entirely plausible that a defendant might examine something such as the object document, and so the past tense verb readers misunderstood seems both syntactically and semantically acceptable (Trueswell et al., 1994). On the other hand, since an inanimate object, such as evidence, cannot examine other objects, readers did not interpret the verb *examine* as the predicate verb of the sentence, rendering it implausible. Surprisingly, the reading experiment showed a similar pattern of eye movements for both (22) and (24), even though it was semantically implausible for evidence to examine anything else. Furthermore, the same difference in reading times observed between (22) and (23) was also found between (24) and (25). The results suggest that the syntactic preference for *examined* as a past tense verb still exists, regardless of the semantic implausibility of the inanimate object.

The preceding example exemplifies the modular modal, which highlights the autonomy and preeminence of syntactic analysis in sentence processing. Specifically, this implies that syntactic analysis can operate independently of other linguistic information, and that it constitutes the fundamental mechanism driving the comprehension of language during communication.

### B. Interactive Modal

In contrast to the modular modal, the interactive modal postulates that during the initial parsing of a sentence, individuals make use of all available information, including syntactic, lexical, discourse, and non-linguistic contextual



information (Tanenhaus et al., 1995). A body of research has compared these two proposals by investigating structurally ambiguous sentences, such as those presented in Rayner et al. (1983):

(26) The florist sent the flowers was very pleased.

(27) The florist sent the flowers to the elderly widow.

(28) The florist who was sent the flowers was very pleased.

Regarding the first sentence (26), individuals listening to it mentally parse the sentence into fragments, and then analyze each fragment individually. There exist two ways of parsing the sentence: the first involves interpreting *sent* as the verb, as exemplified in the second sentence (27). This interpretation may result in the occurrence of a garden path effect. Alternatively, the sentence may be interpreted as a reduced relative clause, as illustrated in the third sentence (28). Ambiguity arises due to the fact that English permits the omission or reduction of relative clauses, such as *who was*. The plausibility of the real world impacts the immediate processing of sentences, as people are inclined to construe *sent* as the verb, given their real-world knowledge that florists are typically the ones who send flowers rather than the recipients. Thus, it is the plausibility of the real world that influences sentence processing. Upon scrutinizing the eye fixations on the sentence (29), it has been discovered that the initial analyses of the sentence were not linked to the plausibility variable. Furthermore, clear evidence of a garden path effect was observed in both plausible and implausible sentences (Rayner et al., 1983).

(29) The performer sent flowers was very pleased.

It seems that many researches have examined the two models and gained some results, yet there is not enough evidence to prove either of the hypothesis. More empirical studies need to be done in the future.

## V. MEANING AND SENTENCE PROCESSING

Early psycholinguistic studies validated the intuitive belief that meaning indeed influences the comprehension of sentences during processing. Reversible sentences have been studied to research the role of meaning in language processing. Slobin (1966) compared reading times for reversible sentences (30) with those for non-reversible sentences (32). It can be seen in sentences (30) and (31), the exchange of subject and object is semantically acceptable, though the meaning of the two sentences is clearly different. However, in the sentence (32) and (33) if the subject and object exchange to each other's place, though the two sentences are syntactically right, but in semantics the later sentence is not acceptable.

(30) The chicken saw the horse.

(31) The horse saw the chicken.

(32) The chicken pecked the horse.

(33) The horse pecked the chicken.

The result of sentence-picture matching tasks indicated that passive versions of the reversible sentences, such as (34), are more difficult to process than passive versions of the non-reversible sentences (35).

(34) The horse was seen by the chicken.

(35) The horse was pecked by the chicken.

According to Berndt et al. (1996) and Schoenemann (2022), reversible sentences allow for the interchangeability of the subject and object, resulting in both active and passive forms being grammatically correct with the same underlying structure, but with contrast meanings. Typically, individuals tend to comprehend the subject as the agent and the object as the recipient of the action. Consequently, when processing passive reversible sentences, additional time is required to determine the correct interpretation between the two possible scenarios. Conversely, non-reversible sentences only require consideration of a single plausible condition as the corresponding active situation does not exist. This indicates that certain elements of grammar, like those indicating a sentence's passive structure, do not heavily limit the analysis during comprehension.

Empirical investigations demonstrate that plausible sentences are processed more efficiently than implausible ones. Reading times were measured for a variety of sentences to evaluate their processing ease. Warren (2013) found that sentences like (36) were processed much faster than those like (37), despite identical syntactic analyses. This disparity arises because plausible sentences are easier to understand, while the processing of implausible sentences, although grammatically correct, poses a significant challenge.

(36) They had a picnic under the tree.

(37) They had a picnic under the teeth.

The experimental methods discussed demonstrate that the influence of meaning on sentence processing happens relatively late in the interpretation, captured through offline measures, contrasting with the more immediate and direct online measures obtained from eye-movement studies.

## VI. PRESUPPOSITION, PLAUSIBILITY AND PARSING

Ambiguous sentences are studied to research language processing. The famous example is the garden path sentence (38) (Bever, 1970).

(38) The horse raced past the barn fell.

Ambiguous sentences such as this have been attributed to a structural preference that results in readers mistakenly interpreting the verb *raced* as the main verb, rather than a past participle in a reduced relative construction. Consequently, readers are led astray by the garden path effect, and only upon encountering the word *fell* do they realize the error in sentence comprehension. Notably, such misinterpretation does not occur in sentence (39), as readers are proved to be right upon reaching the final word (Bever, 1970).

(39) The horse raced past the barn quickly.

Numerous instances of garden path sentences have been studied and are considered to be processed through syntax-driven mechanisms, with ambiguity arising from the interaction between past tense verbs and reduced relatives. However, critics of the syntax-first approach or modular model of sentence processing argue that there are additional complexities involved in the comprehension of many garden path sentences. For instance, according to Crain and Steedman (1985), reduced clause constructions in ambiguous sentences must incorporate certain assumptions or presuppositions that are absent in past tense verb interpretations. In light of these presuppositions, it becomes implausible to interpret the past verb as a reduced relative clause, unless there is further contextual information available to support such an interpretation. It is suggested that these presuppositions arise primarily because the relative clause in sentence (38) is restrictive, whereas in sentence (40) it is not.

(40) The horse, (which was) raced past the barn fall.

They proposed a Referential Hypothesis, which argued that in sentence structure (38), a set of potential horses is assumed, with the horse specified by the relative clause being the one in question. Conversely, sentences (39) and (40) presuppose a single, definite horse being described. It is suggested that this discrepancy between (38) and (39) and (40) gives rise to divergent interpretations. The resulting challenge in processing relative clauses is attributed to this disparity rather than to syntactic predilections. This distinction is believed to be the cause of challenges in relative clause processing rather than the syntactic preferences.

Scholars contend that the challenge in processing sentences such as (38) arises from a plausibility constraint, rather than a syntactic one. Upon encountering *The horse raced* in both (38) and (39), readers are presented with two possible directions: a past tense verb or a past participle. In view of the ambiguity, plausibility assessment mechanisms must be employed to predict the intended meaning. Specifically, we must rely on the mechanisms that evaluate the plausibility of a given sentence. In light of our real-world knowledge, the notion that a horse raced past the barn is eminently plausible and readily acceptable. By contrast, the restrictive relative reading carries a more complex presupposition than the former. Thus, the past tense is preferred for a plausibility constraint rather than the syntactic preference.

This account for the famous garden path sentence makes an earlier appeal to non-syntactic information. There is clear difference between the syntactic account and the non-syntactic information sources. At the parsing process, misanalysis is made by the syntactic approach which leads to the garden path effect. And we must resort to non-syntactic information that we can have the right interpretation.

This account can be applied to other garden path sentences too as (41)-(42) (Crain & Steedmen, 1985). In the sentence (41), there is a similar construction which is also a subordinate clause (that he was having trouble with). *Wife* is modified by the subordinate clause which is connected by *that*. This would be more obvious if *who* were used instead of *that*.

(41) The psychologist told the wife that he was having trouble with to leave her husband.

(42) The psychologist told that he was having trouble with her husband.

This indicates that comprehending sentence (42), where the sequence of words following *wife* forms a subordinate clause, specifically an object clause functioning as the direct object of *tell*, is easier compared to other structures. The sentence structure is that *the psychologist told the wife something*, and it could be asked what did the psychologist tell the wife. Notably, *that* in the sentence cannot be replaced by *who*.

The distinction between the two sentences lies in the type of subordinate clause employed. Specifically, the first sentence features a restrictive relative clause, while the second sentence utilizes an object clause. According to the minimal attachment strategy, readers tend to interpret the phrase *that he was having trouble with* as part of an object clause. Consequently, readers expected an object clause in the first sentence, which led to greater processing difficulty compared to the second sentence. However, the restrictive relative clause in the first sentence, like the one in the preceding example, presupposes that there are multiple wives involved. This presupposition competes with readers' tendency to assume that there is only one wife in the sentence, rendering interpretation more complex. In other words, the interpretation of the restrictive relative clause is complicated by its presupposition, making it less plausible for readers. From this example, we can conclude that misunderstandings in sentence interpretation arise more from non-syntactic information than parsing strategy.

Further evidence has been made by Crain and Steedmen (1985) for this alternative explanation. They altered the presuppositions associated with a sentence by preceding it with different kinds of context. These could guide the readers to the bias of a relative clause interpretation of *that he was having trouble with* or the bias of an object clause interpretation.

(43) A psychologist was counselling two married couples. One of the couples was fighting with him, but the other one was nice to him.

(Relative clause bias)

(44) A psychologist was counselling a married couple. One member of the pair as fight with him, but the other one was nice to him.

(Object clause bias)

In the experiment, participants were presented with distinct conditions for each sentence in (41) and (42) and were asked to determine their grammaticality. The results indicate that the frequency of ungrammatical responses to relative clause structures (41) did not exceed that of object clause structures (42). Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that the primary cause of ungrammatical responses for both types of structures resulted from a contextual mismatch between the test sentence and the preceding context. For instance, a common scenario involved (41) followed by (43) or (42) followed by (44).

These researches provide us with some evidence indicating that our processing of sentences involves not only syntactic information but also non-syntactic factors such as presupposition and plausibility. This finding is in contrast to earlier research that suggested that semantic factors do not have a direct impact on syntactic analysis. It is important to note that grammatical judgments are typically made after the initial processing of the sentence, and therefore can be influenced by a range of additional factors that may affect interpretation. The current results suggest that initial syntactic analysis is followed by a subsequent check by a thematic or meaning-based processor, which underscores the importance of considering both syntactic and non-syntactic factors in understanding the mechanisms underlying sentence processing.

## VII. PROSODY AND PARSING

Previously, the prioritization of syntax in the parsing process was discussed based on studies that primarily focused on reading tasks and written sentence processing. However, the role of syntax differs in listening tasks, as speech conveys cues not only to syntactic structure but also to other aspects of sentence and utterance organization, such as explicit syntactic markers in written language. Specifically, speech provides prosodic cues, including intonation patterns, stress, and rhythm patterns of words, phrases, and sentences. In this section, we will examine the role of prosodic information in immediate sentence processing. Given that prosodic structure can aid word recognition, as demonstrated in slips-of-the-ear, we will investigate how prosody facilitates immediate sentence processing in communication.

(45) When Mary was writing the letter, it fell off the desk.

(46) When Mary was writing, the letter fell off the desk.

The two sentences presented above represent two possible interpretations of an ambiguous sentence, which can be disambiguated with the inclusion of a comma. Without a comma, the Late Closure principle suggests that the noun phrase *letter* is likely to be attached to the verb *writing* as its object. However, the addition of a comma after the verb signals an Early Closure interpretation, with the subsequent noun phrase belonging to a new clause, as in the second sentence. In spoken language, prosody serves a similar function to punctuation by indicating the syntactic structure of the sentence.

(47) Mary saw the skirt and gave her opinion.

(48) Mary saw the skirt was nice.

Regarding the two sentences presented in (47) and (48), the inclusion of a comma is unlikely to disambiguate the pairs of syntactic structures. However, prosody can be utilized to differentiate between the two interpretations through the use of pausing, rhythm, amplitude, and pitch. The key question is whether listeners can effectively use such information during sentence processing, and to what extent. In a study conducted by Schafer, Speer, Warren, and White (2000), participants engaged in a simple continuation experiment in which they listened to spoken sentence fragments and selected their completions. Results indicated that prosodic information was used by participants to comprehend the sentences. Nevertheless, the study was unable to determine whether prosodic information influences the initial analysis of a sentence, or whether prosodic analysis takes priority in parsing or exists solely in post-perceptual analysis. To address these questions, a variety of online tasks must be employed.

In a cross-modal naming experiment conducted by Marslen-Wilson et al. (1992), a set of minimal attachment sentences were used which had been previously extensively studied in reading experiments. Participants were required to read aloud the visual probe, when they were listening to a spoken utterance fragment followed by a visual probe. The experiment aimed to determine if participants could initiate their naming response more quickly when the probe word was related to the preceding utterance fragment, resembling a smooth continuation. It investigated whether prosodic cues, similar to how the complementiser *that* clarified sentence (49), could resolve ambiguity in spoken versions of minimal attachment sentences like (50).

(49) The workers considered that the last offer from the management / was a real insult.

(50) The workers considered the last offer from the management / was a real insult.

(51) The workers considered the last offer from the management / of the factory.

In the experiment, participants can only listen to the sentence fragment before the point marked by / and then they saw the probe word. For these examples this was the word *was*. And the sentences fragment before the / in sentence (50) and (51) are identical in word strings. However, their spoken forms in the experiment are different. This is because the first sentence is a non-minimal attachment version of the sentence, but the second sentence is a minimal attachment version.

Result shows that even though the fragments contained identical word strings, the naming times after the non-minimal attachment fragment in sentence (51) were slower than after the non-minimal attachment fragment in sentence (50). In the experiment, the two sentences are spoken in different prosody which is the only difference between the two sentences. And this result implies that participants used prosodic information online to resolve potential temporary ambiguities. What's more, results show that there is no significant difference between the response times of the two non-minimal attachment versions (49) and (50). This demonstrates that prosodic information is just as effective in online parsing as explicit syntactic marking.

A further experiment conducted by Warren et al. (1995) explored the concept of Late Closure sentences and arrived at a similar conclusion. In this study, participants were presented with sentence fragments, such as sentence (52), and subsequently exposed to a continuation word for naming purposes that was only consistent with an early closure interpretation of the fragment, for instance, closure after the term *Hong Kong* instead of *problem*. Notably, when the spoken version of the utterance was derived from a late closure reading, naming times were considerably slower.

(52) Whenever parliament discusses Hong Kong problems...

Results show that stress shift influences the presence or absence of phonological process. Stress shift is a phenomenon in English and in some other languages it prevents two stressed syllables from being too close together. In the example sentence, the stress of *Hong Kong problems* should be shifted, for the second syllable in *Hong Kong* is stressed and the first syllable in *problem* is stressed. So, the second syllable in *Hong Kong* should be shifted to the first syllable. In the late closure reading, problem should be in the same constituent as Hong Kong.

(53) The spies informed the guards of the conspiracy.

(54) The spies informed the guards of the palace.

Another research by Pynte (1996) used sentences like (53) and (54) in a word monitoring task. The two sentences have the same syntactic structure but the PP constituents *of the conspiracy* and *of the palace* possess structural ambiguity in their relationship to the preceding material, as they could potentially modify either the verb or the object noun, leading to different interpretations. The point lies in the last word of the two sentences and participant did not know that the target word was going to be the last one in the utterance. In the word monitoring experiment, it is found that a prosodic break after the verb made the attachment of the PP to the noun easier to process. The research shows that the placement of prosodic breaks can have a profound influence on the preferred analysis.

The preferred argument structure of verbs can also influence the effect of prosody. Different verbs have different argument structure preference. For example, the verb *inform* prefers a prepositional phrase as in the sentence (53) and (54). The structure is *inform somebody of something*. While the verb *choose* does not have the preference. So influenced by the different argument structure preference, a prosodic break will make different contributions to the interpretation of syntactically ambiguous sentences. Therefore, a prosodic break after *chose* in sentence (56) plays a less significant role to the interpretation of syntactically ambiguous sentences, as the preference was already to interpret the PP as a modifier of the verb.

(55) The student chose the apartment with a balcony.

(56) The student chose the apartment with care.

Other research shows that sentence structure parsing can be influenced by the focus of the sentence, where the focus can be marked by prosody and intonation of speaking (Schafer, 1996). The sentence structure of (55) and (56) is NP1-V-NP2-PP, where the PP can modify either NP1 or NP2. The research of reading time shows the preference for PP as modification of the second noun phrase. And the preference changes as the stress changes. That is to say, if the NP is marked by sentence stress, the NP is most likely to be modified by the relative clause.

These studies provide evidence that prosodic features play a crucial role in the rapid processing of sentences. It is apparent that these features interact with lexical and structural preferences in intricate ways, highlighting their importance in the comprehension of spoken language. In further studies, it is found that such prosodic structures may also have a significant impact on language comprehension during silent reading. This is because, during reading, an individual's internal monologue can be leveraged to facilitate sentence parsing (Fodor, 2002).

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper is to provide a clearer understanding of the immediate processing of sentences in language communication. Recent evidence suggests that sentence processing is influenced not only by syntactic information, but also by various non-syntactic factors such as meaning, background knowledge, plausibility, and prosody. These findings challenge earlier research, which claimed that semantic factors do not directly affect syntactic analysis.

Modals of sentence processing have been articulated with ample examples. It can be argued that sentence processing in language communication involves a comprehensive range of factors. The complexity of this process necessitates further investigation, as current findings indicate that an initial syntactic analysis is subsequently validated by a thematic or meaning-based processor during sentence processing in language communication.

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# Unravelling Yu Guangzhong's Identity Through His Poetic Reflections: A Corpus-Based Investigation

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**Abstract**—This study examines Yu Guangzhong's identity presented in his self-translated poetry collection, *The Night Watchman*. It employs corpus linguistic methodologies and utilizes the corpus linguistic tool AntConc for analysis. This study highlights Yu Guangzhong's identity, which is presented in different categories and topics of poems. It is found that Yu Guangzhong's identity is ever-changing, varying at different times, and occasionally conflicting and opposing. This study may have practical implications for Chinese literature and culture looking to enhance their international influence, and it may also provide academic insights for investigating other literary giants.

**Index Terms**—Yu Guangzhong, identity, poetry, corpus

## I. INTRODUCTION

When discussing Yu Guangzhong, individuals invariably associate him with his renowned poem *Nostalgia*. Indeed, Yu Guangzhong's enduring association with nostalgia is a defining aspect of his identity and reputation (Shao, 2019). Nevertheless, the issue lies in that Yu Guangzhong is often categorized solely as a poet of nostalgia, potentially resulting in a limited understanding of his broader literary contributions, consequently impacting the overall perception of this writer, poet, translator, critic, and educator. Moreover, scholarly investigations about Yu Guangzhong have predominantly centered around his literary works, translations, and translation methodologies (Chen, 2021; Gallo, 2023; Yang, 2020; Yin & Liu, 2013), with limited attention given to this question: What kind of person is Yu Guangzhong in terms of his beliefs and identity? Against the background of China vigorously encouraging its culture to "go global" and promote Chinese literary works beyond China, discussing Yu Guangzhong's identity is of great theoretical and practical significance, as it can have practical implications for Yu Guangzhong's works and Chinese culture and image included on how to enhance the recognition and acceptance of overseas readers, which other literary works might replicate.

However, Yu Guangzhong's identity and personality are primarily understood through interviews, news reports, and autobiographies authored by others, which predominantly provide objective information about Yu Guangzhong's upbringing, education, and professional background. However, these sources scratch the surface and have not sufficiently delved deeper into his personality and inner thoughts. It is argued here that literary works serve as a medium through which authors manifest their own identities in one or more conceivable manners and a poet might be characterized as employing specific styles or diction to reflect their own identity (Nurhamidah et al., 2019). In other words, Yu Guangzhong's literary works might contribute to exploring his identity. However, in literature, studies on identity have predominantly favored novels, not poetic works (Kardiansyah & Salam, 2020; Ouditt, 2020). Additionally, most research on identity in poetry has primarily concentrated on Western poets (Betuganova et al., 2019; Hodgson & Smith, 2020; McCrotty, 2019; Sebola, 2022).

To study Yu Guangzhong's identity, both theoretically and methodologically, the current study integrates a corpus-based approach to conduct a deep analysis according to the category of Yu Guangzhong's poetry to deepen the understanding of Yu Guangzhong's identity, personality, and image, and, subsequently, to provide other literary works with helpful suggestions.

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## II. A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO YU GUANGZHONG

Yu Guangzhong was born in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, in 1928, during a period marked by the incursion of imperialist nations into China. In the year 1937, during the period of the Japanese conquest of Nanjing, Yu Guangzhong's family embarked on a journey of displacement until 1938, when they settled down in Chongqing, where Yu Guangzhong finished his middle and high school careers (Xu, 2016).

In 1947, Yu Guangzhong was admitted to the University of Nanking (currently known as Nanjing University) and received a quality English education due to the sponsorship of American churches for the University of Nanking (Chen, 2001). In early 1949, as the War of Liberation neared Nanjing, Yu Guangzhong's father decided to relocate to Xiamen; therefore, Yu Guangzhong continued his education at Xiamen University. In July 1949, in response to the southward movement of the People's Liberation Army, Yu Guangzhong's family relocated to Hong Kong to seek refuge from the ongoing conflict and then to Taiwan due to his inability to pursue a university education in Hong Kong (Chen, 2001).

In 1958, Yu Guangzhong enrolled at the University of Iowa to pursue literature and contemporary art studies. In the American education system, students could exercise agency in selecting their courses, engage in unrestricted dialogue, and even debate with their instructors. Such liberties, which were not readily available in China, played a pivotal role in Yu Guangzhong's ability to grasp the essence of modern art; he firmly believes that without access to an environment conducive to free learning, his comprehension of this artistic domain would have been significantly hindered (Chen, 2001; Xu, 2016).

Between 1964 and 1974, Yu Guangzhong embarked on two journeys to the United States to deliver lectures on Chinese literature conducted at various colleges and institutions located in the Midwest and East regions of the country (Xu, 2016). From 1974 to 1985, Yu Guangzhong was a faculty member at the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Taiwan started allowing visits to China in 1987. As a result, Yu Guangzhong made his long-awaited return to his homeland in 1992, capping up a 46-year life of leaving his hometown.

Yu Guangzhong's life experience is exceptionally diverse in the present context. Because of the war, he departed from his residence early in life, subsequently engaging in a series of relocations to evade wars. Furthermore, he possessed an extensive academic and professional background, having pursued education and resided in various countries such as the United States, Australia, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Subsequently, he established his residence and career in mainland China for an extended period following the stabilization of Taiwan Strait relations. Yu Guangzhong's poetic works exhibit diverse styles and themes from his extensive life experiences. These include the expression of compassion, a deep concern for the homeland, and a keen perspective that enables him to analyze and capture the essence of contemporary individuals, events, and phenomena.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW: RELEVANT RESEARCH ON IDENTITY USING CORPUS ANALYSIS

Identity is one of the most widely investigated and utilized words in the political and social sciences of the twenty-first century (Române-Kalniņa, 2022). Identity is an umbrella term encompassing various dimensions, including self-definition, external definition by others, and how one presents themselves to others (Ouellette, 2008). The conventional approach emphasizes social aspects of identity, thinking that identity is mainly constant and that people or groups play in certain social connections, such as gender, age, ethnicity, status, and so on (Stryker, 1987). On the other hand, a social constructionist viewpoint believes that identity is not fixed. Giddens (1991) posits that self-identity should not be regarded as a unique attribute or even a compilation of attributes an individual possesses. The concept refers to individuals' self-perception as they reflect upon their life experiences and personal history. People can portray distinct manifestations of themselves by narrating various narratives, contributing to diverse identities within specific circumstances (Li & Deng, 2019). Thus, the above highlights the dynamic nature of identities, indicating that even within a single individual, multiple identities can manifest through narrative or story content variations.

Throughout the years, corpora have been utilized to investigate various intriguing matters (Reppen & Simpson-Vlach, 2019). The utilization of computer technology has significantly advanced the field of corpus analysis, establishing it as a fundamental linguistic method; therefore, corpus analysis has been widely applied in various domains within the field of linguistics (Bonelli, 2010). Corpus linguistics has progressed substantially over the past two decades, expanding and refining its techniques and resources while increasing its multidisciplinary reach (Gablasova et al., 2019), for instance, health care, legal studies, clinical studies, and forensic studies. It seems that corpus linguistic analysis encompasses a collection of methodologies and protocols that can be employed to analyze various texts and contexts.

In addition, corpus linguistics is considered one of the rapidly expanding methodologies in contemporary linguistics (Gries, 2009). Driven by the increasing advancements in computing power, storage capacity, and the ability to share corpora and corpus applications, corpus linguistics has been developed into a significant theoretical and methodological field of research; corpora have been extensively utilized in the field of linguistics research, both in theoretical and practical contexts, since the 1960s, encompassing various areas such as second language acquisition, lexicography, translation studies, and forensic linguistics (Crosthwaite et al., 2023). It seems that corpora mainly focus on language and the methodology in language study, and integrating corpus analysis with research on identity might be a new and challenging trend. However, the existing body of research on identity using corpus analysis has primarily concentrated on analyzing media discourse, government documents, and corporate profiles (Cheng & Shi, 2021; Ko, 2023; Naiyf



Qaiwer, 2019), with limited attention given to the examination of literary works and literary authors.

In recent years, the identity analysis in corpora has garnered significant attention. The majority of prior research has primarily concentrated on political discourses, such as the presidential rhetoric of the Baltic States during their independence (Române-Kalniņa, 2022), as well as the UK's identity within the European Union as discussed in the debates of the British House of Commons (Riihimäki, 2019). Additionally, corporate texts, such as bank corporate profiles and annual reports, have been examined in previous studies (Cheng & Shi, 2021; Fang, 2022). Although previous studies have discussed identity and provided strong evidence of how identity influences the subject's self-image and the objective impression of others, far less attention has been paid to writer identities constructed through literary works and their detailed linguistic realizations. Even fewer studies examine this issue with poetic works, examining the poet's identity in poetic contexts. While Chinese culture is becoming more and more potent in global cultures, how writer identities in literary works portray Chinese culture and how Chinese writers communicate their identities to the international audience deserve academic attention.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology utilized in this study incorporates both descriptive and analytical approaches, which are contingent upon textual analysis. In this study, five small corpora are created using AntConc, a freely accessible software, to examine the different categories of poetry in which Yu Guangzhong's identities are expressed. Depending on the poem's content and main topic, Duan (2020) puts Yu Guangzhong's poem in *The Night Watchman* into the following categories. Table 1 shows the details.

TABLE 1  
CATEGORIES OF YU GUANGZHONG'S POETRY COLLECTION THE NIGHT WATCHMAN

Number	Category	Quantity
1	time, season, and nature	29
2	self-reflection	21
3	nostalgia	17
4	social issues	9
5	love	4

The five corpora consist of Yu Guangzhong's self-translated poetry collection, *The Night Watchman*, which is downloaded in pdf form from digital archives and then converted to plain text (txt.) format. In addition, stop words are removed to prioritize words or phrases that express the content and significance of poetry. Different corpora utilized in this study comprise different tokens; the details are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
CORPUS INFORMATION

Category	Tokens	Types	Type/Token Ratio
love	669	341	50.97%
social issues	1649	714	43.40%
nostalgia	2608	989	37.92%
self-reflection	3479	1190	34.21%
time, season, and nature	5666	1677	29.60%

This study also locates keywords and expressions in context, which gives a precise understanding of the context of a word or expression, allowing researchers to find specific lexicons in different contexts of a poem and thereby providing a more comprehensive picture of the progression of discussion.

#### V. ANALYSIS

##### A. Yu Guangzhong is an Anti-War Activist, a Pacifist, and a Devoted Husband.

The chosen corpus has been organized based on the frequency of its content words using the AntConc software for corpus analysis. The following list displays the top five high-frequency content words found in the category of love.

TABLE 3  
TOP FIVE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS IN THE CATEGORY OF LOVE

Top Five High-frequency Words in the Category of Love	Frequency
war	8
bed	5
day	5
afar	4
love	4

According to Table 3 generated by AntConc, the top five high-frequency words appear predominantly in the poem *If There's a War Raging Afar*, *The Double Bed*, and *The Pearl Necklace*.

Yu Guangzhong's political identity is defined by his experiences of displacement and exile from Mainland China. As

stated by Liu (2018), the anti-war sentiment of Yu Guangzhong is connected to his period of exile during the Anti-Japanese War; Moreover, Yu Guangzhong's sense of national identity gradually emerged as a result of the political circumstances surrounding the Taiwan Strait conflict over the past four decades, as well as his prolonged stays in the United States which have evoked feelings of homesickness and patriotism. Therefore, in the poem, *If There's a War Raging Afar*, Yu Guangzhong effectively conveys his political identity as an advocate against war by skillfully employing the rhetorical device of imagery to depict the harsh realities and brutality associated with armed conflicts, for instance, "A child is crying at its mother's corpse" and "In a field hospital that smells of blood." The rhetorical device of imagery and contrast represents Yu Guangzhong's cultural identity in this poem. For instance, in the lines "If a nun is squatting on her fiery bier" and "You a merciful angel, clad all in white," the terms "nun" and "angel" encompass Western cultural or religious symbolism, which might show Yu Guangzhong's intercultural background. The contrast between war and love, for example, "We are in bed, and they're in the field," can manifest Yu Guangzhong's cultural values and aspirations. The cultural identity of Yu Guangzhong may find its foundation in a longing for love, compassion, and peace, all of which are universally esteemed cultural ideals.

Like *If There's a War Raging Afar*, *The Double Bed* is also an anti-war poem. In the line "We'll be safe at least before the dawn," Yu Guangzhong demonstrates his distinct inclination to flee from the disorderliness of armed conflict and political turmoil, and in the lines "When nothing is there to rely upon, On your supple warmth I can still depend," Yu Guangzhong's decision to find solace in the lover's embrace implies a longing for tranquil and peaceful life. The lines above clearly represent Yu Guangzhong's political identity, specifically his desire to avoid war. Through the rhetorical device of imagery, Yu Guangzhong portrays a vivid picture of the bloody and brutal scenes of the war, for instance, "And hear the straying bullets. Like a whistling swarm of glow-worms" and "Tonight, let mountains topple and earth quake," which can be interpreted as resistance against the devastating impacts of war. In summary, in this poem, Yu Guangzhong assumes a political identity that opposes war and advocates for peace.

*The Pearl Necklace* is a love poem by Yu Guangzhong, dedicated to his wife as a tribute to commemorating their 30th matrimonial anniversary, demonstrating Yu Guangzhong's relational identity as a devoted husband. Within Western culture, the pearl has long been regarded as a customary gift to commemorate the 30th wedding anniversary, symbolizing virtues such as purity, honesty, and wisdom. Thus, the pearl necklace in this poem conveys the relationship between Yu Guangzhong and his wife and also represents Yu Guangzhong's relational identity as a loving partner in this long, stable, and pure marriage. In the lines "So the thread goes all the way through the sun and the moon, around your neck, and, in eighteen inches, through our double life," Yu Guangzhong expresses confidence in the enduring nature of his marriage and makes a commitment that it would remain intact indefinitely, which demonstrates Yu Guangzhong's relational identity as a loyalty and committed husband. Although this poem mainly focuses on Yu Guangzhong's emotions, his social and cultural identities are also represented. For instance, Yu Guangzhong's marriage illustrates a social identity that values the institution of marriage. The celebration of the 30th wedding anniversary evoked a sense of traditional values commonly associated with strong family bonds and long-lasting partnerships, demonstrating Yu Guangzhong's cultural identity as a husband emphasizing Chinese traditions of fostering resilient and enduring marital unions.

In his poems centered around love, Yu Guangzhong portrays various identities, including that of an anti-war activist, a pacifist, and a devoted husband who cherishes his wife and family. He possesses a profound affection for peace and actively opposes the occurrence of war, demonstrating a profound concern for the well-being of all humanity. Simultaneously, he places great importance on familial bonds and exhibits a deep reverence for marriage, exemplifying a more intimate form of love experienced within individual family units.

#### B. Yu Guangzhong is a Rebel, a Pacifist, and a Humanitarian.

TABLE 4  
TOP FIVE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS IN THE CATEGORY OF SOCIAL ISSUES

Top Five High-frequency Words in the Category of Social Issues	Frequency
black	15
spring	9
years	9
angel	7
long	7

Based on Table 4 generated by AntConc, the top five high-frequency words are found mainly in the poems *The Black Angel*, *Often I Find*, and *The Field Gun*.

*The Black Angel* is written as a powerful expression of Yu Guangzhong's deep sadness and anger in reaction to the banning of *Wenxing Magazine* (Fan, 2022). According to Christian tradition, an angel who has been expelled from paradise is commonly referred to as a black angel and is often regarded as a symbol of defiance and rebellion. Therefore, the black angel in the poem might symbolize Yu Guangzhong's political identity as someone who dares to challenge Taiwan authorities and face any consequences in his fight against oppression. An evident example is in the lines "But I am, with a high price on my head" and "The Arch-Assassin none can stop/From breaking through the draperies/And rings of guards, from where the night". Within Western cultures, the black angel stands apart from and is excluded by

other angels, which may show Yu Guangzhong's social identity as a maverick and unique in society. Unlike the majority who remain quiet, he fearlessly voices his discontent in the presence of injustice. An obvious example is in the lines "Among all angels alone I'm black,/An outlaw to every angel white".

The initial portion of *Often I Find* exudes a sense of lightheartedness as Yu Guangzhong expresses his delight and contentment regarding his daughter's idyllic upbringing. However, the latter half of the poem takes on a more somber tone, delving into Yu Guangzhong's tumultuous childhood marked by the ravages of war and the pervasive presence of smoke. Therefore, Yu Guangzhong expresses his political identity as an anti-war activist by drawing comparisons between his childhood and that of his daughter. This poem refers to some social elements, such as "the Red Sun Flag" and "air-raid shelter," which might reflect Yu Guangzhong's social identity as someone who has experienced the Second Sino-Japanese War and other wars. This poem also illustrates the bond between Yu Guangzhong and his youngest daughter, for example, "O how I hope/The girl's memory will prove more beautiful than mine," which shows Yu Guangzhong's relational identity as a caring father.

*The Field Gun* reflects Yu Guangzhong's strong opposition to war and his contemplation of the far-reaching effects it brings. Yu Guangzhong describes the field gun as "This bullying black beast," "A dark massive monster," and "A retired butcher." All of the phrases used to characterize the weapon, the field gun, are negative, which might demonstrate his political identity as an anti-war activist. In the lines "Coughs of rotten lungs, moans of rotten eyes" and "Mothers sobbing, orphans wailing in unisons," Yu Guangzhong shows his concerns about the destructive effects of the war, which might represent his political identity as someone who is humanitarian. In the lines "A dark massive monster" and "Quiet as a monk now in his kindly rustiness," Yu Guangzhong describes the changes of the field gun from "a monster" to "a monk." In the lines "The involuntary yelps for help and pain" and "And festive children astride the barrel imagining/They're riding a giraffe or the steed of a prince," Yu Guangzhong also portrays the changes in scenes from war to peace. The changes above represent Yu Guangzhong's social identity as someone who shifts from war to peace, which resonates with the deep longing for peace.

Yu Guangzhong represents many identities as a rebel, a pacifist, and a humanitarian in his poetry on social concerns. He possesses the courage to challenge social injustice and boldly reject the politics of authoritarianism and hegemony. As he contemplates the effects of war and advocates for peace, he also demonstrates a genuine concern for the well-being of individuals in the aftermath of conflict.

### C. Yu Guangzhong is a Patriot, a Loving Home, and a Practitioner-Guardian of Chinese Traditional Culture.

TABLE 5  
TOP FIVE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS IN THE CATEGORY OF NOSTALGIA

Top Five High-frequency Words in the Category of Nostalgia	Frequency
mother	22
heard	11
long	11
river	11
years	9

Table 5, generated by AntConc, reveals that the poems *Nostalgia*, *The White Jade Bitter Gourd*, and *The Folk Song* contain the top five high-frequency words.

*Nostalgia* expresses Yu Guangzhong's deep longing for his homeland, Mainland China, while also conveying his hopeful aspirations for the future reunification of the nation (Xie, 2018). Therefore, Yu Guangzhong's political identity might be a patriot desiring to reunite Mainland China and Taiwan. The lines "Nostalgia becomes a shallow strait" and "Mainland on the other side" may reflect Yu Guangzhong's geographical identity as a homesick, separated from his loved ones and homeland. In the lines "Mother on the other side" and "Mother on the inside," Yu Guangzhong conveys the hesitancy of a teenager to part ways with his mother and the sorrow of a young man who has experienced the loss of his mother, which might represent his relational identity as someone who is a filial and dutiful son. Moreover, Yu Guangzhong also writes "Bride on the other side," which might reflect his other relational identity as a newlywed husband within the realm of matrimony and love affairs.

*The White Jade Bitter Gourd* imbues the image of the white jade bitter gourd with multiple meanings by combining the sentiments of love for the motherland and a strong sense of national consciousness that is kept in Taiwan's National Palace Museum through imaginative and rich association (Wang, 2007). The lines, "In one gulp, all that old China had to suckle" and "Vast were the Nine Regions" may reflect Yu Guangzhong's political identity as a patriot demonstrating a deep emotional connection and solid political alignment with mainland China by mentioning "old China" and "Nine Regions" that are two terms with intense Chinese cultural connotations. Additionally, Yu Guangzhong notes culture-specific terms, for instance, "Nine Regions," "old China," and "the white jade bitter gourd," which highlights Yu Guangzhong's strong connection to the Chinese heritage, reflecting his deep cultural identity. This poem describes the white jade bitter gourd that Yu Guangzhong saw in Taiwan's National Palace Museum. However, he employs the white jade bitter gourd to convey his patriotic sentiments to Mainland China, which may illustrate his geographical identity as someone who has experienced separation from the motherland.

*The Folk Song* emphasizes Yu Guangzhong's profound affiliation with the spirit of Chinese culture and his duty to

carry on the essence of Chinese culture (Sun, 2011). As a result, Yu Guangzhong's political identity might be a patriot who has a deep sense of belonging to the Chinese nation and a strong cultural connection with Mainland China by mentioning culture-specific terms such as "the Yellow River," "the Blue Sea," "the Yellow Sea," "Dragon," and "the Red Sea". The lines, "There's the Long River's most motherly hum" and "There's the choir of your blood and his blood," might reflect Yu Guangzhong's social identity as belonging to a unified community with a sense of collectivist spirit. Furthermore, the poem references numerous images associated with traditional Chinese culture on multiple occasions, which might represent Yu Guangzhong's cultural identity as someone feeling compelled to preserve and transmit traditional Chinese culture.

In his poetry about nostalgia, Yu Guangzhong represents multiple identities as a patriot, a dutiful son, a devoted husband, and a practitioner-guardian of Chinese traditional culture. Yu Guangzhong demonstrates a deep concern for the unification of China and Taiwan and the preservation of the Chinese nation. Additionally, he expresses a genuine care for his personal family life.

#### D. Yu Guangzhong is a Rebel Towards Destiny and Authorities and a Vital Force in Taiwan's Poetry Circle.

TABLE 6  
TOP FIVE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS IN THE CATEGORY OF SELF-REFLECTION

Top Five High-frequency Words in the Category of Self-reflection	Frequency
night	29
wind	12
answer	11
death	11
side	10

Table 6 indicates that the top five high-frequency terms are in the poems *Tug of War with Eternity* and *Hsilo Bridge*.

*Tug of War with Eternity* demonstrates Yu Guangzhong's viewpoint towards life. According to Li (1990), Yu Guangzhong believes that one should participate in a never-ending battle against the passage of time, striving to add meaning to one's life while also adding value to others, society, and the global community. As a result, Yu Guangzhong's social identity might be someone with perseverance and tenacity. The lines, "Surely I am doomed to lose" and "One more round of unfair contest," illustrate that Yu Guangzhong might have experienced uneven treatment, which might represent his political identity as a rebel holding opposite site with authorities. The lines "Against eternity I hold my ground" and "To print the miracle" show Yu Guangzhong's psychological identity as a fighter with strong determination and unwavering perseverance. Yu Guangzhong demonstrates remarkable resilience and unwavering determination in facing challenges and uncertainty.

*Hsilo Bridge* was written in 1958 when the Lan Xing Shi She (Chinese: 蓝星诗社) was in a period of upward growth. Yu Guangzhong mentions "steel," "design of strength," and "tower of will," which are the symbol of resilience and fortitude. As a result, Yu Guangzhong's social identity might be a backbone force in the Lan Xing Shi She. The lines "I shall be different once across" and "The man across can never come back" imply that some changes happened in Yu Guangzhong, which might demonstrate his relational identity as someone different from what he is now and never returning to the past. This poem might also illustrate Yu Guangzhong's psychological identity as someone with a deep sense of ambivalence in the face of change. For instance, the lines "I tremble a little, but I" and "Must cross the bridge" show that Yu Guangzhong is filled with a sense of unease when confronted with the unfamiliar, yet he possesses a firm resolve and unwavering determination to overcome it.

Yu Guangzhong's poetry delves into the realm of self-reflection, capturing the essence of various identities; he is a preserved rebel and fighter against destiny and authorities and is a vital force in the development of modern Taiwanese poetry. When confronted with injustice, crises, and challenges, he demonstrates bravery and a willingness to endure, displaying a fearless and unwavering determination.

#### E. Yu Guangzhong is a Lover of Idyllic Life and Nature.

TABLE 7  
TOP FIVE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS IN THE CATEGORY OF TIME, SEASON, AND NATURE

Top Five High-frequency Words in the Category of Time, Season, and Nature	Frequency
Nature	
night	42
rain	27
tick	20
tock	19
sea	16

Table 7, created by AntConc, indicates that the top five high-frequency words are in the poems *Passing Fangliao* and *Summer Thoughts of a Mountaineer*.

*Passing Fangliao* expresses Yu Guangzhong's deep fondness and longing for the comfortable existence of the Taiwanese rural areas while showcasing his admiration for the vibrant natural beauty. As a result, Yu Guangzhong's

social identity is shown as an idyllist valuing spiritual peace over material success. In the lines “How the fertile plain lulls,” “Plump the bananas plump the rain,” and “We’re saying Pingtung’s the sweetest of counties,” Yu Guangzhong expresses a deep admiration for Pingtung, which might demonstrate his cultural identity as someone who has a deep regional pride with Pingtung. Additionally, the lines “Greeted by the green guards of Pan” and “The sanguine and seedy god” might reflect Yu Guangzhong’s cultural identity as someone who has an in-depth understanding of mythology and folklore from a cultural perspective.

*Summer Thoughts of a Mountaineer* contains seven short poems and is one of Yu Guangzhong’s masterpieces of landscape idylls depicting natural scenery. In this poem, Yu Guangzhong portrays scenes in the mountain, such as pine cones, dusk, a lamp in the night, wind, and a dog’s barking. The lines “A pine cone comes stealing down/With no notice at all./Who is there to catch it?/The needles or roots upon the ground?/The rocks and moonlight all around?” might reflect Yu Guangzhong’s social identity as someone close to the nature. However, the lines “Let giant night take possession/Of every corner in the dark,/That this lonely lamp may take/Possession of the heart of night” may also demonstrate Yu Guangzhong’s other social identity as someone marked by deep self-reflection and disengagement from society. In the lines “Surely history, long and loud,/Can still spare such a moment/Out of incessant argument?” and “The so-called night is but a frontier castle,/The night reader its lonely host,” Yu Guangzhong showcases his profound contemplation of history and the passage of time, revealing his psychological identity as a perceptive and introspective individual.

Yu Guangzhong’s poems dive into the domain of time, season, and nature, capturing the essence of many identities. He is a lover of idyllic life and the countryside; he is also a lover of nature and praises everything in it. It’s worth noting that Yu Guangzhong finds great joy in the idyllic life and beautiful natural scenery, which also prompts him to reflect on his own life.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The in-depth analysis of high-frequency words through corpus examination reveals the identity of Yu Guangzhong’s self-translated poetry. Yu Guangzhong depicts several identities on different topics in his poetry. Yu Guangzhong reveals his identity as an anti-war activist, pacifist, and loyal spouse in his love poetry. Yu Guangzhong is a rebel, pacifist, and humanist in his poetry on social issues. Yu Guangzhong is a lover of family and patriotism and a defender of Chinese culture in his nostalgic poetry. Yu Guangzhong is a rebel who dares to confront injustice and destiny and a significant figure of Taiwanese poetry in poetry about self-reflection. Yu Guangzhong demonstrates a love of idyllic pastoral life and environment in his poetry on the topic of natural surroundings. It is found that in his poetry on different topics, Yu Guangzhong’s identities overlap and contradict each other. For example, his identity as an anti-war activist and pacifist is expressed in poetry about love and social issues. In the face of injustice and darkness, he dares to oppose, and in the face of problems and challenges, he is courageous enough to conquer them, but he also longs for an ideal pastoral existence and wants to merge with nature in search of inner peace. Yu Guangzhong’s identity may be versatile due to his experiences in various eras. As stated by Estevez (2019), identity is constantly evolving and never remains fixed.

This study has certain limitations. Firstly, this study focuses solely on the high-frequency words in Yu Guangzhong’s self-translated poems. However, it fails to consider other aspects, such as keywords. As a result, this article’s assessment of Yu Guangzhong’s identity may not be entirely accurate. The upcoming articles will delve into Yu Guangzhong’s other poetic works. Secondly, the analysis is done by textual analysis and may be deemed subjective and interpretive. Future research seeks to overcome subjective and interpretive limitations by interviewing experts in Yu Guangzhong’s studies and individuals familiar with Yu Guangzhong, like his family and friends. Lastly, the analysis does not include other poetic works by Yu Guangzhong. These poems will also be discussed in upcoming articles.

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# Aesthetics and Semiotics of Communication in Visual Language: A Multimodal Criticism on the Short Film of *Ismail*

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**Abstract**—This conceptual paper aims to present a multimodal critique of the visual language in the short film *Ismail*. It analyses the social semiotics represented in the film's composition of image and language, which portrays a day story from the Palestinian visual artist Ismail Shammout (1930-2006) in the diaspora. From an aesthetic perspective, the research focuses on the social construction of an artist's identity through visual language. Such film transforms the artist's narrative into a communicational oeuvre in Arabic to represent an individual description of the Palestinian diaspora, which constructed one of the prominent grand narratives in the modern history of Arab Art. The main character in the film is Ismail, a Palestinian painter who performs his daily job as a candy seller in the streets. The argumentation in this critique depends on the aesthetic manifestations of the social semiotics of Arab Art in the film. Throughout the film's visual language, Ismail keeps representing his thoughts about the characteristics of Arab Art. He is a travelling aesthetician who walks through the desert and sells candy to strangers while talking to a younger kid escorting him through the film. The research's problem corresponds to the need for more investigation into language study, which this research advances to render. The methodology dedicated the aesthetic critique to produce aesthetic research on the film's visual language. Introducing an aesthetic review of visual language and connecting it with sociopolitical semiotics is significant. This research raises awareness of the importance of visual language knowledge in education systems.

**Index Terms**—visual language, social semiotics, multimodal creativity, visual communication, Arab art

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to present an aesthetic investigation of visual language in the short film *Ismail*, which aesthetically represents social semiotics from the grand narrative of contemporary Arab arts. In the creative media of communication, the visual language constructs the values of multiculturalism and multimodality through contemporary Arabic creative productions and industries such as cinema, photography, painting, sculpture, graphic arts and performance arts. This approach negotiates the assemblages of multimodality and multiculturalism. This paper focuses on the crosshatches between the concept of multimodality and the concept of multiculturalism. It presents an aesthetic critique of communication temporalities through visual language in contemporary Arab arts.

In the present millennium's beginning, aestheticians debated the integration or assemblage of multiple human intelligences. They focused on the relationship between humans' textual and visual cognitive abilities to critique and develop communication mechanisms in a new global era. They deconstructed the archaeology of communication and explored the chemistry of every expressive component. They explored the language and art and semiology, performance art kinesthetics and language. Aestheticians stood further to examine the chemistry of all such multimodal properties with multicultural frameworks. They examined the language of displaced people and the arts of refugees and foreigners in different geographic, geopolitical and social conditions. Language is a system of symbolic meanings that perform communicational multifunction, which depends on representing the subjective and objective environment around the

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human (Abu-Hammad & Hamtini, 2023; Alsaggar & AlAtoom, 2021; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001; Mitchell, 2005; Sullivan, 2005; Suvakovic, 2017).

Multimodality describes the assemblage of image, text, performance, kinesthetics and sound in human artistic expression and communication activities. Investigating multimodality in visual language research focuses on transforming social symbolisms into languages, images, and voices in communication activities or kinesthetic artworks. Such discourse expresses an aesthetic, educational, and cognitive composition of text, images, colours and sounds as components of the artistic and communicational message (Peng, 2022).

In the context of Contemporary Arab Art's Grand Narrative, Arab artists and authors practice their visual arts through multiple creative media. Those media are not limited to drawing, writing, painting, sculpting and photography. They reflect human expressions through language and art. Furthermore, Palestinian artists, to whom Ismail belongs, practised the art of autobiography as a creative tool to represent the dynamics behind their art in words (Al-Abbas, 2016, 2023). It is an aesthetic and dynamic research practice to identify human creativities turning into visual or textual expressions through multimodal media. Art practices manifest more comprehensive messages across the audience's multiple intelligences in this context. Historically, visual language is a deliberate process of rendering thoughts as a creative approach in art and literature. The visual language enabled artists to reproduce characteristic social situations as historical and grand narratives in their creative oeuvres with advanced expressive qualities (Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001; Mitchell, 2005; Sullivan, 2005).

This study aims to discuss multimodality and multiculturalism as a concept for developing underdeveloped educational and communicational systems, specifically in the practices of artistic and creative expressions. Studying the elements of art and expression can benefit the future of making efficient educational and communicational systems globally. Such communication and education systems can construct better multicultural and multimodal bridges among human societies. This paper investigates the importance of studying visual art language through contemporary expression. It also explores through the aesthetic critique the need to develop multimodal and multicultural elements such as visual artistic expressions and performance to produce a higher quality of visual communication.

## II. AESTHETICS OF COMMUNICATION IN VISUAL LANGUAGE

From an aesthetic perspective, the language of visual art emerges through multimodal and multicultural creativities. Authors and artists compose the manifestations of this art synchronously with textual, musical and kinesthetic elements. Across the conditions of social change, the visual language transforms from familiar artistic semiotics in painting, sculpture or traditional poster art to the new media modernist iconographies. These concurrent transformations evoke the obsessions of integrating traditional aesthetics into modern culture.

This study's methodology corresponds to its problem statement, which provokes the dialectics of the connections between the visual and textual. The problem is how to construct/deconstruct/reconstruct a multicultural and multimodal visual language that meets the recent advances in creative media. Therefore, the methodology in this paper is qualitative and focuses on the aesthetic critique. It concentrates on the multimodal visual language framework presented in Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) and van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001). Images, texts and languages compose signs, flags, fashions, and films in the human visual ecology, which provide a visual oeuvre for aesthetic analysis in art research. The multimodal phenomenon constructs visual and textual grammar framework in the semiotic world of meanings (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Consequently, the aesthetic and qualitative investigation examines the connections of images and texts representing semiotic association and multimodal manifestation.

In this methodological context, the aesthetic analysis focused on a qualitative approach to recognise and explore social performers, reflecting visual and semiotic messages. This method chosen in the present study is related to its aesthetic approach because it demonstrates the emergence of multimodal expression practices through the assemblage of textual and visual elements in communication and creative human practices (Bahrudin & Bakar, 2022).

In the context of this paper, the methodological frameworks of the aesthetic values integrate into the academic patterns to explore social authenticity transversely within the spaces of the Arab visual culture through the social and political constructions of geographic, historical and national narrative circles. On another level, the social aesthetics in a community's structure impacts the artistic practices on the levels of individual experience within the aesthetics of the artistic community itself.

The phenomenon of multimodal aesthetics manifested noticeably and diversely in the contemporary practices of visual artists' societies. In this creative context, the waves and recessions of globalization influence communities to flow over the latest advances in multicultural aspects. At the same time, the question of keeping the classical language of iconographies and social semiotics appears in the course of such progress to indicate the social originalities within artistic practices. The question of social identity through personal displacement, diaspora, communal memory, and nostalgia evokes different perspectives, from collective conceptions to individual perceptions. It is how individual creativity deals with the popular iconographies of society's visual culture and how the intellectual, creative person challenges the collective or mainstream thoughts within community intrinsic and extrinsic constructions (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Leeuwen & Jewitt, 2001; Suvakovic, 2017).

This subject is visually and culturally loaded, diverse and simultaneously complicated. Art critics and aestheticians address the multimodality of visual aesthetics in different humanities and social science fields. Visual Arts is one field

that discusses this issue more often as part of the post-colonial practices in Art Criticism and Art History. The social values that connect those multimodalities in the reader's/viewer's mind evoke diasporas, nostalgias and cultural identities made by authors and artists' oeuvres. Those construct diverse and multicultural implications.

Such representations build multicultural and multimodal narratives as aesthetic experimentation in this study. This aesthetic study investigates and identifies the conceptual phenomenon of multimodality and multiculturalism in creative contemporary arts.

In the context of Arab Art's Grand Narratives, Studying the creativities of Arab artists through geographies and narrative temporalities passes through the conditions of the global and contemporary art practices that lead to investigating those aspects and narratives in artistic representations. They exist in the same framework when reviewers address the relation between the artist and their social context, primarily when the artist represents social issues such as diaspora, nostalgia and cultural identity. The iconographies of those issues manifest as the artist transfers or displaces from the familiar social contexts to the unfamiliar social context, representing cultural identity through nostalgic representations. In the global context, art critics consider this as diaspora when they locate artists' representations outside their cultural geographies and temporalities.

Reem Fadda (2009) describes such a narrative phenomenon through a convergent critique of the connections between the poetic, aesthetic and political issues artists evoke:

The selected artists strive to link aesthetic and poetic developments with broadly conceived politics. Issues such as historical memory, nation-building mechanisms, dispossession, the physical and psychological impact of wars and selected internal conflicts are only a few topics that have been addressed...., in the Palestinian context, we increasingly see an analysis of belonging, identity, nationalism, diasporas, borders, land/geographies and narratives of conflicts by artists .... However, artists' thematics are not exclusive to their location, but serve as the starting point of an investigation that has a broader significance. (Fadda, 2009, p. 16)

We need to translate this identity to be more understandable and give meaning to this image and the iconology of this artistic phenomenon. In this context, Fadda (2009) quotes Walter Benjamin's statement about language expression when he says every word and expression in each language conveys a narrative mutation to represent particular significance in certain conditions. He says translation is the search for the common dominator, like intention and pure understanding of the world. He calls it a Heideggerian understanding of the world when we represent the pure intrinsic beauty of things without indicating their extrinsic significance. Fadda discussed those issues that can be detected in the visual artworks while presenting the artistic practices through her critical point of view.

### III. THE SOCIO-VISUAL LANGUAGE CRITIQUE

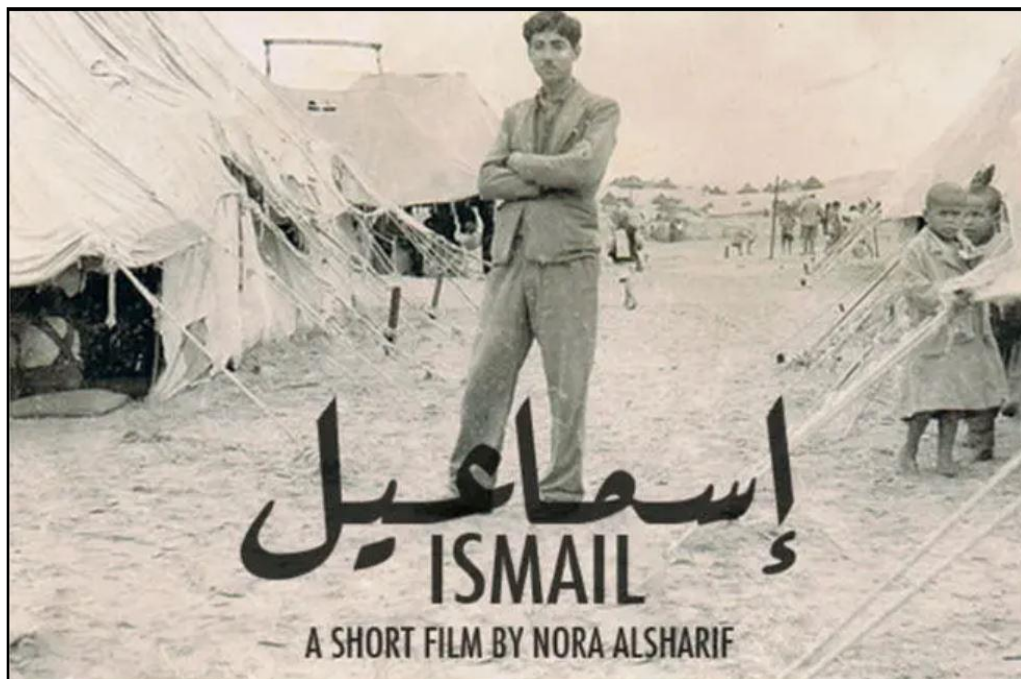


Figure 1. The Film Poster (Public Domain)

In the pictorial composition of this film, the images, colours, texts, and other visual and textual symbols construct the message of its narrative. As a graphic visual art, film frequently takes images and pictures as the primary pictorial system of communication. The picture assembles countless communicational codes, such as language, colour and composition, corresponding to the film's theme. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) characterise the process of constructing

the meaning from the image into a social symbol or semiotic narrative. The narrative images in the short film *Ismail* are a performance of a multimodal phenomenon, seeing the aesthetics of texts, movements and images reflect the spirit of the visual artist through the oeuvre. In the multimodal composition of this film, the narrative presents the connection between the image identity and the audience.

This film's aesthetic values cluster into metaphoric integration based on a multimodal aesthetical framework. The language and image analogies build a social construction of semiotic meanings, where the cognitive operations embody social connotations. The film reflected social realities, while the characters focused on representing the narrative of diaspora across continuous scenes and locations. Such symbolic construction assembles multiple mods of semiotics. Such conceptual assemblage drives a dynamic structure of the meaning of multimodal metaphors from a cognitive perspective. This aesthetic critique provides a new perspective on interpreting multimodality in multicultural and educational settings (Wang Chongqing, 2022).

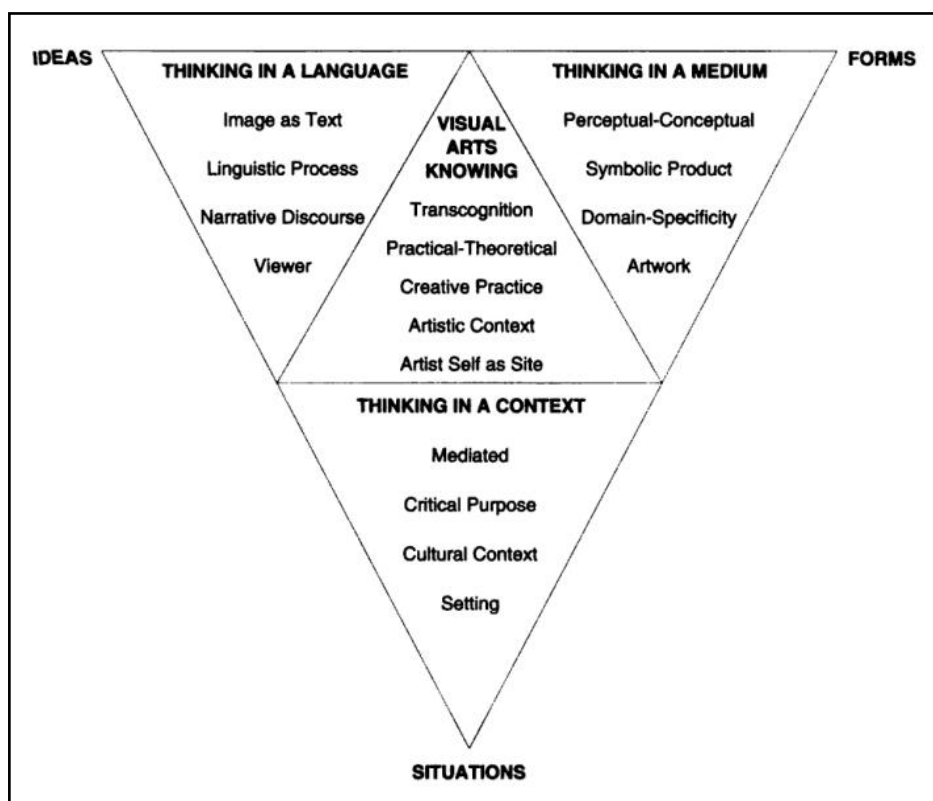


Figure 2. Framework of Visual Knowing (Sullivan, 2005, p. 129)

According to Sullivan (2005), language and media engage in visual knowledge, where cultural ecology crystalizes through the aesthetic connection between the artist and the others. This connection grows among language, media and socio/cultural/political/psychological contexts. Nevertheless, those 'others' may manifest as a mainstream homogeneous community or appear as heterogeneous individuals who act highly individually. In this context, the social narratives, cultures and memories connect to the artist's cognition. The artist/author reflects social/cultural cognitive experience, where social concurrency is a social construction while cognitive perception is a psychological and physical action inside a social/cultural context. Therefore, the knowledge of visual art is a conjunction of thinking in language, media, and context (Sullivan, 2005).

From a methodological perspective, this paper critiques the visual phenomenon through sociopolitical influences. Corresponding to the short film *Ismail*, the current semiotic critique provides a contextual background of the film's composition. It introduces the social analysis of the stylistic expressions in the visual language. The current investigation focuses on the crossing points between art, language and culture by conceptualizing the interaction between the displaced cultures through creative media. Then, the paper renders the composition and visual values by considering the cultural and historical contexts, revealing the concepts behind using iconographic motives or formal values in artwork to get through the synthesis of visual cultures and artistic practices.

In the film *Ismail*, the semiotic connection between characters' creative visions anticipated the movement of their individualities towards the self and surroundings. The original endeavour in the film is to observe and understand the diasporic symbolisms through simple artistic practice. The grand narrative of Palestinian displacement involved the visual environment in direct contact, and the film developed the audience's visual understanding through different phases of cognition and awareness. In this visual development context, language plays a significant function. The

multimodal vision is one of the primary sources of knowledge, memories, and meanings. On the other hand, the self-image of Ismail presents the intellectual individual who keeps on creating visual knowledge.

The film presents Ismail as an intellectual who thinks as an artist/author. However, the viewer can now observe various backgrounds of mass and symbolic production of images and iconographies. Artists/authors compose multicultural/multimodal/semiotic values to deliver various narratives to support visual and lingual expressive methods. In the same context, contemporary artists always use avant-garde media to represent their ideas and concepts, along with traditional art forms like painting and sculpture. Remember that the interactions between different visual cultures are an imaginative subject for art practitioners and critics to practice artistic creations in visual arts and studies.

In social realities, Arab artists present a significant example of political symbolism within the domain of individual artistic experience, as they created a record of the Arab narratives when they represented their memory and folklore. The temporalities of the Palestinian people are a significant example of the Arab creative narrative through different stages of the modern Palestinian displacement into the contexts of the political and social environments. The novel aesthetics of visual arts construct the artistic process within social contexts that convey the resemblance of the authentic Arab interactive visual culture. In the context of socio-politics, the impact of the political atmosphere in the Arab visual culture manifests through diverse proportions within popular spaces.

The phenomenon of political and social manifestations in the visual language of art constructs social symbolisms, which emerge pictorially in art. Arab artists, in this context, represented social narratives and memories. Through portraying the daily iconographies of social temporalities, the influence of Palestinian contemporary politics on folkloric practices generated a phenomenon that led to different expressions in the local and global Middle Eastern contemporary arts (Gharran, 2009). The ecological and sociopolitical influences on the individual creative experience significantly manifest the social symbolisms through visual arts. As we can see in Ismail's short film, the narrative practices of contemporary Arab artists presented a deeper communication among social characteristics and politics.

In the same political reality and social context of the film, the visual narratives of Ismail represent Palestinian folklore through several geographies as the Palestinian diaspora extended worldwide, where we indicate it in many global cultural events interacting with different shades of people telling the narratives of the Palestinian story. This interaction through the folklore led to different examples of convergence between the displaced and the recipient visual cultures. Since this kind of folklore represents political contents, visual phenomenon constructs a dynamic social iconography which consists of the representations and imaginations of three visual iconographic elements; the first one is a group of people that move with their own cultural identity, the second element is the host culture that hosts the displaced people, and the third element is the cultural messages, narratives and memories of the displaced people to the new urban spaces within the recipient community.

The dynamics of social iconographies manifest in Ismail's artistic narratives and reflect the turbulent political situations in Palestine. However, those three elements of the displaced visual culture, recipient visual culture, and the social-political content illustrate how politics influence contemporary visual arts across different creative practices, particularly in the contemporary arts. The iconographies and social manifestations evoke the relationship between the visual identity of folklore as a part of the collective cultural identity and the visual arts as an individual artistic and creative practice (Gharran, 2009). In general, the Palestinian artists created an individual diasporic narrative, contributing to worldwide art exhibitions by continuously travelling from one country to another. They exchanged different artistic concepts of cultural identity through the temporalities of displacement. Palestinian artists are telling the Palestinian story and individual narratives to the people.

Social reality is an authentic ecology of any contemporary artistic practice where the dynamics of the artwork create an assembly between the manifestations of the artwork and the societal structures. The formal comprehension of the artistic practice needs practical aesthetics through investigating the social differences and similarities in the artistic practice. In this context, modern artists are grounded with practical aesthetics led by modernist ideologies established within the post-independence era paradigms.

Visual aesthetics in artistic practices connect various cultural intercourses through sociopolitical impacts. As a result, visual language dualism originates amidst the constructions of contemporary visual culture and artistic practices. The primary account of this paper is to critique visual language as a phenomenon through social realities represented by the artists. The study of communal environments of artistic practices explains the dualism of the artwork's manifestations within the social environment and connects with its cultural ecology. In modern society, the pictorial transformations in the visual ecology from the traditional to modernist artistic identity impacted aesthetics through artistic and creative practices. Connecting aesthetics, poetics and conceived politics evoked the issues of historical memory, national systems, and the social and psychological impacts of wars. In the Palestinian context, the issues of identity, nationalism, diasporas, and land/geography narratives appear (Fadda, 2009).

In the context of visual language practices in the short film Ismail, we can observe that artists reflect the narratives of personal experience, which yields manifestations from the artists' social aesthetics. Furthermore, culture connects the artist to aesthetic experience and socio-politics in Arab contemporary cultures. It is the self-portrait, into which the visual artist practices art through social interactions with the surrounding visual/multimodal/multicultural ecological environment. The conceptualizations of social aesthetics change according to sociopolitical dynamics in the mainstream ideas and advocate new demands for artistic practices through multimedia arts, photography, and novel trends in

applied arts and crafts. Society and social system are the mainstream into which the artist accumulates memories and cognitive means.

The transformation of aesthetics and visual art creates critical practices in political terms determined by inclusion or exclusion. New art blurs boundaries between mainstream art and revokes the mainstream dualism between geographically oriented or regional arts and ethnographic practices. Global art represents a geopolitical or geo-aesthetic brand (Suvakovic, 2017). The visual artist reveals himself/herself through manifesting social culture, signifying an individual visualizer of all imaginative narratives derived from environmental spaces. Also, the practising artist creates individuality by communicating with the social context through augmenting artistic practice from the environment of the corresponding aesthetic uniqueness. The practising artist generates perception within the social and cultural routine systems, revealing technical and practical experience based on social-cultural consciousness.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The ecological environment surrounds authors/artists with several substantial elements; they feel/perceive/recognize/understand through multiple audio-visual and kinesthetic knowledge. Consequently, those artists/authors express this multimodal/multicultural knowledge through multimedia creativities such as video art, photography, art posters, expressionist painting and sculpture. Such an interaction between the artist/author and his or her ecology creates a semiotic phenomenon.

This research examined the multimodal aesthetics of visual language in the composition of Ismail's film. The image, locations and backgrounds, and further symbols in the picture concurrently construct the film. Examining pictures from the aesthetic perspectives of graphic language starts from the operational purposes of composition, delivering engagement to the inner portrayal of the film's characters. Social critics and aestheticians explore creative artworks and present argumentations according to cognitive theories. Visual cognition is knowing visuals and rendering them into meaningful ideas. The construction of this knowledge in visual language stands on the architectonics of narrative content, medium, and social context (Sullivan, 2005, p. 129). This organic composition leads to a subjective and aesthetic explanation of an artwork. Social narrative impacts the symbolic meaning of the artwork representation and leads to an aesthetic investigation throughout the social layers of the community. These layers connect critical and cogent reading of the artistic and creative experience. This conceptual research equalized different regional arts culturally by accentuating the interactive ecological influences. It conceptualized the stimulation of displaced visual cultures and languages. Exploring the complementary conditions that touch another culture further integrates components of conceptual paths between cultures, which this research rendered.

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# Enhancing Young EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning Through Contextualizing Animated Videos

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**Abstract**—Practicing target language contextually integrated with animated video in the classroom influences the way students use the language in their everyday situations. Contextualized animated videos as learning media based on young learners' characteristics can be appropriate for stimulating them to acquire vocabulary. This study attempts to examine the effectiveness of utilizing animated videos as learning media in learning vocabulary for enhancing young EFL learners' engagement in classroom activities. The study used experimental research in which participants from two groups (experimental and control) were involved. The context-based learning strategy is utilized to introduce new vocabulary items to the participants in the control group. While the new vocabulary items were presented to the experimental group's participants through context-based learning integrated with animated videos. The analysis of the data revealed that the participants who underwent vocabulary learning through context-based learning integrated with an animated video in the vocabulary learning treatment significantly outperformed those who underwent vocabulary learning through the context-based learning method. Integrating animated videos into vocabulary teaching proves its effectiveness with the four word classes of the content word type. It was very effective in learning verbs and adverbs compared to being learned via a context-based learning strategy separately. Hence, integrating animated videos is not just appropriate to facilitate vocabulary learning for young learners but also increases their motivation to engage in classroom learning.

**Index Terms**—animated, videos, learners, vocabulary, classroom, media

## I. INTRODUCTION

The process of learning a language always involves expanding one's vocabulary. Learning without a vocabulary would be impossible. Vocabulary learning is not limited to memorizing single words; it also involves understanding words in a realistic and meaningful context. Kasper and Wagner (2018) point out that word knowledge develops in a dynamic and situational manner as a result of user and context interactions. However, young students may find it difficult to comprehend the meaning of new vocabulary words in classes where traditional methods are only in use. Despite the fact that many studies have been conducted on vocabulary, few researchers have identified the most efficient methods of teaching vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary to young students presents a variety of difficulties, the majority of which are due to the differences between the characteristics of young students and the methods of teaching that teachers use (Cameron, 2003). Thus, learning media are now widely used in teaching vocabulary, especially animated ones, as a result of a significant technological paradigm change that alters both how teachers conduct their classes and how students learn. Animated videos suit well for stimulating young learners' interests and imaginations. Bishop and Cates (2001) state that animated videos are preferred as instructional materials over static images because they have entertaining sounds and music to go along with their colorful personalities and eye-catching visual presentations. In addition, presenting language in meaningful situations helps learners understand and interpret meanings. Since children are keen observers, they may understand and interpret language using contextual cues including gestures, body language, actions, intonation, imitation, and messages. (Slatterly & Willis, 2001; Cabrera & Martinez, 2001; Brewster et al., 2002).

According to the researcher's observations and information gained from 20 years of teaching English in EFL settings, most EFL learners, particularly young learners, avoid engaging in daily interactive situations. Their avoidance is due to their poor vocabulary knowledge, which is one of the main reasons. One of the most common EFL learners' difficulties in properly acquiring vocabulary is that EFL teachers employ ineffective teaching strategies and techniques. This study aims to find an effective strategy for teaching vocabulary in the classroom to enhance learners' engagement. Thus, it attempts to examine the effectiveness of utilizing animated videos as learning media integrated with context-based learning. Based on this objective, the study intends to answer this question: Is context-based learning integration with animated video an adequate strategy for teaching new vocabulary items to young learners? Students who are engaged and motivated often work hard to achieve their best in the classroom. Students could find animated learning films to be highly interesting, particularly EFL young learners. According to Rahayu and Kristiyantoro (2011), employing animated videos in the classroom can improve both learning outcomes and learning experiences. Because animated



videos catch students' attention, many senses are engaged, notably the ears and eyes, allowing students to absorb the information being conveyed. Children have a low level of concentration, so there should be a variety of activities to hold their interest. Young learners are more likely to concentrate on watching animated films than older students because of their brightness and colorfulness. Moreover, EFL teachers contextually need to connect vocabulary with learners' everyday situations as well.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The function of the media as a messenger is crucial for engaging students because the teacher cannot produce effective communication for the learning process alone. A successful learning process is one that enables students to use all of their senses effectively during learning activities. The integration of media into the learning process will create meaningful experiences for young learners while also making abstract concepts more real. Thus, using learning media in young EFL classes becomes crucial for enhancing their engagement in classroom learning, particularly visual stimulation. With no doubt, colorful visual presentations could capture young learners' attention and make the learning experience more engaging. Creating engaging and interesting classroom learning is helpful for learners to share their likes and dislikes because they usually have more opportunities to use their mother tongue outside classroom contexts than the target language.

### A. *Contextualizing Language Instruction*

The purpose of the contextualized language instruction method is to teach the target language to young students by giving them contextualized and meaningful texts rather than discrete grammar rules and isolated linguistic constructions (Adair-Hauck & Cumo-Johanssen, 1997). Teachers are attempting to contextualize their instruction within the students' lives by developing materials and activities that reflect students' backgrounds, interests, and experiences to enable students to interact with their lives (Hotchinson & Waters in Kusumawati, 2017). Therefore, it is appropriate for young learners to understand the meaning of language by being exposed to authentic usage of language that connects them with their everyday situations. In other words, it makes learning more meaningful, engaging, memorable, and applicable to real-life situations. According to Sinaga (2018), materials should be contextualized based on the students' experiences, circumstances, and first languages.

### B. *Contextualizing Vocabulary Learning*

It is important to emphasize that vocabulary is the core of EFL learning; hence, contextualized vocabulary instruction is crucial. It is supported by Brown in Rohayati (2013), who affirms that contextualization is essential for enhancing language learners' retention and attention, such as through providing storylines, recognizable events and people, and engaging in regular, everyday discussions. Besides, Paul in Rohayati (2013) also affirms that giving learners a relevant context helps them learn more effectively since it allows them to concentrate on the meaning rather than the structure of the words. The reason for utilizing contextualization as a vocabulary teaching strategy is that it can create a real atmosphere when using the words. It happens as a result of the words that are presented as daily words. Thus, Siangwan and Abhakorn's (2016) findings suggest that contextualized vocabulary instruction helps learners' memory by surrounding them with clues to enhance word recognition.

### C. *Animated Videos as Learning Media*

The process of learning is a set of complicated processes that need to be supported by the media. Media is something that is utilized to transmit information and instructional material (Wahyuni, 2013). The media is referred to as learning media if it contains a message or information with an instructional or learning aim. Thus, learning media is a tool that can be used within or outside of the classroom to support and aid students' learning experiences. According to Sadiman et al. (2008), instructional media is anything that can be utilized to transmit a message from the presenter to the recipient in order to pique students' interests, concerns, and attention in a way that facilitates learning. The technical, mechanical, and electronic components of the media are the most obvious characteristics that determine its purpose, form, and other physical traits (Kozma, 1991).

The function of the media as a messenger is crucial for engaging students because the teacher cannot produce effective communication for the learning process alone. A successful learning process is one that enables students to use all of their senses effectively during learning activities. The integration of media into the learning process will create meaningful experiences for young learners while also making abstract concepts more real (Permana, 2016). Moreover, during the learning process, the media could stimulate students' interests, emotions, and thoughts (Yuningsih et al., 2018). Oktradiksa and Agung (2017) and Karimah et al. (2020) found that learning media has recently had an effect on students' performance in developing speaking skills. The selection of suitable media for learning English influences both short-term and long-term goals of reaching maximum learning results, as the teacher desires them to be. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the instructor to choose the appropriate media that are meant to enhance the quality of learning English as a foreign language and achieve the purpose of learning. Using learning media in young EFL classes becomes crucial for enhancing their engagement in classroom learning, particularly the use of visual stimulation. With no doubt, colorful visual presentations could capture young learners' attention and make the learning experience more engaging.

Animation, in general, can be described as the process used to make still images appear to move. According to Harrison and Hummell (2010), animation is defined as the quick presentation of a number of still images designed to provide the illusion of motion. They went on to say that animated videos can improve students' knowledge of and skills with a variety of educational materials. With the advancement of technology today, animation videos can offer visual displays that significantly enhance the effectiveness of the learning process and outcomes. Animated videos are widely used to teach a variety of subjects. People tend to respond to moving objects, so animated messages are more likely to catch their attention than still ones (Schwartz, 2003). Because it's important to keep in mind that teaching children a foreign language at a young age has the goal of instilling in them the idea that learning a language is enjoyable (Pujiani et al., 2022; Cameron, 2001; Rixon et al., 1991; Slatterly & Willis, 2001; Brewster et al., 2002).

To enhance the process of learning and teaching, EFL teachers need to investigate more effective media to enrich learning situations. Audio-visual media can stimulate students' thoughts, feelings, concerns, and willingness so that teaching and learning processes occur (Sudjana & Rivai, 2011). The utilization of videos in English instruction is growing in popularity. In fact, video is one of many types of educational media that can be utilized to support the learning process. Yükselir and Kömür (2017) highlight how effective videos are at disseminating information in an interesting audiovisual design. They also demonstrated that video provides a realistic learning model, allowing pupils to learn practically rather than abstractly. Thus, watching films combines common elements like settings, action, emotions, gestures, etc., which serve as a significant stimulant for language production and practice. Additionally, young children enjoy watching animated videos because they are interesting, and the visual context helps them understand better.

When a student is more motivated to learn a language, their performance and presentation are improved and superior to those of other students. Thus, visual aids can help make teaching and learning more engaging and interactive. It is expected that the use of animated movies will increase student motivation to communicate, comprehend the material, and improve their learning outcomes. Children enjoy watching animated movies, which are developed by turning still images into moving ones (Syarifudin & Wahyu, 2013; Buchari et al., 2015). Thus, animated videos can be adapted to the demands of young learners and related to the growth of empathy in young viewers in order to effectively communicate with young audiences.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Both descriptive and experimental methods were used in the investigation. Thus, for attaining reliable results, both qualitative and quantitative data analysis were used.

#### A. Participants

The participants of this study are Sudanese young children, whose age range is between seven and eight. Altogether, twenty males and females were randomly selected and assigned into two groups, group 'A' and group 'B'. Group 'A' is used to represent the control group, while Group 'B' is used to represent the experimental group. Participants in both groups had almost the same English background knowledge, so they had just completed Grade 1 of Book 1 of the national curriculum English book. They were familiar with the English alphabet and a few vocabulary of content words' type.

The participants in both groups used to be taught the same vocabulary items, but through two different methods. Participants in group A used to be taught new vocabulary items via a context-based learning method. While the participants in Group B were taught new vocabulary items via context-based learning integrated with animated videos (video films, movies, and cartoons). It means the experimental group's participants watched short videos that introduced vocabulary items that were made for the purpose of this research. Presenting new vocabulary items via context-based learning refers to introducing the meanings of these items using authentic materials that represent events from everyday life and the everyday speech patterns of native speakers. Presenting vocabulary in context integrated with animated video refers to introducing their meanings in context (using authentic materials to represent events from everyday life) with the aid of animated video.

#### B. Data Collection

The instruments of data collection consisted of oral achievement tests (pre and post) and a questionnaire. The pre-test was designed to determine to what extent the participants in both groups were homogeneous in understanding new vocabulary items when they were introduced via traditional methods. A pre-test is conducted after the participants of both groups spend four weeks learning vocabulary via the context-based learning method. Since they were described as beginners with the least exposure to the English language, few words were taught in the traditional method. The treatment period took almost 4 weeks, and the students were taught three units of the book. At the end of the treatment period, the posttest was used to assess the vocabulary development of the students in both groups.

The pre-test was applied to see if there was any significant difference in both groups' proficiency levels. Both pre- and post-tests are designed to be verbally tested. The items were rearranged in the post-test to prevent individuals from experiencing practice effects. The tests are vocabulary tests; each one consists of 30 questions that intend to test content words' type (noun, verb, adverb, and adjective). Twenty of these questions are multi-choice, and ten are wh-questions. Despite the fact that the study covers both content and function words, only content words are considered to be

analyzed for the purpose of this study. To be statistically acceptable, the test-and-retest technique was used to measure the reliability of the test. In this respect, a pilot was applied to a sample of seven pupils from the population of the study. The two tests' correlation coefficient was shown to be 0.84, which was appropriate for the purposes of the research.

Another instrument was the questionnaire, which was designed to reflect experimental group participants' experiences with animated videos as learning media for teaching vocabulary. The questionnaire posed five closed-ended questions about participants' attitudes toward animated videos as learning media, their appropriateness for vocabulary learning, and their influence on learners' performance. Pearson's correlation is used to calculate statistical evidence:  $R = 0.85$ , validity =  $\sqrt{\text{reliability}}$  = 0.93. Therefore, these findings are supported by statistics. Additionally, two ELT experts evaluated the two instruments. The instruments were put into their final draft based on their feedback.

#### IV. FINDINGS

The following will make an attempt to answer the question raised in this study. It also highlights the aspects that characterize context-based learning integrated with animated video as a learning media that can be utilized to enhance young EFL learners' engagement in learning vocabulary. That is, to propose some recommendations that may be utilized for establishing classroom interaction that interestingly engages young learners in the classroom's vocabulary learning.

##### A. Data Analysis

It was found that the experimental group made significant progress while the control group made little progress in the overall analysis of the comparison between the pre- and post-tests and the questionnaire responses. This is due to the adoption of an experience of teaching vocabulary in which the new vocabulary items are presented via context-based learning integrated with animated videos (treatment). This learning experience interestingly enables young learners to pick out the meaning of words. It helps the young learners practice what they have been routinely taught.

TABLE 1  
PRE-TEST ANALYSIS

Group	N	Mean	Std Deviation	t	Sig(2- tailed)
Group A	10	11.35	2.824	.000	1.000
Group B	10	11.08	2.228	.000	1.000

As it has been shown in Table 1, there was no significant difference between the scores of the experimental group ( $M = 11.08$ ,  $SD = 2.228$ ) and the control group ( $M = 11.35$ ,  $SD = 2.824$ ),  $t = 1.000$ ,  $p > .05$ . The significance ( $P$ ) was greater than 0.05, which means statistically there was no significant difference in the mean scores between Group A (the control group) and Group B (the experimental group) in the pre-tests.

TABLE 2  
POST-TEST ANALYSIS

Group	N	Mean	Std Deviation	t	Sig(2- tailed)
Group A	10	11.84	2.029	.000	-23.684-
Group B	10	22.18	2.753	.000	-23.684-

In Table 2, it has been shown that in the post-tests, Group A (the control group) and Group B (the experimental group) had significantly different mean scores. The scores of the experimental group ( $M = 22.18$ ,  $SD = 2.753$ ) and the control group ( $M = 11.84$ ,  $SD = 2.029$ ),  $t = 23.684$ ,  $p < .05$ . The significance level ( $P$ ) was less than 0.05, which indicates there were significant differences. This significant difference in favor of Group B is a result of the use of context-based learning integrated with animated video. Thus, integrating animated video with the context-based learning strategy improved learners' comprehension of new vocabulary items more than using context-based learning separately.

##### B. Content Words' Analysis in Group B

In spite of the fact that the study covered both content and function words, only content words were used to be analyzed for the purpose of this study. The following figures show their performance in the content words in the pre- and post-tests for Group B. "S" is used in the following figures to refer to a student.

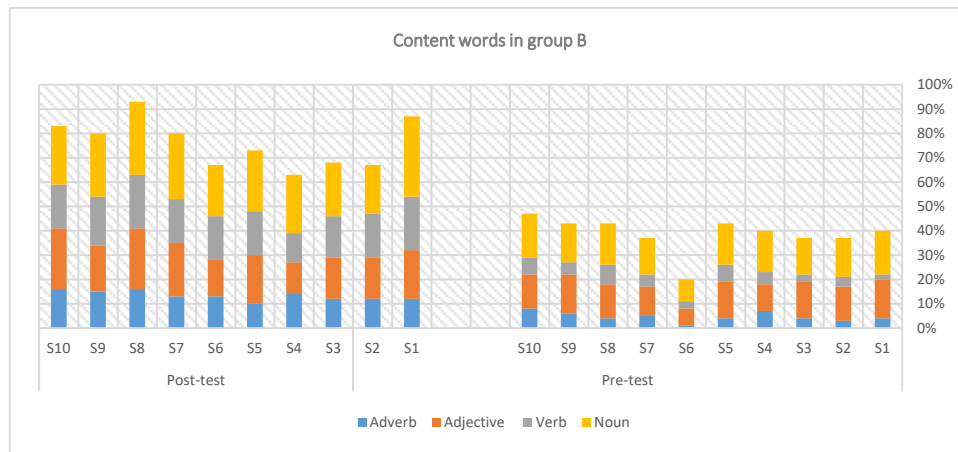


Figure 1.

The above Figure 1 shows the results of group B's participants (the experimental group) in pre- and post-tests. It obviously confirmed what was already proven in tables 1&2 that there are significant differences between participants' performance in the pre- and post-test. The remarkable progress in the post-test is due to integrating animated videos with context-based learning in teaching new vocabulary items. Thus, the participants' performance in the post-test in content words is significantly different from that in the pre-test. The participants' performance in the post-test improved in all word classes (noun, verb, adverb, and adjective). But their performance in verbs and adverbs remarkably progressed compared to their performance in the pre-test.

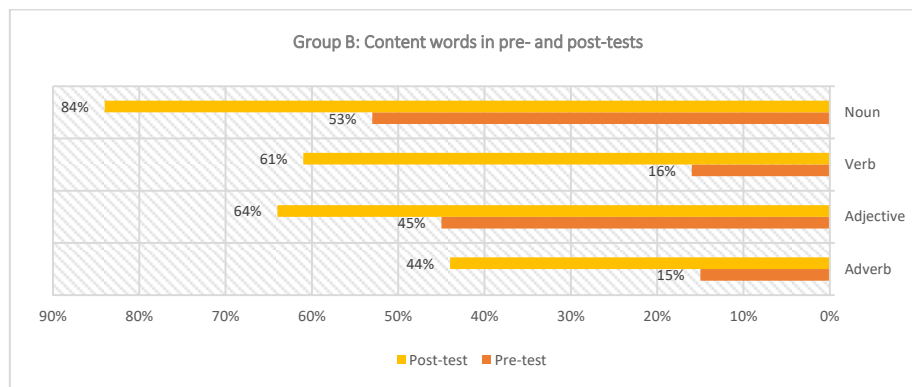


Figure 2.

The result in Figure 2 showed that there is a difference in students' learning outcomes after the new learning process (applying treatment). It indicates that students in the experimental group possess better performance in vocabulary learning compared to their performance in the pre-test. Participants made progress in the four word classes (noun, verb, adjective, and adverb), but their progress in the verb and adverb was remarkable. It means that using animated videos in vocabulary learning items is effective, particularly with verbs and adverbs.

### C. Content Words' Analysis in Group A

The following Figures 3 and 4 show the performance of the control group's participants in the content words in the pre- and post-tests.

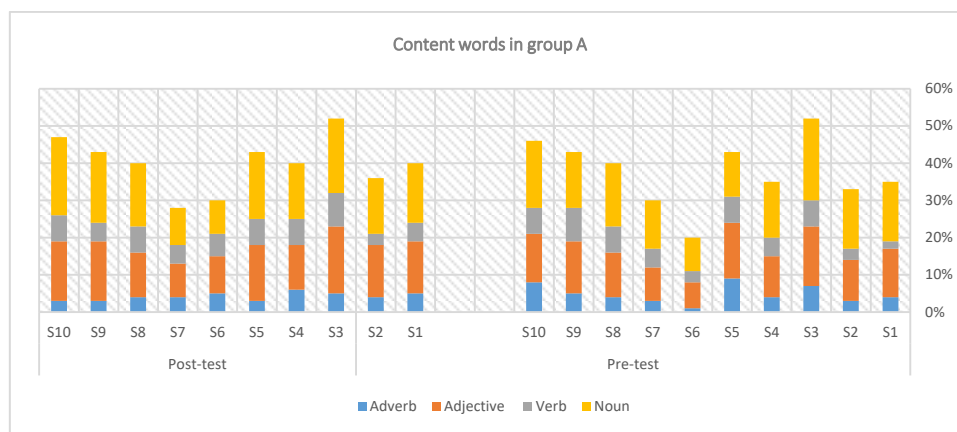


Figure 3.

The above Figure 3 indicates that the performance of participants' pre- and post-tests shows no significant difference. This result conformed to the results in Tables 1 and 2, in which the scores of the participants show no significant differences. That may be due to depending on the same teaching strategy (context-based learning), as well as the fact that there is no new factor that influences their performance and knowledge.

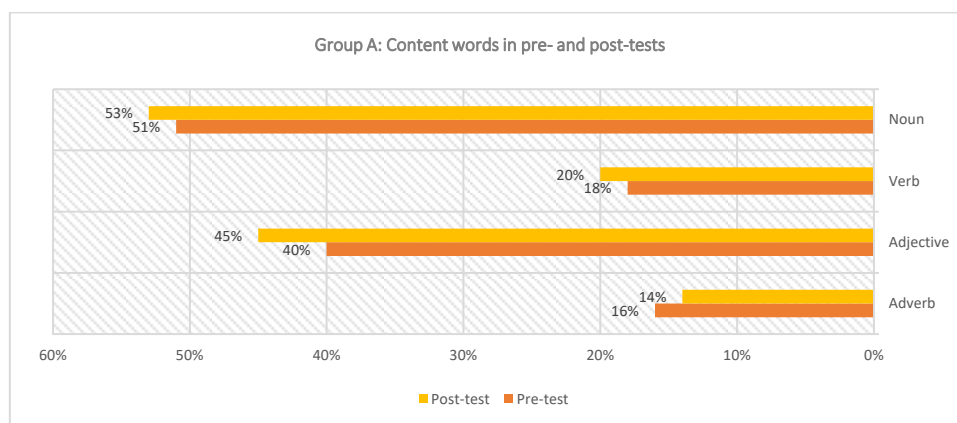


Figure 4.

The result in Figure 4 indicates that there is no significant difference in the control group's participants' performance in pre- and post-tests. Their performance is less than 50% in the four word classes except noun. Moreover, very little progress is recorded for verbs, from 40% in the pre-test to 45% in the post-test, and for adverbs, from 14% in the pre-test to 16% in the post-test. This may be due to the practice they do in the pre-test and again in the post-test.

#### D. Questionnaire's Analysis and Discussion

The questionnaire is designed to gather pupils' reactions to the use of animated video in vocabulary acquisition. It was only given to the experimental group participants after they had received the treatments. The questionnaire's questions are all closed-ended questions aimed at eliciting pupils' perspectives on the use of animated video. The questionnaire was made up of five statements about how animated videos affect vocabulary learning. As it has been shown, the participants who were taught via animated videos seemed to have a higher mean and higher scores than the other group. The questionnaire's result has shown that the majority of these participants agreed that learning via animated videos enhances vocabulary learning, increases learners' engagement, and makes classroom learning interactive and interesting. Since animated videos provide new vocabulary in contextualized visual representation, this helps young learners associate the new words with images, making it easier for them to understand and remember. According to Ridha et al. (2022), animated videos contextualize new words and their definitions, followed by graphical definitions, which all play a crucial role in assisting students to comprehend difficult words. Since Children who watch animation exhibit advanced cognitive and linguistic development (Ghilzai et al., 2017; Yousaf et al., 2015), visual information in language is easier for children to understand, and animated messages are more likely to catch their attention than still ones.

The young learners interestingly interact with the notion of presenting learning items in a video show (animated learning). Instructors must employ inspiring methods to pique students' attention in their lessons; animated videos are suitable to be used as motivation in language, particularly for young learners. According to Shreesha and Tyagi (2016) and Egounleti et al. (2018), the animation inspires and motivates students for improved learning. Since animated videos present a variety of characteristics that are appropriate for young learners to increase their enthusiasm to learn English

(Laksmi et al., 2021; Khalidiyah, 2015). Moreover, animated videos are more effective at grabbing young learners' attention than conventional text-based materials because they make use of colors, shapes, and movement. In addition, Kamelia et al. (2019) found that children's boredom was reduced with animated films.

Animated videos incorporate elements such as vibrant visuals, colorful characters, and dynamic storytelling that encourage learners to actively engage with the content. Salman et al. (2021) found that utilizing animated videos as an instructional tool encouraged students to participate in class activities and to enjoy and feel comfortable speaking English. Nuansari's (2021) study has shown that the use of animated videos is beneficial because the engaging content of animation films piques pupils' interest in creating their own sentences to narrate the story. Thus, animated videos are an effective strategy for enhancing students' classroom verbal engagement.

## V. LIMITATION AND IMPLICATIONS

The limitation of this study is that it applied the treatment to a small number of participants in the experimental group for a short period of time. In addition, the study only used the content words' type for examining animated videos' effectiveness in learning vocabulary. Future researchers should consider applying the treatment to more participants throughout the school year, covering both word types (content and function words).

One of the most notable implications that can be inferred from this study is that a good knowledge of vocabulary has a great effect on the learners' improvement in other aspects of language. Learners' improvement in vocabulary learning enhances young learners' engagement in classroom learning. Based on this study's findings, it can be concluded that contextualized vocabulary learning integrated with animated videos creates realistic and meaningful learning situations that enhance learning positively.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The goal of teaching any language is to make it possible for students to interact with others. Word knowledge develops in a dynamic and situational manner as a result of user and context interactions. This study is to examine the effectiveness of utilizing context-based learning integrated with animated videos in teaching new vocabulary items for EFL young learners to enhance their engagement in classroom activities. Statistically, utilizing context-based learning integrated with animated videos in teaching vocabulary proved its effectiveness and improved young learners' overall learning experiences. Hence, three common results have been shown. The first is that the learners enjoy watching contextual animated videos because of the variety of characteristics that they have. The second result is that contextual animated videos are an effective learning media that motivates young learners to engage positively in classroom activities. The third result was that the contextual animated video had a good effect on the learners' attitudes towards classroom interaction as an enjoyable task. According to these results, the use of contextual animated videos in English lessons, particularly for vocabulary learning, has a substantial impact on increasing learners' comprehension of the language and their ability to participate in class activities. Animated videos are a better way for EFL teachers to engage their students as early as possible, especially young ones. Exposing learners to contextual animated videos facilitates their engagement and helps them seem natural when using the foreign language.

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# Swear Words From the Indramayu Javanese-Indonesia in the Novel *Aib dan Nasib*

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**Abstract**—Swear words are impolite words or words that make other people offended or get angry. Every region has its' own particular swear words, especially in Indramayu. The swear words used by the Javanese people of Indramayu have various types and functions. Therefore, this study describes the types and functions of Indramayu Javanese swear words in the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto. The result reported nine types of swear words in the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto. They are 1) excretion in the word of tahi; 2) death in the word of mampus; 3) body function term in the word of kontrol, memek, endas, kuping; 4) religious term in the word of dedemit, setan; 5) mother in law in the word of telembuk, lonte, perung, jalang; 6) sex term in the word of ngentot, rabenan; 7) animal term in the word of kirik, ketek; 8) imbecilic term in the word of dungu, goblok, koplok, cecunguk, campleng; 9) general term in the word of, sinting, lancang, bangsat. Meanwhile, the functions of those swear words in the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto are: to create attention; to discredit; to provoke; to create interpersonal identification; and to provide catharsis.

**Index Terms**—swear words, form, function, the novel *Aib dan Nasib*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The culture of a society reflects the communication behavior of a particular society. It means that people will behave like the cultural environment in which they are located and have characteristics that are not the same as other people from different cultures. It is in line with Tajfel (2010) statement as the founder of identity theory, interpreting the characteristics of society as a personal understanding of people as elements of group members who have similar emotions and values. Thus, the value of society can be seen from the language used because the language main role is as a means of communication. Language as a medium or means of communication is the main thing used to transfer information, ideas, and feelings to other humans. Therefore, language is present as a way to establish interaction, communication, and socializing in people's lives. Furthermore, Wardhaugh (2000) explains that language is a tool to express ideas or feelings to establish good communication. Thus, both individually and in groups, humans have been using language to communicate. Good communication is communication where the listener can understand the speaker's ideas. Speaking of good communication, Gamble and Gamble defines the term communicator as a person who builds relationships with other people in communication (2013). Thus, communication involves many variables such as gender, culture, intelligence, belief, and so on (Ainurokhim, 2009, p. 1).

Language is not only a means of communication but also a means of self-expression. It is because one of the functions of language is expressive. The expressive function of language is to express feelings to the interlocutor. A person can express his feelings in various ways. One way to express emotions and feelings in conversation is through harsh words or swear words (Sarnika, 2018). Swearing is described as the use of offensive language and occurs in almost all cultures (Stephens et al., 2009) and is associated with social threats (Wabnitz, 2012) and is a strong physiological response caused by affective effects (Bowers, 2011). In addition, being offensive is also an unavoidable impact when swearing (Goddard, 2015, pp. 2-3; Stone et al., 2015). However, on the other hand, swearing has an adaptive nature that functions as a sign of solidarity or shows intimacy (Pinker, 2008). Swearing can also reduce pain (Stephens et al., 2009; Stephens & Umland, 2011; Stephens et al., 2020). Therefore, swear words should be used in a non-technical sense (Ljung, 2011). Swear words are thus generally used to express strong emotions, mainly to express anger and frustration (Vingerhoets, 2013). Furthermore, swear words are one type of affective word, which is a word that is always related to who the speaker is, when and where, and when spoken, it will contain emotional feelings by spilling feelings through cursing (Putra, 2015, p. 9).

Swearing is the use of taboo language to reveal the speaker's emotional state and communicate the information to the listener (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). So, swearing is meant to convey connotative or emotional meaning. Thus, people swear because they want to express themselves, and it is an expressive act to express frustration with others, frustration with oneself, show solidarity, or even to cheer someone up (Bryne, 2017) as well as to express feelings of anger, sadness, emotion, stress, confusion, and so on. Therefore, swearing is to vent emotions, especially anger and frustration. So, in the current context, swearing is understood as the use of language that has the potential to be "offensive, inappropriate, unpleasant, or unacceptable in certain social contexts" (Fägersten in Schweinberger in Schweinberger, 2018). Meanwhile, Finn divides swearing into propositional swearing used by speakers who consciously and genuinely intend to swear (Finn, 2017), and non-propositional swearing, automatic, reflexive, and non-creative (Jay, 2000, p. 33). In addition, Horan argues that swearing refers to a series of communicative activities that cause variations in lexical sources (2011). There are various types of swear words. Most of the types of swearing that are often used are related to sexual activity, excretion (Isaacs, 2014, p. 1), racial or ethnic insults, and blasphemy (Brown & Attardo, 2005, p. 120). In addition, Leach divides swearing into three types; 1) profanity related to sex and excretion, 2) blasphemy related to religion, and 3) swear words that use animal names (Yang, 2009, p. 88). Each type of swearing has its motive. Andersson grouped swearing motifs into psychological, social, and linguistic motives (Karjalainen, 2002, p. 24). Prokhorova et al. (2019) reported that nouns and adjectives are the most widely used in pronouncing harsh words or swear words.

Swear words in sociolinguistic studies are included in the topic of language variation. Yule (2010) explains that sociolinguistics is included in linguistics, which involves the relationship of language to all things in society, including values and social phenomena. Sociolinguistics thus deals with the study of the relationship between language and society to better understand language structure and function in communication (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 13). Furthermore, Holmes added that the main interest of sociolinguistics is to describe the different ways of speaking of a person in different social contexts and to explain the use of language in social life to convey social messages (2013). Furthermore, Trudgill (2000) also mentions that sociolinguistics is centered on cultural phenomena's influence on language behavior. Homby defines language as a spoken and written communication system used by people from certain countries (2000). Furthermore, Mesthrie et al. (2000) stated that language conveys meaning or ideas about certain events or entities. It shows the speaker's social group background, such as social class, status, origin, gender, and group of age. Thus, the way people use language in different social contexts will produce different dialects for different layers of society. Different society layers include age, gender, social class, ethnicity, and cultural group (Howe, 2012).

Literature can be considered a cultural archive because literature is born from the results of community social interactions. According to Eagleton (2011), literature can be defined as 'imaginative' writing in the sense of fiction. This means that literature is an imaginative mindset that comes from a person's imagination or real events that may occur in real life. That way, understanding the culture of a society does not always have to go directly to society but can be done by exploring literary works. Excavation or study of literary works will obtain views of a culture that lives in a particular society. Thus, literary works, language, culture, and society are interrelated. It is in line with Wellek (2018), who stated that literary works and society have a close relationship. Through literary works, we can know the culture, traditions, and communication patterns in society. One of the literary works that also raises many issues of culture and behavior of a society is the novel.

A novel, according to Hazlitt is defined as a story written based on experiences, habits, traits, and a person and is usually a reflection of society (Iranmanesh, 2013, p. 130). Hazlitt's definition is still too general because it includes all other types of prose Throughout history, the term 'novel' has been applied to writings covering many topics, using many and varied styles, and which have achieved different results - critically, publicly, aesthetically, and economically (Goodyer, 2008, p. 11). Thus, the novel emphasizes individuality for both the characters and the reader. The novel tells the story of characters who are forged through various kinds of conflicts and suffering (Black, 2019).

Novels are literary works that many people most like. One of the famous novels in Indramayu for being the first winner of the 2019 Jakarta Arts Council Novel Contest is the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto. The novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto is a novel that describes the most vulgar representation of the various lives of rural communities that occur in Indramayu, especially in Tegalurung Village with all its problems. The novel displays various events and various conflicts in the lives of people who are in middle to lower social status. The characters in the novel are in contact with various feelings, namely the effects of events and behavior around them. It gives rise to a lot of anger, irritation, sadness, disappointment, and so on. So that much swearing is made by the characters in the novel. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a research study on swearing in novels. Several studies examine swearing in the fields of language, health, and law, including research conducted by Sommerstein (2008), Cressman (2009), Gray (2012), Cavazza and Guidetti (2014), Drange (2014), Han and Wang (2014), Vicens (2014), Mansor et al. (2014), Chun et al. (2015), Cruz (2019), Vaattovaara and Peterson (2019), and research by Briechle et al. (2019). Thus, this study aims to describe the form and function of Indramayu's Javanese swear words in Minanto's novel *Aib dan Nasib*.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative method. According to Mackey and Gass (2005, p. 162), qualitative thus, this qualitative descriptive study analyzed the form and function of Indramayu's Javanese swear words in Minanto's novel

*Aib dan Nasib*. Furthermore, this study uses a content analysis strategy. According to Harwood and Garry (2003), content analysis is a method for analyzing the content of various data, such as visual and verbal data. Furthermore, content analysis can be used with various sources of textual data, visual designs (photo or video), and audio data. In this study, the data in the form of words, sayings, phrases, quotes, and dialogues are contained in the novel. This is based on Cresswell's (2018) opinion, which states that data is information obtained from research data sources that are used as a basis for analysis. Meanwhile, this research uses the data source in the form of the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto. Furthermore, the data collection technique used was the reading data technique with the following steps: 1) read the novel *Aib dan Nasib*; 2) mark the dialogue of the characters in the novel that contains swearing; 3) record all the curses obtained; 4) classify and analyze swear words based on their form and function. Meanwhile, according to Miles and Huberman, the data analysis technique used in this study, according to Miles and Huberman, consists of three steps: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions, and verification (2014).

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion consist of two parts. The first part discusses the types of swear words in Indramayu's Javanese language in Minanto's *Aib dan Nasib* novel, and the second concerns the function of swear words in Minanto's *Aib dan Nasib* novel.

#### A. Types of Indramayu Javanese Swear Words in the Minanto's Novel *Aib dan Nasib*

Based on data collection that has been carried out using various methods and data collection techniques that have been described, data on swear words spoken by characters in the novel are as follows.

TABLE 1  
THE LIST OF SWEAR WORDS IN *AIB DAN NASIB* NOVEL

No	Swearing	Frequency	No	Swearing	Frequency
1	Kirik	7	26	Medit	1
2	Telembuk	7	27	Jalang	1
3	Goblok	8	28	Campleng	1
4	Kampret	11	29	Lancang	1
5	Memek	1	30	Gila	2
6	Kontol	4	31	Bodoh	4
7	Sinting	16	32	Rabenan	1
8	Koplok	1	33	Sialan	4
9	Tolol	4	34	Setan	2
10	Eand	4	35	Pengecut	2
11	Bangsot	9	36	Pantat	1
12	Tahi	2	37	Mampus	2
13	Lonte	3	38	Bocah blesak	1
14	Kuping	1	39	Bocah bebal	1
15	Ketek	1	40	Dasar bocah	1
16	Cecunguk/ si Cungkuk	6	41	Penis	1
17	Ngentot	2	42	Penjahat kelamin	1
18	Celeng	1	43	Sekarep endasmu	1
19	Dedemit	2	44	Bibirnya memble	1
20	Bacot	4	45	Enggak gableg	1
21	Gembel	1	46	Bodo amat	1
22	Anjing/Njing	13	47	Jijik	1
23	Dungu	1	48	Perung	1
24	Bego	1	49	Rakus	1
25	Bajingan	6			

Based on the table, forty-nine kinds of swear words were found. The most common swear words spoken by the characters in the novel are the word "crazy" as many as 16, the word "dog" as many as 13, the word "kampret" as many as 11, the word "ass" as many as 9, and the word "stupid" as many as 8. Swear words based on a combination of the theory of Wardhaugh (2006) and Hughes (2006) in the Novel *Aib dan Nasib* are described as follows.

#### (a). Excretion

This type of swear word is derived from human waste or excretion. This waste or excretion is considered dirty and unclean. An example of this type of swear word is "tahi". The word "tahi" in Indramayu Javanese means human waste. This kind of swear words can be found in the following quote:

"Dia bau *tahi* and pasti aku akan enek". (Minanto, 2020, p. 198)

"He smells like dung and sure, I'll be nauseous". (Minanto, 2020, p. 198)

#### (b). Death

This type of swear word is a swear word that is related to the death or something that will happen when a person dies. An example of this kind of swear word found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib" is "mampus". The word "mampus" in Indramayu Javanese means dead. The kind of death swear word can be seen in the following quote:

"**Mampus** kau, Njing!" umpat Bagong. (Minanto, 2020, p. 236)

"Just go dead, Njing!" cursed Bagong. (Minanto, 2020, p. 236)

(c). *Body Function Term*

This kind of swear word is a swear word that is related to the hidden human part of the body used to insult other people. There are various types of body function terms of a swear word found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib", they are "kontol", "memek", "bacot", "endas" and "kuping". The word "kontol" and "memek" in Indramayu Javanese means male and female genitalia. While, the word "bacot" means mouth, the word "endas" means head, and the word "kuping" means telinga. These swear words are found in the following quotes:

"Nah, sudah kubilang kalau lagi ngentot enggak usah ah uh ah uh. **Kupingmu** jadi budek!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 66)

"**Bacot!**" "Bodo amat dengan HP-mu. Kau sudah memukul kepalaku." "**Bacot!**". (Minanto, 2020, p. 168)

"well, I told you if you're having sex, you don't need to ah uh ah uh, your ears go numb!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 66)

"Too much talking!". "So stupid with your HP. You hit me in the head." "Too much talking". (Minanto, 2020, p. 168)

(d). *Religious Matter*

Swearing is not only related to something bad. The religious matter that has good intentions is also used for swearing. Religious words are usually uttered to express surprise. The religious matter swear words found in the Novel "Aib dan Nasib" realized in the word "dedemit", and "setan". Those words are found in the following quote:

"Njing! Anjing! Sudah kubilang dia seperti **dedemit!**," kata Bagong Badrudin. (Minanto, 2020, p. 161)

"**Setan!** Ngapain kau di sini?" bentak Susanto setengah terkejut. (Minanto, 2019, p. 161)

"Njing! Such a dog! I told you he was like a devil!," said Bagong Badrudin. (Minanto, 2020, p. 161)

"Devil! What are you doing here?" Snapped Susanto half surprised. (Minanto, 2019, p. 161)

(e). *Mother in Law*

The swear word related to prostitution describes women who have more relationships with men. The swear word mother in law found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib" has many variations such as the word "telembuk", "lonte", "perung" and "jalong". These swear words have the same meaning, namely prostitutes. This can be seen in the following quote:

"Hei, kau **telembuk bosok!** Tunggu saja gubukmu kubikin bobrok!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 20)

"Lonte, semua keluargamu itu, Pak, **lonte! lonte!**" ujar Malina. (Minanto, 2020, p. 20)

"Dasar **perung!** Itulah mengapa Nurumubin selalu menganggapmu tolol Marlina". (Minanto, 2020, p. 237)

"Kirim gajimu sekarang juga, **jalong!**". (Minanto, 2020, p. 237)

"hey, you chubby bitch! Just wait for your hut to fall apart!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 20)

"Bitch, all your family, Sir, Bitch! Bitch!" shouted Marlina. (Minanto, 2020, p. 20)

"Bronze! That's why Nurumubin always thinks you're a fool, Marlina!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 237)

"send in your paycheck right now, bitch!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 237)

(f). *Sex Term*

The sexual issue should not be exposed in society. Therefore, sexual activity in society is an embarrassing topic, so it is often used for swearing. The words used to swear are derived from sexual activity. The sex term swear words found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib" have many variations, such as the words "ngentot", and "rabenan." The swear words mean a person who engages in sexual activity. It is presented in the following quote:

"Nang," sapa Marlina. "Kalau kalian seandg **rabenan** dengan perempuan, kalian harus hati-hati. Jangan sekali-kali kalian **metu** di dalam. (Minanto, 2020, p. 60)

"Bagaimana bisa kau **ngentot** dengan perempuan sinting seperti itu?!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 197)

"Nang," said Marlina. "If you are having sex with women, you have to be careful. Don't you ever go inside". (Minanto, 2020, p. 60)

"How can you fuck with a crazy girl like that?!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 197)

(g). *Animal Term*

This type of swear word is a swear word that uses the names of animals such as dogs. The animal term swear words found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib" are taken from several types of animals such as "kampret", "kirik", "ketek" and "anjing." The swear word "kampret" in Indramayu Javanese means bat. Meanwhile, the word "kirik" means dog, while the word "ketek" means monkey. These swear words can be seen in the following quote.

"**Kampret** kau ini, Inem!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 23)

"**Kirik** kau, Pang! Keluarlah atau kudobrak pintu ini!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 178)

**Anjiing! Anjiing! Anjiing!** Bagong Badrudin baru berhenti mengumpat and melepaskan kepalan tangannya saat Boled Boleng mengeluarkan HP dari saku. (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"Njing! Kirik! **Ketek!** Lepaskan aku atau kupanggil Susanto untuk menghajarmu!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 256)

"You bastard, Inem!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 23)

"Dog you, Pang! Get out or I'll break down this door!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 178)

dog! dog! dog! Bagong Badrudin just stopped cursing and released his fists when Boled Boleng took out his cellphone from his pocket. (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"dog! dog! Armpit! Let me go or I'll call Susanto to beat you up!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 256)

#### (h). Imbecilic Term

The term imbecilic comes from the word imbecile which means the same as stupid or idiot. These swear words are associated with a disability or low level of intelligence. The imbecilic term swear words found in the novel "Aib dan Nasib" consist of many terms such as "dungu", "goblok", "koplok", "tolol", "bego", "cecunguk", and "campleng." The swear words "dungu", "goblok", "koplok", "tolol" and "bego" in Indramayu Javanese means stupid. Meanwhile, the word "cecunguk" means petty criminal. Meanwhile, the word "campleng" refers to people who are not good at doing something. These swear words can be seen in the following quote.

"Sampean **dungu** sekali, Pak! Itu poster partai, tidak mungkin sampai jual tanah". (Minanto, 2020, p. 15)

"**Dasar goblok!**" kalau jadi bangkai di jalanan, siapa mau mengurusmu?" umpat Mang Sota lebih lantang. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Minggat kau! **Dasar cecunguk!**". (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"Ini kenapa? Ini kenapa bisa sampai begini? **Tolol!**". (Minanto, 2020, p. 118)

"**Koplok!** Kirik sampean!" And ketika Marlina menoleh, Baridin pun memutar arah, kemudian berbelok ke gang. (Minanto, 2020, p. 249)

"You're so stupid, sir! It's a party poster, it's impossible to sell the land". (Minanto, 2020, p. 15)

"You idiot!" If you become a corpse on the street, who will care for you?" Mang Sota cursed louder. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Get away from you! You bastard!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"Why is this? Why did this come to this? Stupid!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 118)

"Koplok! Drop you!" And when Marlina turned her head, Baridin turned around, then turned into the alley. (Minanto, 2020, p. 249)

#### (i). General Term

This type of swear word is a swear word that uses general terms. Examples of swear words that include general terms are the word "gila". The general term swear words found in the novel Aib and Nasib consist of many terms such as "edan", "gila", "sialan", "lancang", "bangsat" and "bajingan". The swear words "edan" and "sinting" in Indramayu Javanese mean Crazy. The swear word "lancang" denotes an impolite person. Meanwhile, the swear words "bangsat" and "bajingan" mean criminals. Meanwhile, the swear word "sial" means an unlucky person. These swear words can be seen in the following quote.

"**Bangsat! Bajingan!**" umpat Kartono ketika hendak meraih persneling. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Silakan cuci-cuci lagi, Mba Eni. Perutku sudah dikuras habis." "**Sialan!**". (Minanto, 2020, p. 130)

"Bastard! Bastard!" cursed Kartono when trying to get into gear. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Please wash again, Mba Eni. My stomach has been drained completely." "Damn it!". (Minanto, 2020, p. 130)

Based on the explanation above, the swear words forms, according to the theory of Wardhaugh and Hughes are grouped into nine forms of swear words. They are excretion, death, body function term, religious matter, mother in law, sex term, animal term, imbecilic term, and general term. The number of swear words found in Minanto's novel Aib and Nasib is presented in the following table and figure.

TABLE 2  
THE TOTAL DATA OF SWEAR WORDS IN THE NOVEL AIB DAN NASIB

No.	Swearing Form	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	Excretion	2	1,29%
2	Death	2	1,29%
3	Body Function Term	17	10,97%
4	Religious Matter	5	3,23%
5	Mother in Law	10	6,45%
6	Sex Term	3	1,94%
7	Animal Terms	28	18,06%
8	Imbecilic Terms	36	23,23%
9	General Term	52	33,55%
Total		155	100,00%

As seen in the table above, the general term is the most common form of swearing by the characters in the novel. General terms appeared as many as 52 swears or 34%. This is because the form of the general term has many variations.

Next, followed by the imbecilic term spoken 36 times or 23%. The third highest order is animal terms that appear as many as 28 swears or 18% and then followed by body function terms spoken 17 times or 11%. Furthermore, namely mother in law found as many as 10 swearing or 7%, followed by religious matters as much as 5 swears or 3%. The next order, namely sex terms as much as 3 swears or 2%. Meanwhile, the curses that were spoken the least, namely excretion and death, were found with the same number, namely 2 swears each or 1%.

The topic of this research is a deepening, extension, and development of previous studies related to the form of swearing. If it is reviewed based on previous research as conducted by Twenge, VanLandingham, and W. Keith Campbell (2017) with the title "The Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television: Increases in the Use of Swear Words in American Books, 1950-2008", namely analyzed seven forms of swearing namely shit, fuck, motherfucker, cunt, piss, cocksucker, tits. Based on this research, it was found that the most common swear word, "motherfucker" was used 678 times. Furthermore, the second most frequently used sequence is "fuck" which is used 168 times and followed by cocksucker which is used as many as 110 swears. This study only focused on seven types of swearing in the film.

Further research by Gedik (2020) with the title "Translation of Turkish Swear Words in Subtitling: GORA". In this study, swearing was grouped into five categories according to Pinker's (2007) theory, namely: (1) descriptive swearing; (2) idiomatic swearing; (3) abusive swearing; (4) empathic swearing; and (5) cathartic swearing. This research reported that the most frequent swearing in English is the category of abusive swearing. In Turkish, the most common swearing category found is idiomatic swearing, with a total 16 swearings.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Slamet and Fatimatuzzahroh (2018) entitled "Swear Words among Males: The Social Function and Pragmatic Meanings". In this study, swearing was analyzed based on its type and situation. The types of swearing in this study were classified into five types, namely: (1) sex organ; (2) sexual activities; (3) animal names; and (4) other. The study results concluded that the most pronounced type of swearing was sexual activity as many as 13 swears, and the least found was sex organs with a total of 5 swearings.

In addition, a research conducted by Saeed and Reza (2020) entitled "A Comparative Study of Taboo Rendition in 3 Dubbed Versions of 'Deadpool' Movie: A Case Study of Swearwords." The results reported that 'taboo for' non-taboo' (substitution) is the most frequently used strategy by Iranian audio-visual translators to translate western taboo into Persian. In addition, it was found that 'euphemism', except for QD1, was also a strategy Persian translators used to reduce the taboo of swear words. The difference between the current research and this research lies in the swearing theory used, the type of research, and the research object. The process of extracting and determining the type of swear words was based on the classification proposed by Pinker, Anderson and Trudgill. In addition, motivational factors were determined based on the classification of Stapleton (2003) and the analysis of swear words from the film Deadpool (2016).

Meanwhile, research on swearing found in national journals is conducted by Nasution and Rosa (2012) with the title "Swearwords Found in Yahoo Messenger Chat Room". The data collected is the words that is containing swear words from April 1 to 30, 2012, which only focused on Indian conversation spaces on Yahoo Messenger. The study results found that Yahoo Messenger users used six types of swear words: (1) The name of supernatural or infernal powers of Gods, angles, and devils such as God, Jesus, and Gosh. (2) Words relating to the future such as Hell. (3) The name of ancestors and heroes such as by my father's blood. (4) Oath by natural objects, forces, and phenomena such as the sun, the moon. (5) Vulgar or obscene words such as shit, fuck, and asshole. (6) Oath by animals, plants, and products such as Bitch, damn. The most common swear words were vulgar or obscene words with a frequency of 17 or 42.5%.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Rullyanti and Devita (2017) under the title "Swearwords Used in Detected Movie Viewed by Speech Act Theory". The study analyzed swear words in the Detected film. This research aims to find out the types of swear words and the motives of swearing based on the speech act principles. The study results found 83 swearing, including 22 dysphemistic contexts, 18 abusive contexts, 17 cathartic, 14 empathic, and 12 idiomatic, which are found in the movie. Thus, based on the exposure to previous studies, the novelty in this study is the selection of swearing theory and the object of study used.

#### B. *The Function of Indramayu Javanese Swear Words in the Novel Aib dan Nasib by Minanto*

According to Rothwell in Murray (2012), the swearing function is classified into five swearing functions. The five functions of swearing in the novel *Aib dan Nasib* are explained and described as follows.

##### (a). *To Create Attention*

Some people say swear words attract the attention of others because swear words are considered to have a significant influence on attracting attention. The swear words that function to attract attention contained in the novel can be seen in the following quote.

"*Setan!* Ngapain kau di sini?" bentak Susanto setengah terkejut. (Minanto, 2020, p. 161)

"Tapi aku takut ketahuan." *Kampret!* Kau memang banci, Bagong!" hardik Susanto. (Minanto, 2020, p. 199)

"Devil! What are you doing here?" snapped Susanto half surprised. (Minanto, 2020, p.161)

"But I'm afraid of being found out." Shucks! You are a sissy, Bagong!" said Susanto. (Minanto, 2020, p. 199)

##### (b). *To Discredit*

Based on the analysis results of several types of swear words, there are types of swear words that are intended to insult or offend others. In other words, swear words are used to express disappointment. The swear words that function to insult are found in the novel as seen in the following quote.

"**Dasar goblok!** Kalau kau tertabrak mobil di jalan bagaimana?" umpat Mang Sota. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Minggat kau! **Dasar cecunguk!**" (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"Ini kenapa? Ini kenapa bisa sampai begini? **Tolol!**" (Minanto, 2020, p. 118)

"You idiot! What if you get hit by a car on the road?" cursed Mang Sota. (Minanto, 2020, p. 44)

"Get away from you! You bastard!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 75)

"Why is this? Why did this come to this? Stupid!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 118)

(c). *To Provoke*

In many cases, swear words create a negative impression among the public. It is because by listening to swear words someone will be carried away by emotions. Thus, swear words can arouse anger in those who hear them. The swear words that function to arouse the interlocutor's anger contained in the novel can be seen in the following quote.

"**Dasar pengecut!**" (Minanto, 2020, p. 242)

"**Dasar jalang!** Kau tidak mendengarkanku?" (Minanto, 2020, p. 245)

"You are a coward!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 242)

"You bitch! You didn't hear me?" (Minanto, 2020, p. 245)

(d). *To Create Interpersonal Identification*

The next function of swear words is to create interpersonal identification. Swear words are spoken to identify a friend or companion more specifically. It means that swear words are used to express intimacy. In Indramayu, people swear because they feel close. So, the more intimate and closer, then someone will often swear. Therefore, this swearing function is only used or spoken to really close friends. Swear words that function to create interpersonal identification in the novel can be seen in the following quote.

"Aku tidak peduli dengan adik-adikmu, **kampret!**" papar Susanto. (Minanto, 2020, p. 71)

"Kalian sama saja." "**Sialan!**" umpat Pang Randu. (Minanto, 2020, p. 136)

"I don't care about your siblings, you bastard! said Susanto. (Minanto, 2020, p. 71)

"You guys are the same." "Damn it!" cursed Pang Randu. (Minanto, 2020, p. 136)

(e). *To Provide Catharsis*

The last function of swear words is to provide catharsis. Swear words are spoken to emphasize or express anger, annoyance, and sadness. The swear words that function to release the emotions contained in the novel can be seen in the following quote.

And ketika ia tahu Bagong memenangkan adu jotos itu, ia mengumpat dalam hati, "Bagong **bangsat!**" (Minanto, 2020, p. 253)

"Jika kuberikan, apa kau akan membiarkanku pergi, **Njing?**" (Minanto, 2020, p. 257)

And when he found out that Bagong had won the fistfight, he cursed in his heart, "Bagong bastard!" (Minanto, 2020, p. 253)

"If I give you, will you let me go, dog?" (Minanto, 2020, p. 257)

According to Rothwell's (1973) theory, the function of swear words is grouped into five swearing functions: to create attention, discredit, provoke, create interpersonal identification, and provide catharsis. The number of swear words in the novel *Aib dan Nasib* by Minanto is presented in the following table and figure.

TABLE 3  
THE TOTAL DATA OF SWEAR WORDS IN THE NOVEL *AIB DAN NASIB*

No.	Swearing Function	Quantity	Percentage
1	To Create Attention	3	2,08%
2	To Discredit	52	36,11%
3	To Provoke	4	2,78%
4	To create interpersonal identification	32	22,22%
5	To Provide Catharsis	53	36,81%
Total		144	100,00%

From the table above, the most widely used function of swearing in the Novel *Aib dan Nasib* is to release emotions. So, the swearing used in the novel is to express various kinds of feelings. To provide catharsis gets a percentage of 37% or 53 swears. The swear word function is then followed by discredit with a percentage of 36% or 52 swearings. Not much different from the previous function, swear words that aim to discredit someone are also the most widely used. Furthermore, swear words to show interpersonal identification are also quite widely used or spoken by the characters in the novel. That is, the spoken swearing is only used or addressed to someone who has closeness. To create interpersonal identification, the percentage is 22% or 32 swearings. Meanwhile, swear words used the least or appear the least in the

novel are swear words that function to get attention and swear words that function to humiliate or insult other people. To create attention with a percentage of 2% or 3 swears and to provoke with a percentage of 3% or 4 swears.

The topic of this research is a deepening, extension, and development of previous studies related to the function of swearing. Previous research that examined the function of swearing was carried out by Prawinanto (2020) with the title "Swearing and its Motives in the Anthology of Novel Rasa". In this study, swearing was analyzed based on its form and motivation according to the theory of Anderson and Trudgill (1992) which classified swearing into four forms, namely: (1) expletive swearing; (2) abusive swearing; (3) humorous swearing; and (4) auxiliary swearing. Meanwhile, swearing is based on its motives, namely: (1) psychological motives; (2) social motives; (3) linguistic motives. In this study, the results of the most widely spoken form of swearing were auxiliary swearing, and the most widely used swearing motif was the psychological motive. The result of this research can be concluded that the most common form of swearing is auxiliary swearing with 26 swearings or 56.5%, and the least found is abusive swearing and humorous swearing with a total of 4 swearing or 8.7%. Meanwhile, based on the motivation of swearing, the most commonly found is psychological motive as much as 23 or 50.00%. Meanwhile, the least swearing motivation found was social motive as much as 4 or 8.70%.

Meanwhile, research conducted by Setiawan & Fatimatuazzahroh regarding swearing based on the situation it occurs is grouped into six, namely: (1) get angry; (2) get mad; (3) chill out with friends; (4) jogging; (5) habits; and (6) annoyance. The results of this study reported that the most common curses found are getting angry and getting mad with a total of 8 swearings based on the situation. Meanwhile, the least swearing found was annoyance with a total of 1 swearing.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Nasution and Rosa (2012), Yahoo Messenger users use seven functions of swear words to express anger, joke, surprise, admiration, promise, belief, and disappointment. The most dominant or most used swearing function is to express anger with a frequency of 23 or 57.5%. Thus, this study differs in the use of swearing theory.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, it can be concluded as follows. First, Indramayu Javanese swear words in Minanto's novel *Aib dan Nasib* consist of nine swear words: excretion, death, body function term, religious matter, mother in law, sex term, and animal term, imbecilic term, and general term. Types of swear words that use the term expression consist of one form of swear words, namely "tahi". The form of swear words that use the term death consists of one form of swear word, namely "mampus". The types of swear words that use the term body organs consist of five forms of swear words, namely the words "kontol", "memek", "bacot", "endas", and "kuping". The types of swear words that use religious terms consist of two forms of swear words, namely the word "dedemit", and "setan". The types of swear words that use the term prostitution consist of four forms of swear words, namely the words "telembuk", "lonte", "perung" and "bitch".

Furthermore, the types of swear words that use sexual activity consist of four forms of swear words, namely the words "ngentot", and "rabenan". The types of swear words that use animal terms consist of four forms swear words, namely the words "kampret", "kirik", "ketek" and "dog". The types of swear words that use the term imbecilic consist of six forms of swear words, namely the words "dumb", "stupid", "koplok", "stupid", "stupid", "cecunguk", and "campleng". Finally, the type of swearing that uses general terms consists of six forms of swear words, namely the words "edan", "insane", "damn", "presumptuous", "bitch" and "bajingan". Second, Indramayu's Javanese swearing function in Kelir Slindet's Novel by Minanto consists of five functions of swear words, including to create attention, discredit, provoke, create interpersonal identification, and provide catharsis.

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# Investigating the Effectiveness of Synchronous E-Learning Tools on Developing EFL Learners' Language Communication Skills Among the Hashemite University Students

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**Abstract**—After COVID-19, today's language classes have become blended with e-learning tools that have become indispensable to the process of learning in many situations. Synchronous e-learning classrooms have been studied for their impact on EFL communication skills, but few studies have been conducted in the Jordanian institutions. The purpose of this study is to investigate the EFL students' viewpoints on the efficiency of online classrooms in improving their verbal communication abilities. This study consisted of 284 participants who were EFL learners from the Hashemite University. It was conducted during the academic year 2022-2023, and it followed a mixed qualitative approach. Two means of data collection were used: a questionnaire and observations. The results indicated that students have a positive viewpoint toward online learning effectiveness in developing their communication. Nevertheless, students showed that low self-assurance, nervousness over making errors, and poor lexical knowledge are their main concerns when communicating in EFL classrooms.

**Index Terms**—synchronous, e-learning, communication, EFL instruction, verbal

## I. INTRODUCTION

In interpersonal interactions, effective communication plays a crucial role. Proficiency in advanced English communication can create numerous opportunities at both personal and professional levels. Effective communication has the potential to augment the process of learning within a classroom environment. The concept of communication skills encompasses various aspects, including verbal and non-verbal components such as writing, body language, and facial expressions. However, oral communication poses the greatest challenge and difficulty among learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) (Alhamdi, 2014; Alhosni, 2014; Alshumaimeri, 2019). The ability to express oneself effectively and appropriately constitutes a fundamental element of communication skills, extending beyond mere theoretical comprehension of grammar and language (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012). Communication skill development in the classroom is influenced by various elements such as teaching approaches, the curriculum employed, time constraints, and the number of students in a class. Consequently, students require ample opportunities for practice in order to enhance their communication abilities. Web-based language instruction has shown the potential in improving the oral communication skills of students (Appel & Borges, 2012).

The integration of information and communication technologies into the educational system has significantly impacted teaching and learning procedures. The use of technological tools like the Internet, is widely used in the teaching of English because it enables students and teachers to practice the language outside the classroom. Using online resources in conjunction with language instruction tools provides students with more chances to improve their communication skills (Alshumaimeri, 2019; Alswilem, 2019; Cong-Lem, 2018). The vast majority of Middle Eastern educational institutions have tried to incorporate technology into their systems to attain improved learner-oriented upshots and cope with the new teaching method tendencies (Alshumaimeri, 2008, 2019; Alswilem, 2019). For example, in Saudi Arabia, e-learning was initially applied in 2002 and has had a profound influence on the domains of academia and education as well (Alasmari & Khan, 2014).

During COVID-19, a number of educational institutions, including colleges and universities, adopted online and distance learning modes as the next logical step in the process of teaching. Some industry experts have gone as far as to speculate that the "residential-oriented models," in which students attend classes at fixed locations and times, may

become obsolete in the not-too-distant future (Al Ibrahim, 2021). Nowadays, there is a persistent problem with the Coronavirus that has to be addressed, and that is the question of how the new learning delivery model, which has shifted from physical interaction instruction into a remote method, influences student input. Students have to explore the contemporary remote learning setting effectively and must show the ability to manage various novel dimensions, which include proficiency in Internet and computer technologies. A dependence on self-directed learning methodologies, engagement with both instructors and fellow learners via online platforms, the submission of assignments electronically, and the assessment of knowledge through online testing mechanisms should also be investigated thoroughly. In the context of online instruction, these criteria have a critical role. Salmon (2003) indicates that technological competence is obviously important. Failure to communicate proficiently through computer-mediated tools would be an obstacle to the ability of both students and teachers to be engaged in online educational endeavors. Macdonald (2003) further asserts that a mutual expectation exists for educators and students to show familiarity with collaborative teamwork, mastery of learning management system (LMS) tools, online chatting proficiency and web utilization. Within the domain of online learning, a significant component known as online assessments is integral alongside the submission of assignments through digital means. Collaborative learning introduces new challenges and prospects, including its potential to enhance skill development and distinguish outcomes from collaborative processes. Through collaboration with educational institutions and instructors, students are offered the opportunity to expand and deepen their comprehension by evaluating diverse perspectives, while also testing and defending their own viewpoints (Tam, 2000). According to Higgins (2000), the online educational environment is carefully designed to grant students the autonomy to determine their learning objectives, while also providing essential support systems and promoting interactions with both instructors and peers. The notion of self-directed learning is predicated upon the belief that learner education flourishes when situated within authentic experiences and when students possess a clear understanding of the purpose behind their learning endeavors.

The use of a synchronous e-learning platform is called "Teams" which facilitates real-time interaction between teachers and learners. Online classrooms provide students with the opportunity to acquire new skills in English language learning. Nevertheless, because of the absence of direct one-to-one communication, effective communication has become vital.

The objective of this study is to evaluate the efficiency of the synchronous e-learning platform "Teams" in enhancing communication skills. This research focused on investigating the extent to which the students' English communication abilities were demonstrated through verbal interactions with their teachers and peers within this medium. Synchronous e-learning classrooms have been studied for their impact on EFL communication skills, but few studies have been conducted in the Jordanian setting, and the most used experimental methods without considering students' voices. The primary objective of this research was to assess how Jordanian students learning English as a foreign language perceive the "Teams" platform as an e-learning tool to enhance their communication skills. This involved investigating their viewpoints on disadvantages, advantages, limitations, prerequisites, and recommendations for enhancing the platform's effectiveness. Students appreciated the opportunities offered by e-learning and its support for their unique learning needs and communication.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research aims to answer the following questions:

- A. What are the anticipated challenges faced by users of the Teams learning platform?
- B. How do learners perceive the efficacy of e-learning techniques, specifically in terms of improving their communication skills?
- C. How does the utilization of synchronous e-learning tools impact the interaction between the learners and the instructors?

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Parker and Martin (2010), synchronous e-learning solutions offer a learning setting in which students and instructors can engage in live discussions through various tools like audio and video conferencing. This enables active participation and real-time interactions in the educational process. Synchronous e-learning tools have become a new and innovative method for both educators and learners due to the advance in global technology and network infrastructure (Yadav, 2016). Montoute (2013) clarified that a web-based classroom known as a synchronous e-learning setting can be accessed by teachers and students using either desktop computers or mobile devices. The use of a synchronous environment represents a considerable resemblance between synchronous e-learning tools and traditional classrooms. On the other hand, Hussein (2016) emphasizes that synchronous online learning environments offer unique opportunities for both teaching and learning when compared to traditional classroom setups. Danesh, Bailey, and Whisenand (2015) reported that engaging in synchronous e-learning courses can improve communication skills, particularly by developing speaking abilities. Garner and Rouse (2016) demonstrated that synchronous online learning technologies are flexible, cost-efficient, applicable in real-world scenarios, and easily reachable. Yadav (2016)

presented evidence supporting the idea that synchronous e-learning technologies can overcome geographical constraints, alleviate students' anxieties, and boost their enthusiasm, resulting in enhanced communication skills.

Al-Asmari and Khan (2014) found that the primary benefits of synchronous e-learning technologies are their flexibility and ease of use, particularly for students situated in various global locations, including those attending classes in geographically scattered regions. The inclusion of elements like audio or video conferences in synchronous e-learning settings promotes continuous connections, which in turn improves students' engagement and feelings of being part of a community (Berry, 2019). Besides, Pan and Sullivan (2005) noted that engaging in real-time conversations with instructors or fellow students positively influences the level of interaction within synchronous classrooms.

Yilmaz (2015) claimed that synchronous e-learning platforms are comparable to traditional classroom environments concerning the provision of feedback, the communication between educators and undergraduates, and the conduct of activities during class sessions. Nonetheless, synchronous e-learning does have its drawbacks. Furthermore, there are concerns about the compatibility of this format with all types of learners. However, it is possible that future technological advancements, as suggested by Manegre and Sabiri (2020), could address these challenges. In addition, the familiarity of instructors and students with traditional classrooms might impact how they adopt technology in teaching and learning (Yadav, 2016). Hence, it is essential to offer adequate training to both instructors and students on the usage of synchronous e-learning systems. According to Manegre and Sabiri (2020), for an effective synchronous e-learning environment, reliable internet connections are crucial for both teachers and students, along with clear instructions and guidance.

Communication comprises diverse methods, such as verbal, written, and nonverbal expressions, and it involves essential components like attentive listening and providing constructive feedback. As a result, having strong communication abilities is a fundamental requirement for individuals learning a new language (Wambui, 2012). On the other hand, Cheekeong et al. (2014) argue that developing oral communication skills and effectively utilizing them in an educational context can present difficulties. Cheekeong et al. (2014) points out that the obstacles encountered in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) oral communication arise from three primary factors: teachers, students, and the curriculum. The researchers suggest that teachers should avoid pressuring students to engage in oral communication and refrain from using ineffective strategies that do not support the improvement of students' communication skills. Furthermore, the students' absence of self-assurance and fear of making errors and slip-ups may contribute to their hesitance in participating in classroom discussions. The writers highlight that traditional EFL courses tend to focus more on hypothetical attributes of language learning. According to Abu Alyan (2013), there are several significant factors that play a major part in students' inadequate verbal communication abilities. These factors encompass limited vocabulary, inadequate exposure to substantial reading and listening materials, interference from their native language, and a lack of self-confidence. Khambayat (2017) emphasizes the potential for improving students' oral communication abilities through ample speaking practice opportunities. However, students may face challenges in effectively communicating in real-life situations as Khamkhien (2011) points out. Therefore, achieving effective communication goes beyond mere language proficiency; it requires active participation in practical activities. According to AlSaleem (2018), successful oral communication involves integrating cognitive and affective processes alongside verbal skills, including vocabulary, pronunciation, and syntax. To facilitate this, English teachers can employ diverse instructional strategies within the classroom, as suggested by Khambayat (2017). Thakur, AlMashani, and Almashikhi (2019) also advocate for authentic language practice through classroom projects, as it helps students utilize language more proficiently and develop their communicative abilities. Additionally, Parker and Martin (2010) point out that students in Synchronous e-learning classrooms can interact and communicate with each other as if they were physically present in a traditional classroom setting.

Recent research indicates that online education has a positive impact on students' confidence and talent development. Abu Baker, Latiff, and Hamat (2013) conducted a case study with eleven English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who had limited proficiency. The study aimed to explore their perceptions of using an asynchronous chat means to improve their verbal communication. The findings indicated that most of the students were more at ease and skilled when interacting orally in virtual learning environments compared to traditional classrooms. In face-to-face interactions, the participants displayed hesitancy, largely due to concerns about their peers' reactions. The researchers asserted that online learning platforms, by removing physical barriers, provide students with a valuable opportunity to enhance their spoken communication abilities.

In terms of the attitudes towards online teaching, Salbego and Tumolo (2015) reported that their study revealed participants' favorable attitudes toward online classes. This positivity stemmed from the necessity of paying close attention and seeking clarification regularly, which contributed to a constructive learning experience. Similarly, in Banditvilai's (2016) case study, people also exhibited a positive attitude toward online learning. However, it was noted that the absence of in-person communication could lead to social isolation, hindering meaningful interactions between professors and students. In fact, different studies were conducted on synchronous videoconferencing (Alshahrani, 2016). They showed that there are positive attitudes toward online education (Al Qahtani, 2019; Hamouda, 2020; Alshahrani, 2016; Hamouda, 2020).

#### IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study aimed to examine how effective synchronous e-learning sessions are in improving the communication abilities of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The research adopted a mixed-methods research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Following the approach advocated by Clark and Ivankova (2015), the researchers decided to combine qualitative and quantitative methodologies to enable classroom observations and confirm the survey-based quantitative results in a more comprehensive manner.

##### A. Study Sample and Population

The study involved undergraduate students from various disciplines who were enrolled at The Hashemite University- a Jordanian institution- during the first term of the 2022-2023 academic year. The total population consisted of 284 students, which was also the sample size for the study. However, due to institutional regulations and accessibility constraints, only around 30 students were observed during classroom sessions, leading to the use of convenience sampling. The subsequent tables provide an overview of the demographic distribution of the sample population.

TABLE 1  
PARTICIPANTS' FIELDS OF STUDY

Major	Percentage
Business	14.8%
Engineering	12.3%
Humanities	11.9%
Medicine	8.1%
others	52.9%

TABLE 2  
GENDER OF THE POPULATION

Gender	Percentage
Male	37%
Female	63%

##### B. Instruments of the Research

A survey and teacher observations were both used as the research's two primary data collection tools.

###### (a). The Survey

This survey is composed of thirteen different statements which focus on the efficiency of the "teams" platform in resolving problems of this nature. It was composed of thirteen different statements. The purpose of the third and last section is to evaluate the dynamics of the learner-instructor relationship in the context of distance education and online education. It was composed of six different statements. The design of the questionnaire was developed based on previous research on online learning and EFL communication abilities. A Likert scale with five responses (neutral, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, and highly disagree) was employed.

###### (b). Validity of the Study Tool's Internal Consistency

The researcher computed the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine the relationship between each individual element and the overall importance of the dimension. It was found that there is a statistically significant correlation between each category and the overall degree of significance. The correlation evaluations indicate a strong level of core consistency and reliability among the three survey components. According to Creswell (2011), a study tool is considered reliable if it consistently produces similar results across trials. Upon testing the overall dependability of the coefficients, results demonstrate the tool's high level of stability.

###### (c). Observation

The researchers used classroom observations to collect data on the efficacy of e-learning and learners' self-reflection. The study tracked 30 students over multiple sessions, ensuring reliable data by conducting online sessions in teams and recording them. The sessions included lecturer and student presentations on English teaching, computer-assisted language learning, using various teaching methods, and discussing language-learning apps. Observations were noted and typed up, referring to the presenting students as presenters.

###### (d). The Procedure for Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to conduct statistical analysis on the survey data, while theme analysis was used to do qualitative analysis on the observation data. The process of thematic analysis for the data involved a variety of steps such as reading of the recordings, identification of recurring patterns through coding, organization of similar codes into categories, and ultimately, the emergence of various themes such as student engagement, interaction between lecturers and students, interaction among students, and challenges related to spoken language. The evaluation of the responses was carried out by three experts with extensive knowledge in applied

linguistics and English as a foreign language. Additionally, descriptive statistics and correlation analysis methods were applied.

(e). *Analysis*

Calculations utilizing means and standard deviation were performed on the participants' questionnaire responses in order to provide answers to the study questions. In the first question, students were asked if vocabulary deficit is their primary difficulty when communicating in English. Responses show that 43.4% of the students responded with 'agree' while about 24.6 % wit strongly agree. The second question addressed the students' concerns regarding making grammatical errors while speaking. Their responses indicate that it is less challenging for them since 31% of them agree and 9.2% strongly agree. In the third question, the issue of pronunciation is focused on. Responses show that it is a partial concern since almost half of them agree with this statement (30 % agree and 18.3 % strongly agree). The affective factors are concentrated on in questions 4 and 5. Most students either do not consider that self-confidence is a main challenge while communicating in English or are not sure about it (18% strongly disagree, 20.8 % disagree, and 31.3% neutral). Regarding the subjects' anxiety and nervousness when speaking English, responses to question 5 indicate that about 30.2 % disagree while 30.3 % are neutral and 39.5 % agree with this idea. The teacher's lack of engagement with students and use of strategies that promote communication are tackled in questions 7 and 8. The majority of students either disagree or are neutral (just 24% agree). Similar responses are given to questions 9 and 10 which address the classroom atmosphere and oral communicative activities where again students either disagree or are neutral and not sure about it (just 30% to 35 % agree). The concept of having constructive criticism of students' performance in speaking activities and its benefit is focused on in question 11. The results show that a high number of students are either neutral or agree with it. In question 12, the frequency of teachers' correction of verbal errors is concentrated on, and in question 13, the student's irritation with it is interrogated. As for question 12, responses show that most students either disagree or are neutral which asserts that teacher most often correct their verbal mistakes. However, about 37% indicate that they are irritated by it while the others are either neutral or generally disagree. The last question addresses the high frequency of speaking Arabic in class. Students' answers indicate that their views are not stable since about 33% of them disagree while 28.9% are neutral and the rest of them agree. This means speaking the native language in EFL classes is part of the issue.

In general, the overall mean score is 56.9, which demonstrates that learners have a neutral attitude regarding their verbal communication challenges. The students believe that receiving constructive criticism is the most helpful way to build their communication skills, with a mean score of 57.9, which received the highest score (58.0), which indicates that their principal issue in talking in English is due to a vocabulary shortage. One of their least significant concerns, which received the lowest possible score of 56.2, is that the Arabic language is employed in the classroom more frequently than it ought to be.

The analysis of the learners' point of view on the effectiveness of synchronous e-learning sessions in developing the skills of communication indicates that it has a positive impact. Responses show that most students either have a neutral viewpoint toward the addressed subject or simply agree with the statements. In most questions, the students who strongly disagree or disagree record the lowest scores.

The students had a positive attitude towards employing "teams" as a medium of instruction, as evidenced by the overall mean score of 48.5. The statement that "participating in in-class conversations is made easier for me by my participation in synchronous online learning sessions" received the highest score of 49.4 out of all the statements. After which there was a mean score of 48.7 that it is much simpler for students to communicate with both their teachers and students during synchronous online learning sessions, which is good for both the second and the third research questions. When they came across question number 8, which was about how it is difficult to participate in conversations because there is limited opportunity for face-to-face engagement, a large section response was marked with neutral. This was definitely evident in how they responded. It finished in third place with an average score of 48.6 towards the statement of developing better vocal communication skills due to participating in synchronous online learning sessions.

The analysis of learners' points of view on the effectiveness of synchronous online learning sessions in developing the learner-instructor relationship displays some contradictory views toward the tackled issue. Results show that about 32.2 % to 36.8 % of the students are neutral in their views while 25.5 % to 36.5% agree. The other variables score relatively lower percentages. The highest mean score of 49.2 indicates the students' positive attitude towards getting the most benefit out of their online sessions. However, the second in rank is a mean score of 49.0, which indicates that students are having difficulties interacting with the instructor via synchronous learning sessions. The researcher suggests that the sample's answers do not reflect learner-instructor communication nature as much as they reflect the technical issues and inability to interact face-to-face with the instructor. The thing that explains the reason behind the sample's positive attitude towards developing better communication skills using the synchronous medium of learning is obviously since they weren't pressured by the actual existence of the instructor or their peers and that they were able to speak and interact more freely.

During observations, the lecturer posed questions and included some activities that require verbal participation. Most students were able to participate at least once, but some students were obliged to participate by calling their names. The primary methods of engagement during these sessions were audio calls. The data that was gathered from the classroom observations demonstrated that all in all, synchronous e-learning sessions have the potential to play a key role in

significantly boosting the communication abilities of EFL students. However, the results shed insight into the widespread challenges that students experience while engaged in oral communication practice such as the students' lack of self-assurance, concern about making mistakes, and inadequate vocabulary.

## V. DISCUSSION

A survey was employed to collect data from 284 students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). The data aimed to find out challenges encountered by the students in communication and their views regarding the efficacy of online learning platforms in enhancing their communication skills. Additionally, some participants were observed by the researcher during real-time online learning sessions, allowing for a comparison between how the students perceived their performance and how they performed. The primary objective of the initial section of the questionnaire was to evaluate the students' challenges with verbal communication. The respondents predominantly expressed negative viewpoints concerning the common obstacles they face when engaging in spoken English communication. According to the survey, learners' lack of self-assurance and worry about committing mistakes are the two biggest barriers to effective English communication, and students also felt that a limited vocabulary was a barrier. Similar findings were observed in the study by CheeKeong et al. (2014), where it was discovered that 60% of the students refrained from participating in classroom interactions due to reasons such as insufficient language skills, lack of self-assurance, or the fear of receiving unfavorable assessments. According to CheeKeong et al. (2014), the students' low self-esteem in their linguistic and communicative skills will restrict their verbalized English interaction. As a result, language instructors should create a calm environment for their pupils and motivate them to talk, regardless of any potential oral errors.

The quantitative investigation shows that students are neutral about communication-difficult phonological and structural matters. These results offer opposing findings to Abu Alyan's (2013) notion that students' pronunciation hinders class participation. The results demonstrated that students' attitudes regarding teaching tactics and activities are neutral, not a hindrance to oral communication. This contradicts CheeKeong et al. (2014), who found that classroom instruction affects oral skill practice. It can also be stated that this study may suggest that students gain speaking skills.

The second component of the survey asked students how synchronous learning sessions improved their communication skills. According to previous scholarship (Salbego & Tumolo, 2015; Banditvilai, 2016; AlQahtani, 2019), most students like synchronous learning. Online modules are more comfortable and suitable than conventional classrooms, and students showed that synchronous learning sessions boost their self-assurance to express themselves and engage in debates and class discussions. AlQahtani (2019) found that undergraduate EFL students exhibited greater self-assurance when speaking during synchronous online learning sessions compared to in-person interactions. Cong-Lem (2018) found that web-based tools foster student engagement. These results suggest that conventional methods of practicing spoken English might pose challenges for EFL students. Synchronous learning sessions may be better because they don't involve face-to-face interactions. Thus, teachers should use synchronous learning to assist students develop their communication abilities. Relaxed students openly communicate with instructors and classmates, improving their confidence and communication abilities. The questionnaire also showed that synchronous learning sessions motivated and engaged students in class discussions. This suggests that relaxed students are more engaged and motivated. Students were neutral on whether they preferred regular or synchronous learning. In contrast, Istifci (2017) found that most participants prefer traditional classes since they can better communicate with teachers and classmates. Combining the two teaching approaches may address students' learning styles and personality preferences.

Students preferred synchronous learning sessions, although most disagreed that they helped them spot oral faults. This suggests that feedback helps students learn from their mistakes. In synchronous learning sessions, students thought the lack of face-to-face communication hampered their ability to express ideas. Banditvilai (2016) found that absence of face-to-face contact may impact teacher-student interactions. Eye contact and body language are important in face-to-face communication. Thus, missing components were predicted to impair communication.

Based on the findings of this study, utilizing synchronous learning sessions as a strategy to enhance spoken skills is a viable method that could substantially enhance the communication proficiencies of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Consequently, using synchronous learning sessions to practice oral communication skills can be quite helpful. This is coherent with Hamouda's (2020) research, which showed that completing online courses significantly improved the speaking abilities of the experimental group. The students' oral interactions during the sessions revealed a high level of engagement on their part. The students' queries and remarks to the professor and their classmates can be taken as an inclination to engage in the discussion. Most of the students responded to the mentor's questions punctually, suggesting that synchronous learning sessions provide a more laid-back atmosphere. This is consistent with students' perceptions that synchronous learning sessions are cozier. Additionally, the research by Salbego and Tumolo (2015) verifies the outcomes of this present study, as their participants expressed increased comfort when speaking in online classroom settings. The primary technique utilized by the instructor to initiate conversations with the students during these sessions involved the use of inquiries. To encourage children to engage in dialogue and enhance their oral communication proficiencies, employing questioning is an effective approach. According to Alshahrani (2016), asking questions that need answers encourages dialogue between the teacher and pupils. According to the current study, using the question-and-answer method to improve communication in online classrooms is a successful strategy. Short responses to more in-depth inquiries should both be included in the queries. As outlined by Alshahrani (2016), posing



questions that require thoughtful responses fosters interaction between educators and students. In line with the present study, implementing the question-and-answer technique as a means of enhancing communication within online educational settings proves to be an effective approach. It is advisable to incorporate both concise replies and more comprehensive explanations within the included inquiries.

Within synchronous e-learning environments, numerous approaches can be employed to enhance spoken communication skills. Enabling students to engage in exercises such as practicing communication, delivering presentations, and engaging in role-playing aids in the development of their communicative competencies. Khambayat's (2017) study supports the efficacy of these methods in enhancing communication within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Participating in role-plays during various synchronous e-learning sessions was a mandatory component for the students. These techniques proved effective within the synchronous e-learning environment due to their provision of extra opportunities for learners to engage and communicate with their peers. The study's results indicate that refining speech skills within a virtual classroom, utilizing resources like presentations (PPTs), and innovative approaches like role-playing, constitute a valuable and efficient strategy for enhancing communication proficiencies.

The outcomes of the research by Fauzi and Hanifah (2018), showcasing the effectiveness of presentations in augmenting oral skills and elevating student performance, are in harmony with this deduction. To enhance student engagement, educators should concentrate on instructing students in the incorporation of their peers and the integration of communication exercises into their assignments. As an example, in the third session, the presentation had a lot of activities, which gave the students more chances to practice speaking. However, Session 4's lack of exercises or quizzes had a modest impact on the students' participation.

Overall, the research showed that using synchronous learning sessions can significantly improve students' speech skills. It should be stated that in synchronous learning sessions, the roles of learners and instructors must be defined clearly. The instructor is supposed to function as a mediator, helping learners to refine their verbal communication skills and promoting participation in online sessions. Furthermore, effective communication might be hindered by the absence of direct eye contact, body language cues, and in-person interaction.

As a result, it is the lecturer's duty to give EFL students the chance to utilize their verbal communication skills in a setting that is appropriate for the virtual environment. Throughout the sessions, the researchers also observed some technical issues. For instance, students encountered difficulty in effectively engaging with Presenter 2 due to the unclear voice of one of the students. Such challenges are commonplace in online learning environments. As highlighted by Gedera (2014), unforeseen technological obstacles during synchronous learning sessions can influence students' effectiveness. However, across the span of four sessions, this issue only arose on a single occasion. Therefore, the study suggests that technical difficulties are not a significant barrier to online learning.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to evaluate how well synchronous learning sessions improved oral communication abilities in undergraduate EFL students. It also looked at the main difficulties that EFL students have communicating in English. According to the mixed-methods study's findings, oral communication skills may benefit from synchronous learning sessions. Based on the results, the primary hindrances to students' effective communication stem from a restricted vocabulary, diminished self-confidence, and apprehension of committing errors. Participants stated that developing their communication skills in virtual classrooms offers a convenient and comfortable setting. Additionally, during online classes, students reported feeling more inspired, involved, and self-assured when conversing with professors and classmates. These results can motivate language teachers to use synchronous learning sessions to enhance communication skills in their students. Despite these encouraging findings, the study also brought to light certain drawbacks of synchronous learning sessions. Students perceived that their face-to-face interactions were hindered due to the absence of in-person engagement. Technical issues can sometimes make it difficult for students to communicate effectively, but this was only noticed once over the four sessions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The efficacy of virtual classrooms in intensifying EFL students' communication competencies was the subject of this study. It is suggested that future research might focus on teachers' reflections on the same concerns. Additionally, this study used two methods for gathering data: classroom observations and a questionnaire. Future research might use various tools, such as interviews. A similar study might be conducted to investigate how virtual classes affect other EFL skills. A comparable study could be conducted to explore the impact of virtual classrooms on other English as a Foreign Language (EFL) skills. This current study concentrated on the enhancement of EFL communication abilities through synchronous learning sessions. To enhance the applicability of the study's outcomes, researchers are advised to adapt it by incorporating a larger student cohort, students with diverse educational contexts, or individuals from various geographical locations.

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# Affiliations, Aversions and Assertions: Memory, Identity and Amnesia in Elif Shafak's *The Bastard of Istanbul*

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**Abstract**—The present study aims to investigate the nexus between memory, identity, and amnesia in Elif Shafak's *The Bastard of Istanbul*. The proposed study will examine how collective amnesia inflicted by the state, aids in the erosion of historical memory of violence and inhumanity among its denizens. Memory of the past shapes a person's life in a plethora of ways. It is a source of personal as well as collective identity. Memory travels across generations and links one's past and future. It is created, destroyed, and recreated. The loss of memory or amnesia performs a crucial role in what one remembers, how one thinks of their self, and how one acts. The study contextualizes memory as an important source of one's personal as well the collective identity. The loss of memory or amnesia performs a crucial role in what one remembers, how one thinks of their self, and how one acts. The study concludes that not everything can be remembered and not everything can be forgotten. After all, a little remembering and a little forgetting never hurt.

**Index Terms**—affiliation, memory, identity, amnesia

## I. INTRODUCTION

Due to various cultural changes in the contemporary era, the concept of identity has become a subject of much debate. Identity refers to the association of the self with an abstract entity that provides a sense of meaning and belonging and helps the world to survive. An abstract entity can be class, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, nation and so on. Such abstract entities are not material but play an indispensable role in human life. According to Deng (1995), identity is used to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture. Giddens (1991) defines identity as a project on that individuals and society work on and that is constantly changing. Identity entails our ability to sustain a narrative about the self. Barker (2012) describes identity as "An emotionally charged discursive description of ourselves that is subject to change" (p. 221). The idiom of identity can include 'all kinds of relatedness, all experiences of shared ethics, connectedness, and harmony as well as all senses of self that are mediated through various ways and practices.

In today's globalized world, one encounters an infinite number of people who may or may not share one's identity. As physical distance becomes negligible in this age of globalization, one becomes conscious of who they are. Identities intersect, sometimes old ones are lost and new ones are born. However, such interplay of identities often leads to conflict. It occurs when one meets a person or persons with a different identity that one believes to be inferior or strange. Moreover, the tension arises when there is an ongoing attempt to homogenize identities by putting forth the narratives such as 'Your identity is in danger due to the other person's identity'. Often, such narratives are propagated by the ruling dispensation that calls for the erasure of different and conflicting identities in order to maintain its power.

In cultural studies understanding identity is not a thing but a description in language. Identity is never static or singular. So, it would be appropriate to use the plural form of this word as it exudes multiplicity. Moreover, identities are dynamic, constantly changing, forming, and reforming. No identity is superior or complete. The importance of any identity depends on the place one is in, the kind of people one is surrounded by, and the purpose of the person in that place. Therefore, one's external environment decides what kind of identity or identities one is going to display. During 2005 in his *Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction* opines,

Individuals do not have a single identity, they have identities, and do so just because identities are based on partial traits (skin color, socio-economic status, gender, nationality, region, profession, generation, and so on). I am a man and a New Zealander and an ectomorph and bourgeois and an academic and Aquarian, etc. But not all identities carry equal weight in particular circumstances or have the same social consequences. For instance, in many nations the country in which one was born used to matter a great deal in terms of identity. Now (generally speaking) it matters much less. (p. 146)

The emphasis of during here is on the multiplicities and temporalities of identities. Contributing to this significant discussion on identity Hall (1991) says, "Identity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself. Identity is always a temporary and unstable effect of relations which define identities by marking difference" (p. 21).

Hall's critique of identity is against an understanding of identity as something that is originary, unified and integral. Grossberg (1996) conceptualized identity as not simply a matter of places, but also of the spatial relations of places and spaces and the distribution of people within them.

Identity is closely related to memory, which is considered a key component in the creation and maintenance of the individual and collective identity. The word memory comes from the Latin roots *Memoriam* or *memor* which means to remember. Memory can be defined as the ability to recall past events and recall learned facts and ideas. Such ability to recollect past events leads a person to identify himself/herself with something or the other. This process of identification results in the construction of an identity-based on past recollections. Thus, what one remembers of the past, and what one forgets, defines what one becomes in the present. This process of remembering and forgetting is sometimes influenced by external factors. The outside environment may be such that certain things are presented as important for retention, while other events or experiences are shown as worthless which should be discarded and are no longer required to be remembered. The importance of memory in the construction of identity can be captured by imagining a self that has no memory. When there is nothing to remember the sense of connection with an entity also disappears. Hence, lack of memory results in lack of identity which in turn makes it difficult for a person to survive in this world of infinite identities. According to Reid (1785):

Our own personal identity and continued existence, as far back as we remember anything distinctly... we know immediately, and not by reasoning. It seems, indeed, to be a part of the testimony of memory. Everything we remember has such a relation to ourselves as to imply necessarily our existence at the time remembered. (p. 586)

Memory, like identity, is dynamic. It depends on the constant process of remembering and forgetting that goes on in one's mind. Things that are retained and emphasized, become a strong element of personal identity and things that are forgotten or lost gradually lose their significance in one's identity. Memory is ubiquitous and often used quite loosely. Prager (1998) claims that memory is 'intersubjective' and represents past motivations that emphasize situated schemas, which are of course cultural. Yelvington (2002), contends that "Memory is a process of the self-situating itself. It is part of the process of self-constitution" (p. 239).

Not only individuals, but communities, groups, and nations have a sense of memory too in the form of a shared past. A nation's consciousness represents the collective past of the people. Personal identity is closely related to national memory, especially when the nation has a history of turmoil, or war. The subject living in the nation feels a sense of belonging and responsibility to the land, which becomes especially important when there is interaction between two groups or individuals with distinct national identities. Also, national memory is constantly shifting and changing.

Nations rewrite histories, erasing earlier histories mostly to reinforce a particular identity. The dynamic nature of memory can be understood by looking at the concept of amnesia. Amnesia comes from the Greek *a* (without), *mnesis* (memory). In simple words, it refers to the loss of memory. Among the many different types of amnesia, the condition in which a person forgets some important information about their life (e.g., a traumatic, violent event) but does not experience any disruption to their sense of identity, this is called dissociative amnesia. This type of memory loss is used to forget the pain or trauma associated with the event. Memory loss can be a natural process such as an injury or accident. However, it can also be intentional as influenced by external factors such as power structures, culture, etc.

Certain events or memories are erased from a person's personal or collective consciousness in such a way that the person feels that they were never part of their identity. Such gradual erosion of memory can have many motives, including the desire to abandon the previous identity and create a new identity that may somehow be detrimental to the new identity. When the erosion of memory occurs at a communal level, it is called collective amnesia. In this way, communities collectively forget memories and cannot recall them whenever they are referred to by another group. Such is the effect of collective amnesia. At the individual level, one may try to forget a painful past. This is generally done through ignorance or avoidance. Therefore, studying the complex relationship between memory, identity and amnesia is highly relevant as the contemporary world is identity-conscious where identity construction and destruction is an ongoing process that happens through the process of remembering and forgetting. "Memories are not ready-made reflections of the past, but eclectic, selective reconstructions. People remember or forget the past according to the needs of the present, and social memory is an active and ongoing process" (Van Dyke & Alcock, 2003, p. 3).

The proposed study is an attempt to understand how past memory shapes a person's life and is a source of personal and collective identity. Memory travels across generations and connects one's past and future. It is created, destroyed, and recreated. Memory loss or Amnesia plays an important role in what one remembers, how one thinks of their self, and how one acts. Such loss can be inflicted by various social, cultural, or national factors. The research will engage the following questions:

## II. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

- What are the effects of collective amnesia on a nation and an individual?
- How do past experiences and memories shape the social relations and identity structures of the present?
- Does amnesia act as a liberating experience or as a source of rootlessness?
- Why is the past manipulated and memory is erased from communal consciousness?
- How does memory become baggage of the past but also act as a source of healing?

### III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to analyze the effects of collective amnesia on a nation as well as an individual. The study shows how the past shapes the social relations and identity structures of the present and how amnesia acts as a liberating experience as well as a sense of rootlessness. The study ponders over how and why the past is manipulated and memory is erased from communal consciousness. It illustrates how memory acts as a baggage of the past as well as a source of healing.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

The study will use a broad theoretical framework of memory, identity, and amnesia. Related texts, documentaries, interviews, and other supplementary materials will also be consulted. This study will be conducted by looking at various elements and events in Shafak's *Bastard of the Istanbul* that reveal the nexus between memory, identity, and amnesia. Quotations from the original text will also be used, wherever relevant.

### V. LITERATURE SURVEY

Un-Silencing the Past: A Juxtaposition of Personal and Political in Elif Shafak's novel, *The Bastard of Istanbul* by Tajamul Islam (2022) provides the socio-political background of the Armenian genocide and discusses the concept of the bastard represented through the character of Asya Kazanci. Asya and Armanoush share a history of rootlessness and identity crisis. Through their characters, a personal account of the 1915 genocide is presented. Additionally, the author examines how alternative spaces such as Cafe Kundera and Cafe Constantia are used in the novel to subvert the state-imposed silence surrounding the genocide. Apart from this, the issue of personal versus political is also examined. The Armenian community cannot forget the past even after becoming a member of another community which is American. However, for Turks, the past is an unknown place. They are amnesiac towards their history. Thus, according to the author, Shafak tries to address a historical wrong that holds immense importance when Turks are trying to reconstruct their past.

Nabanita Chakraborty in *Contesting Spaces and Conflicting Memories: A Reading of Armenian Diaspora in Elif Shafak's The Bastard of Istanbul* (2019), examines the political dynamics of the contemporary Armenian and Turkish State. State-sponsored silence and denial over the 1915 genocide is questionable. The author proposes that the Turkish state should acknowledge the atrocities and that Armenians should leave their past behind. In this way both communities can resolve their differences.

A Post-Modernist Critique of Elif Shafak's Novel, *The Bastard of Istanbul* by Nabila Akbar et al. (2020), presents a postmodernist view of the novel by probing various elements such as depthlessness, pastiche, etc. The authors have used the concepts given by Ehab Hasan such as silence, play, opportunity, solitude, emptiness, alienation etc. which reflect the postmodern tendencies of the novel. In addition, Jameson's definition of 'disconnection with the past' as an element of postmodernism is used to illustrate the fragmented identities of various characters in the novel, for example the characters of Asya and Armanoush. The repetition of many postmodernist elements makes *The Bastard of Istanbul* a true postmodernist novel.

Elena Furlanetto (2014) in *Safe Spaces of the Like-Minded: The Search for a Hybrid Post-Ottoman Identity in Elif Shafak's The Bastard of Istanbul* acknowledges Shafak's attempt at writing a novel to oppose the Kemalist goal of forgetting the Ottoman past and deliberately induce amnesia to construct a modern Turkish identity. Shafak provides a critique of the Kemalist regime and aims to revive Turkey's past of pluralism, peaceful coexistence, and diversity.

Identity construction of Istanbulites in Elif Shafak's *The Bastard of Istanbul* by Mohd Zaimil Alvin (2017) studies the process of identity construction in the novel by drawing upon the theories of Castells. The author discusses the relationship between social memory and identity construction. The novel mainly discusses three types of identities namely, Legitimising, Resistance, and Project identity. The author concludes the study by calling Turkish a legitimizing identity and Armenian as the Resistance identity. Finally, the characters of Zeliha and Asia represent the project identity according to the author.

In summary, several aspects are investigated such as the socio-political context of the Armenian Genocide, the state-sponsored silence surrounding the event, personal and political, the convergence of postmodernist elements, the nature of Istanbul society, and multiculturalism. It may be noted that the studies that have been conducted on identity construction have only discussed the issue from a sociological perspective. Moreover, diasporic identity issues are studied only in references. Therefore, it becomes crucial to analyze in depth the relationship between memory, identity, and amnesia without limiting the examination to only one perspective.

### VI. DISCUSSION

A sense of the past is what plays a pivotal role in shaping the plot and the lives of the characters in *The Bastard of Istanbul*. "Memory of the past as well as the links between the past and the present constitute the central subject of the novel" (Yazicioğlu, 2009, p. 65). The novel is not just the story of two communities living in two different geographical boundaries, but it is a story of well-nigh every human being on this planet who remembers the things they do not want

to remember and forgets the memories they cherish and want to retain. Their lives become a constant struggle between the search for a lost memory and the desire to break away from the identity they live in at the present. Such are the characters of Zeliha, Mustafa, and Asya. At the very beginning of the novel, Zeliha walks the streets of Istanbul, swearing by the rain, the traffic, and the garbage left after the rain. She is a rebellious modern woman who wears mini-skis, high heels, flaunts her body and ignores the male gaze. She is almost everything one would not expect from an Istanbulite woman. Here, Shafak's first identification is with Istanbulite, specifically as a woman from Istanbul. "Hadh't she already waged a war against the entire society?" (Shafak, 2007, p. 8).

Zeliha's battle is not only against society but also against the identity of being a woman in Istanbul which restricts her from expressing herself as she wishes. Behaving contrary to what is expected of her, she distorts her social identity and creates her own distinct identity where she becomes the center of her universe. Interestingly, when Zeliha, who is nineteen years old, unmarried, and pregnant, goes to have her abortion, the receptionist asks her about her place of birth. The receptionist is shocked to hear from Zeliha about her birthplace. She finds it unpalatable to associate Zeliha's actions with her identity of being an Istanbulite. However, Zeliha considers herself a true Istanbulite, her sense of national identity and the Receptionist's perception of a true Istanbulite are different. This incident provides an alibi that identities are plural and subjective. Zeliha is rebelling not only against society but also against her inner self. She is filled with bitter memories of her past. "Aram, when is it going to end? This compulsory amnesia. This perpetual forgetfulness" (Shafak, 2007, p. 281). Like other characters in the text, her character is a victim of her past. It is a journey of self-afflicted amnesia that takes a toll on their lives.

Mustafa struggles between two worlds. At home, he is treated like a king by the Kazanci women as he is the only surviving male child of the family. However, he is antisocial in the outside world. In Arizona, Mustafa is constantly haunted by memories of home that question his existence. He wants to detach himself from these memories but fails to use this willful amnesia. "How he wished he could remove his memory, restart the program until all the files were deleted and gone" (Shafak, 2007, p. 45).

Like all Turks, Mustafa has no knowledge of the genocide. He is living an identity that is entangled with a past that he wants to erase. In Istanbul, neither his national, nor his personal past makes any sense to him. When Armanoush asks him about history and how the Turks treated the Armenians, he simply answers in the negative. Mustafa is constantly trying to bring about amnesia on purpose. When he finally visits Istanbul, he has no choice but to embrace and face his past. The memories leave him weak and depressed. "This amnesia of his was deliberate, though not calculated. On the one hand, there was somewhere inside his brain a gate that would not close no matter what; some memories always escaped. On the other hand, was the urge to dredge up what the mind had neatly expunged" (Shafak, 2007, p. 334).

Rose's character is worried about her post-marriage identity. Her recent past at her ex-husband's house forces her to prove to the world that she is indeed a good mother. "After being repeatedly accused of being a slipshod housewife and a terrible mother, Rose was eager to prove the contrary in any way she could" (Shafak, 2007, p. 36). Her desire to become a new woman makes her unhappy with her current status as a good mother envisioned by her husband's family. "Now that hell-of-a-divorce season was over, she was going to become a new woman" (Shafak, 2007, p. 37). A clash of identities occurs when the Tchakhmakhchian family learns that Rose is planning to marry a Turk. This is an attack on their Armenian identity. In order to preserve their lineage, Armanoush must be raised in a purely Armenian way sans any influence of the outsider let alone a Turk. Uncle Stambouljian is particularly upset about Rose's decision to marry a Turk.

What will the innocent lamb tell her friends when she grows up? My father is Barsam Tchakhmakhchian...Something Somethingian, and I am the grandchild of genocide survivors who lost their relatives at the hands of Turkish butchers in 1915, but I have been brainwashed to deny the genocide because I was raised by some Turk named Mustafa (Shafak, 2007, p. 53).

Armenian families consider the memory of the genocide an important marker of their personal and communal identity. A person who forgets Armenian history cannot be called a true Armenian in this sense. This illustrates the resentment of the Armenians against the Turks. The memory of the past is so important to the family that Aunt Surpun confronts Barsam who does not want to interfere in Rose's affairs.

In an ideal world, you could say, well, that's her life, none of her business. If you have no appreciation of history and ancestry, no memory and responsibility, and if you live solely in the present, you certainly can claim that. But the past lives within the present, and our ancestors breathe through our children and you know that (Shafak, 2007, p. 55).

Barsam, who does not seem too attached to his Armenian past, has easily adapted to American ways. He does not want to interfere in his ex-wife's affairs and understands Rose's inability to fit into the Armenian Catholic family because she had no multicultural background. However, members of the Tchakhmakhchian family always harbored grudges against Rose because she was from the outside community. Community identity and the memory of a painful past become so rigid that members fail to accept their daughter-in-law's background.

Asya Kazanci is often made to feel her unwanted presence at home. The first time she heard the word bastard from Grandma Gulsum, she did not understand what it meant. She realized what it meant when a schoolboy called her a bastard a year later. After that, the word became so embedded in her identity that she became convinced that she no longer belonged to Istanbul. Her suicide attempt at the age of seventeen symbolizes her desire not to fit into any normal

identity and her struggle to break free from the socially imposed undesirable identity. Unable to find out her father's identity, Asya feels subjugated. "We all pretend there is no such thing as a father" (Shafak, 2007, p. 146).

Not only Asya, but the place she frequents, Café Kundera has no distinct identity of its own. The name of the place itself is mysterious as there are many stories about the name of the place. Members and visitors come here shedding their worldly individuality. "The Café was a fictive place with fictive people as regulars" (Shafak, 2007, p. 77). The space consisted of numerous frames of different countries that give people a kind of traveling experience jumping between different identities.

Armanoush Tchakhmakhchian's identity is largely shaped by her past. Born to an American mother and an Armenian father, she is constantly burdened to prove her identity. She spends five months of each year with her father's Armenian family and the remaining seven months with her mother in Arizona. She is a bookworm that does not go over well with the Tchakhmakhchian family. Armanoush knows that the family is afraid of her bibliophile nature because of the traumatic past they share.

Thus, the memory of the past shapes the current fears and insecurities of the family. The Tchakhmakhchian family could not even think of children excelling too much, or displaying extraordinary talents, for fear of shining differently from ordinary people, which could endanger their lives. Such fear makes Armanoush downplay her talents and constraints her from expressing herself openly. Not only her talents and capabilities, but Armanoush's past also meddles in her personal encounters. On a date with a boy named Matt Hassinger, she could think of nothing but talk about her past. "They talked a little, he about the career he wanted to build, she about the childhood she would like to destroy; he about his plans, she about the traces of the past; he about his expectations in life, she about family recollections" (Shafak, 2007, p. 108). Like Mustafa, she also wants to forget the memory of her past which becomes a hindrance in her present engagements. Albeit, she loves living in San Francisco, but still feels part of her identity missing. Presumably, it is this search for a lost identity that makes her land in Istanbul.

Like Café Kundera, Armanoush regularly visits a cyberspace called Café Constantinopolis; a group of descendants of families that once lived in Istanbul. The cafe offered a place where members could enter by giving up their identity. Armanoush visits the Tree of Anoush which consists of people who argue against a common enemy. The space paradoxically presented an opportunity where members without identity could project their past memory into their present. Armenian identity and the presentation of Turks as a threat to them is reinforced through debates, tests such as one's degree of Armenianness, etc. Armanoush's desire to find her identity unfolds during her visit to the tree. "Because of her fragmented childhood, she still had not been able to find a sense of continuity and identity. She had to make a journey to her past to be able to start living her own life" (Shafak, 2007, p. 116).

The memory of Ottoman violence travels from generation to generation and hatred against the perpetrators grows stronger. Such anxiety is represented by the reactions of the group members when Armanoush explains her decision to move to Istanbul. People in cyberspace believe that Turkey is not a normal place and any Armenian community visiting it will be arrested. Anti-Khuvurma, a member, claims that Armanoush will be a war reporter there. Armanoush's visit to Istanbul is a symbolic visit to her family as well as her past. The Tchakhmakhchian family, feels a sense of rootlessness in being constantly aware of its history. Their memory is a baggage that must be carried forward, but ironically, such a baggage will also save them from an identity crisis.

The history of Petite-Ma greatly coincides with the development of the modern Turkish Republic. Governments' efforts to build a modern nation based on Western values were accompanied by many changes at the societal level that indicated the fact that the Ottoman past and its deeds were to be erased from public memory. It was not welcome on the part of the national elite to discuss government affairs barring their veneration. Women's identities were also changing as this division took place among elite women. On the one hand, there were professionals who symbolized the new Turkish woman, on the other hand, wives remained. The former shed their sexuality and femininity and became asexual as they climbed the social ladder. "They had short haircuts, no makeup, no accessories. They moved in defeminized, desexualized bodies" (Shafak, 2007, p. 140). The latter group was more inclined towards their femininity. Importantly, the drastic change in society, especially among women, also points to the emergence of new identities that were institutionalized by the state breaking down past identities. Elite women considered their identity superior and modern compared to the wives who stuck to their original Turkish identity. However, the Turkish state itself suffers from a conundrum in its identity. It can neither be fully Western nor willing to bend to the East. Dipsomaniac Cartoonist blurts out, "Yeah, we should all line up along the Bosphorus Bridge and puff as hard as we can shove this city in the direction of the West. If that doesn't work, we'll try the other way, see if we can veer to the East" (Shafak, 2007, p. 145).

The same is visible when Armanoush arrives and is astounded that in the same household, Zeliha wears modern clothes whereas Aunt Banu is clad in a headscarf and a long dress. Armanoush's shock reflects the image of the Turkish state among Americans, particularly Armenian-Americans. It is the distance and lack of dialogue between the two communities that strengthens their prejudices against each other. It will be only through the presence of dialogue that differences will be resolved, and negative images about each other can be shed. When Armanoush reveals her Armenian-American identity to the family, she realizes that the family has no sense of a national past. They could not understand why her grandmother had to leave. Armanoush narrates the whole story and the miserable condition in which her grandma Shushan and her siblings were exiled. Aunt Cevriye, being a teacher of national history was not aware of this atrocity.



Twenty years in her career as a Turkish national history teacher, she was so accustomed to drawing an impermeable boundary between the past and the present, distinguishing the Ottoman Empire from the modern Turkish Republic, that she had heard the whole story as grim news from a distant country. The new state in Turkey had been established in 1923 and that was as far as the genesis of this regime could extend. Whatever might or might not have happened preceding this commencement date was the issue of another era--and another people (Shafak, 2007, p. 164).

Turks shared with Armenians a very distinct sense of memory and past. The history of the Ottoman past was clearly erased from Turkish memory, indicating state-induced amnesia. The family listened to Armanoush's story in silence, neither accepting nor contesting her claim. It seemed as if they did not consider themselves the perpetrators of the crime. The past where they were tyrants was a completely distant territory for the Turks. "For the Armenians, time was a cycle in which the past incarnated in the present and the present birthed the future. For the Turks, time was a multihyphenated line, where the past ended at some definite point and the present started anew from scratch, and there was nothing but a rupture in between" (Shafak, 2007, p. 165).

The state-induced collective institutional amnesia affected Turkish identity in several ways. Citizens lost their sense of the past and became apathetic. They constantly oscillated between East and West in search of belonging and identity. In addition, they became merciless in their treatment of other communities, especially the Armenians whose blood had been shed at their hands. There was nothing left in the past that they could claim as their own, not even the accusation of having committed violence.

There is often visible a big tension between the past and the present. More particularly, it is a tension between past meanings and processes, which we would like to reconstruct from historical remains and meaning which we would like to obtain from the material culture of today. Critical role of the past in the assertion and legitimation of group identities often leads to a problematic slippage between contemporary concepts of group identity and the mapping of past groups in the past (Jones, 1996, p. 63).

The meeting of Asya and Armanoush represents a clash of two strange identities. It comes as a shock to Armanoush that Asya has no interest in traditional Turkish music, which she considers an important part of her connection to her roots. However, Asya claims that the past becomes part of one's identity only when one has some knowledge of the past. Lack of knowledge about the past makes one wander in the world of identities.

Moreover, the two communities fear each other. The group members of Anoush Tree fear that Armanoush may be Turkified during her visit as she speaks positively of the city. Armanoush gradually comes to realize that her attempt of asking for recognition or apology from the Turks is futile as they do not even accept that the atrocity occurred. The Nonnationalist Scenarists of the Ultranationalist movement, for instance, believe that the incident never happened as anyone really among them had ever heard about it and people have been brainwashed.

Though the motive of hatred against the perpetrators of genocide is shared by the Armenians, there is no concerted political action proposed by any member to resolve the differences. The Armenian diaspora seems to be at stasis since it is caught up in the memory of the past and cannot look towards a new future (Chakraborty, 2019).

Since there are no official documents available on Ottoman history, no books have been written, and no research has been done on Ottoman history, it becomes clear that even the intellectual circles of the Turkish land has apparently no knowledge of this genocide. In this way, the government is quite successful in erasing the violent past. It is only through the memories of the victims of the genocide that the wounds have not yet healed. When aunt Banu hears of the horrific events of the genocide and the destruction it has brought to the Stamboulouian family, she wonders about the usefulness of the past. "Was it better for human beings to discover more of their past?... Or was it simply better to know as little of the past as possible and even to forget what small amount was remembered" (Shafak, 2007, p. 243)? Hence, it becomes pertinent to ask whether the past and its remembrance are better or whether being amnesiac towards the reminiscences is healing and to what extent?

Aram who is the significant other of Aunt Zeliha is a complex character. He is an Armenian but lives in Istanbul. He does not share any hatred toward the community. Armanoush wonders why he did not go abroad and become a member of the Armenian diaspora, but believes that Istanbul is the place for him. "He suspecting she was too Americanized, she construing he was too Turkified. The mordant gap between the children of those who had managed to stay and the children of those who had to leave" (Shafak, 2007, p. 254).

Nevertheless, it is debatable whether a community with a bloodied past, and facing displacement will be able to survive without any collective identity. Shunning the Armenian identity in a foreign land, in this case, America would only mean that they would be left only with the American identity. If this identity were to be recognized, it would once again mean a complete obliteration of their original past and history. Such willful amnesia would be burdensome. In trying to get rid of the native identity in a foreign land, one may feel inferior and constantly aspire to be like someone else. The sense of identity is confused here, the diaspora can neither fully embrace the new identity nor reject the past identity. Barsam Tchakhmakhchian, for instance, felt the same pangs of pain. "Even years later, his mother would approach him now and then, explaining how as a little boy he had asked the Dutch American tenants upstairs what particular soap they used to wash themselves because he wanted to be just as white as them" (Shafak, 2007, p. 279).

It becomes clear that despite efforts to deliberately forget, the past certainly affects present relationships and identities. A gradual acceptance and recognition of the past on a personal level is better than repressing memories that

are painful. Retrieving the past identity is important in making-up the national identity. Communal identity and harmony can be achieved when communal groups recognize past tensions and try to forget mutual hatred.

If history cannot be changed, the attitudes that drove the Armenian Genocide can be abandoned in favour of a new approach that will respect Armenians and promote the well-being of all people in Turkey, including Armenians. This will carry over to Armenians around the world, fostering better relations with the Armenian Republic as well as the sizable Armenian diaspora. Turkey will improve politically and this will support the well-being of Armenians as well as Turks (Theriault, 2009, p. 89).

## VII. CONCLUSION

*The Bastard of Istanbul* is a novel where the characters are either constantly in denial or searching for their identity. Their memories shape their present states of existence. Past is either a hellish place for them or a territory yet to be explored. Zeliha, Mustafa, and Asya are under the illusion that they do not need the past and see their memories as a burden. However, when they delve into their past and come to terms with their memories, which until now were overshadowed by their willful amnesia, those same memories become the source of healing. The past can be repressed but not erased. Similarly, the Turkish state is also in denial about its past. It seeks a new identity to Westernize itself through the institutional erosion of historical memories of violence and genocide. Its purpose is to induce collective amnesia to completely erase memory from the minds of its citizens as well as from the national consciousness. Such an effort is made to create a strong sense of national identity as well as to steer itself clear of all the accusations of being the persecutor of the communities such as the Armenians. However, like the characters, collective amnesia leads the state nowhere. It succeeds in westernizing itself but fails to escape the need for a strong historical past. This leads to the feeling of rootlessness and pastlessness. In this way, the inhabitants of Istanbul become a diaspora in their homeland. Hence, collective amnesia proves destructive to the unity as well as to the identity of the nation.

Furthermore, the Armenian community clings strongly to its past as a marker of its identity. According to them, the past cannot be forgotten and must be strengthened from generation to generation to unify the communal identity. This is probably because the Turks did not accept their responsibility for committing the genocide. Thus, hatred of the Armenian community spreads and is further exacerbated by the geographical distance between the Armenians and the Turks. The other side of the coin is seen here. Clinging to one's past can also be a source of hatred and an inability to accept though hatred can be eradicated. Hate should not be such as to breathe in hatred. Being amnesiac to some memories can also be a way of avoiding bitterness and distress in the present. In this way, memory can be a burden as well as a source of healing. As in the case of Armanoush, for instance, her inability to have a past hollowed out her identity. She searches for her lost past, and in the process loses her bitterness towards the Turks. Here, memory becomes a healer.

Both memory and amnesia are important elements of identity, whether personal or national. The past is important to feeling a sense of belonging and understanding who one is. By looking deep into the past, one can avoid indifference from the roots, but the same past can also prove to be a treasure of bitter truths. Remembering is important to sustain the present identity but forgetting the past or deliberative amnesia is also crucial so that the past does not poison the present. The question of identity and memory will never be obsolete because identity and memory are in a constant process of creation and re-creation.

Moreover, all identities such as personal, social, cultural, or national are interconnected and interrelated and thus, shall be a source of harmony and peaceful co-existence. The question of Armenian and Turkish identity and the chasm between the two could be filled only through the acceptance on the part of the perpetrators and the forgetting on the part of the victims. The aim should always be to construct the identity in such a way that no other identity is undermined and harmony is at stake. Finally, this study provides a sense of understanding of the nexus between memory, identity, and amnesia. The important point is that not everything can be remembered and not everything can be forgotten. After all, a little memory and a little forgetting never hurt.

## VIII. SIGNIFICANCE

The study is important in several ways. Its treatment of universal themes such as memory, identity and amnesia emphasizes the need to engage with art as a source of knowledge, compassion, and community. Memory and amnesia are an important element of identity. Memory can be a burden as well as a source of healing. A gradual acceptance and recognition of the past is good for communal identity and cohesion. Forgetting certain memories can also be a way to avoid bitterness and distress in present. The important point is that not everything can be remembered and not everything can be forgotten. After all, a little remembering and a little forgetting never hurt.

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# The Interaction Between Morphosyntactic Features and the Performance of Machine Translation Tools: The Case of Google Translate, Systran, and Microsoft Bing in English-Arabic Translation

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**Abstract**—The present study compares the performance of three machine translation tools in English-Arabic translation to answer the questions of (a) whether the three machine translation tools, Google Translate, Systran and Microsoft Bing can be ordered in a hierarchy of performance, and (b) whether they can handle lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences. Using a number of constructed and selected English sentences, the morphosyntactic features of number, gender, case, definiteness, and humanness, agreement between cardinal numerals and their head nouns, lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences are used to test the three machine translation tools for performance. The results show that (a) as far as handling the morphosyntactic features of subject-verb agreement in Standard Arabic, all three machine translation tools perform equally well, and no machine translation tool seems to perform significantly better than the other two (b) some marked features (e.g. dual number and humanness) of SA seem to pose some problems for machine translation tools, and (c) lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences seem to be the most challenging sentences for the three machine translation tools.

**Index Terms**—machine translation tools, Google Translate, Systran Translate, Microsoft Bing Translator, English-Arabic translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Machine translation (MT) refers to the use of computer programs to translate texts from a source language (henceforth SL) to a target language (henceforth TL) with or without the help of human translators with the ultimate goal of a full automation of the process (Huchins, 1995). Work on MT tools first began in the fifties of the twentieth century with two opposing approaches to development, one emphasizing the use of statistical models to develop MT tools, and the other using theoretical linguistic models to develop the tools (Huchins, 1995). Beaver (1955) is credited as the first person to suggest the use of cryptography, as was used in World War II and information theory, as discussed in Claude Shannon for natural language processing (Hovy, 1999, pp. 498-499). Neural networks or artificial neural networks are designed to mimic the way human neurons connect to one another. Each network is made up of an input node layer, one or more hidden node layers, and an output node layer. If the output node has a value above a given threshold, the node is activated and the data in that node are passed on to the next layer. If, on the other hand, the output of a given node is less than the given threshold, then the node is not activated, and the data in that node are not passed on to the next node in the network (IBM Education, 2020).

The present study is an attempt to evaluate the quality of English-Arabic translation as performed by three free online MT tools, namely Google Translate (henceforth GT), Systran Translate (henceforth Systran), and Microsoft Bing (henceforth MB). The goal of the study is to investigate the performance of these three MT tools by focusing on the complex morphosyntactic features of subject-verb agreement in the features of gender, number, case, humanness and definiteness, targeting cases of lexical and structural ambiguity, and investigating how these machines handle garden path sentences. The choice of the features of number, gender, case, humanness and definiteness is dictated by the fact that Standard Arabic (henceforth SA) exhibits complex and sometimes idiosyncratic patterns of agreement in these features; therefore, it is the belief of the authors of this paper that no proper evaluation of English-Arabic MT tools can be made if the evaluation process does not take into account the morphosyntactic features targeted in this study.

## II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

- (1) Can the three MT tools investigated in this study be ordered in a hierarchy of performance?
- (2) Do the three MT tools encounter problems with lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences?

This paper is organized as follows. Section II includes the research questions of the study. Section III is the literature review. Section IV reports on the methodology and instruments used. Section V reports on the results of the study. Section VI is a discussion of the results, and section VII concludes the paper.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on English-Arabic-English MT tools falls into three groups. The first group of studies evaluates the performance of one MT tool, namely GT with a focus on the types of errors that the tool is making, be they lexical, syntactic or semantic. For example, Al-Samawi (2014) considers the errors made by GT in the English-Arabic translation of 10 texts representing different academic disciplines taken from Wikipedia, and concludes by identifying an average of 3.66 syntactic and semantic errors per sentence. Jabak (2019) feeds GT with sentences taken from the book called *Thinking Arabic-English translation* by Dickins, Hervey and Higgins (as cited in Jabak, 2019) and compares the output of those sentences to the human translations offered in the book. He concludes that GT makes some lexical and syntactic errors that negatively impacted the quality of the translations. Abdelaal and Alazzawie (2020) evaluate the performance of GT in the translation of informative texts from Arabic to English, and conclude that the most common types of errors are lexical errors (e.g. omission) and semantic errors (e.g. the use of inappropriate lexical items as equivalents). Aljerf (2021) evaluates the accuracy of GT in the English-Arabic translation of technical terms, and concludes that GT faces problems with words with varying prefixes, roots combined with the same suffix, compounds and blends. Sabtan et al. (2021) use comments made on social media to create a corpus of Egyptian Arabic. Using a number of sentences from that corpus, the authors feed a number of sentences into GT and evaluate the output of GT English-Arabic translation. They conclude that GT makes a number of mistakes having mostly to do with lexical addition (i.e., adding words that are not in the SL text) or omission (i.e., omitting words that are in the SL text). All of the above studies show the inadequacy of MT compared to that of human translation.

The second group of studies on English-Arabic-English MT compares the performance of GT against that of another MT tool. Al-Kabi et al. (2013) test the performance of GT against that of Babylon in the English-Arabic translation of some well-known English sayings as well as some sentences taken from websites. The authors use the automatic evaluation metric called the Bilingual Evaluation understudy (BLEU), and conclude that GT does a better job than Babylon in terms of the precision of translation. A similar conclusion has been reached in Almahasees's (2018) study where the performance of GT is tested against that of MB in the English-Arabic translation of 25 sentences taken from Petra News Agency of Jordan using BLEU as an evaluation metric. The study concludes that GT does a better job than MB. Similar studies on other language pairs can be found in Seljan et al. (2012).

The third group of studies on English-Arabic-English MT focuses on the attitudes of a specific population, namely university students in the Arab World towards the use of MT tools. Alhaisoni, E. and Alhaysony (2017) find that the majority of their Saudi university students use GT to help them read English textbooks, look up the meaning of a word, or do their writing assignments.

The present study differs from all of the literature cited above in a number of significant ways. First, unlike all previous studies on MT tools, the present study compares the performance of GT to two other MT tools, namely MB and Systran. Another important aspect which makes the present study stand out is that rather than feeding the MT tools with sentences or texts and then classifying errors into types such as lexical, syntactic and semantic, a number of structures and complex morphosyntactic features are tested by constructing sentences that target those features. For example, gender as a linguistic feature may not appear as a problematic aspect of MT between English and Arabic when random sentences are fed into the MT tools. However, it might turn out to be problematic once we take into account areas of SA morphosyntax where gender agreement is quite complex, as in the case of gender agreement between the verbs and subjects that refer to nonhumans. Complex patterns of agreement also arise when one considers gender concord between cardinal numerals and the head noun, an area which is known in the literature on Arabic linguistics to be quite complex (Ryding, 2005). A third aspect in which the present study is unique is that it includes for the first time, to the best of our knowledge, sentences that are structurally and lexically ambiguous as well as sentences that cause initial temporary parsing problems for humans, known in the literature on psycholinguistics as garden path sentences.

## IV. METHOD

In this study, three MT tools are tested for performance against one another, and these are GT, Systran and MB. The choice of these three MT tools is dictated by two important factors. The first is that some of these tools such as GT is the most widely used MT tool by individuals around the world (Greene, 2016) and others such as Systran are widely used by corporations and organizations such as the European Commission (Wilks, 2009). The second factor that motivated the choice of these MT tools is that all three are free of charge.

GT is one of the most widely used MT tools used to employ statistical models for the purpose of translation, but since 2016 it moved to neural machine translation (Alkhawaja et al., 2020; Abdelaal & Alazzawie, 2020), when fed with a word or a phrase, it searches the Internet from the billions of documents that are translated by human expert translators in order to find a translation for the source language word or phrase. To find a good translation candidate, GT searches specifically for pages on the Internet that have identical domains with different endings such as /en or /fr. The software has then to make a decision; either that the candidate is a good candidate, and therefore it is in, or that the candidate is not a good candidate, and therefore, it is out; in other words, GT is a binary decision-making system rather than one that assigns a given weighting to a given pair. This software started as a statistical-based system, but later developed into a hybrid statistical-based system and a rule-based system (Greene, 2016). The software offers translations in more than 103 languages (Almahasees, 2018).

Systran is the oldest MT tool that initially provided translation services to the US Ministry of Defense and the European Community. It started as a rule-based MT tool, and later developed into a hybrid rule-based system and a statistical-based system (de olivera & Anastasiou, 2011; Zughoul & Abu-Alshaar, 2005).

MB started as a statistical-based system, but has recently developed into a neural system. It offers translation for more than 60 languages (Almahasees, 2018).

The following morphosyntactic features are targeted in the present study.

#### A. Number, Gender, Case, and Definiteness

SA is a language where adjectives agree with the head nouns in gender, number, case and definiteness (Ryding, 2005). To illustrate, consider the following examples.

- (1) a. Laila Taalibat-u-n mujidda-t-u-n<sup>1</sup>  
 L. student.FSG-NOM-INDEF hard.working-FSG-NOM-INDEF<sup>2</sup>  
 'Laila is a hardworking student.'
- b. \*Laila Taalibat-u-n mujidd-u-n  
 L. student.FSG-NOM-INDEF hard.working.MSG-NOM-INDEF
- c. \*Laila Taalibat-u-n mujidda-t-aan  
 L. student.FSG-NOM-INDEF hard.working.F-DU.NOM.INDEF
- d. \*Laila Taalibat-u-n mujidda-t-a-n  
 L.student.FSG-NOM-INDEF hard.working-FSG-ACC-INDEF
- e. \*Laila Taalibat-u-n al-mujidda-t-u  
 L. student.FSG-NOM-INDEF DEF-hard.working-FSG-NOM

The examples in (1) are all ungrammatical except for the one in (1a). The reason for the ungrammatical status of (1b-e) is the mismatch in one of the features of gender, number, case or definiteness between the nominal predicate *Taaliba* 'student' and the adjective *mujiddat* 'hardworking' modifying the nominal predicate.

#### B. Subject-Verb Agreement

SA is a language which exhibits two different types of subject-verb agreement depending on the order of the subject (S) and the verb (V). In the V-S order, the verb is always singular regardless of what number feature the subject has. This rule explains why (2a) is grammatical, but (2b) is not. In the S-V order, the number feature on the verb must match the number feature of the subject; otherwise, the sentence is ungrammatical, as can be shown in the contrast between (3a) and (3b).

- (2) a. Hadhar-at l-fataat-aani l-hiSSat-a  
 attend.Pst-F.SG DEF-girl.F-DU.NOM DEF-class-ACC  
 'the two girls attended the class.'
- b. \*Hadhar-ataa l-fataat-aani l-HiSSat-a<sup>3</sup>  
 attend.Pst-F.DU DEF-girl.F-DU.NOM DEF-class-ACC
- (3) a. ?al-fataat-aani hadhar-ataani l-HiSSat-a  
 DEF-girl-DU.NOM attend.Pst-F.DU DEF-class-ACC  
 'The two girls attended the class.'
- b. \*?al-fataat-aani hadhar-at l-HiSSat-a  
 DEF-girl-DU.NOM attend.Pst-F.SG DEF-class-ACC

#### C. Subject-Verb Agreement in the Feature of Humanness

SA has an idiosyncratic feature, where the number and gender features of the verb in both the V-S and the S-V orders are always singular feminine whenever the subject is plural non-human (Ryding, 2005). This is shown by the contrast between (4) and (5).

<sup>1</sup> The following abbreviations are used in the study. ACC = accusative case; DEF = definite; DU = dual number; F = feminine; GEN = genitive case; INDEF = indefinite; M = masculine; NOM = nominative case; PL = plural number; Pst = past tense; SG = singular

<sup>2</sup> Targeted morphosyntactic features are bolded.

<sup>3</sup> A star \* before a sentence is the standard notation used in the linguistic literature to indicate that a sentence is ungrammatical.

- (4) a.        nahaq-at            l-Hamiir-u  
               bray.Pst-**F.SG**   DEF-donkey.**M.PL.**-NOM  
               ‘The donkeys brayed.’
- b.        \*nahaq-a            l-Hamiir-u  
               bray.Pst-**M.SG**   DEF-donkey.**M.PL.**-NOM
- (5) a.        ?al-Hamiir-u                            nahaq-at  
               DEF-donkey.**M.PL.**-NOM            bray.Pst-**F.SG**  
               ‘The donkeys brayed.’
- b.        \*?al-Hamiir-u                            nahaq-uu  
               DEF-donkey.**M.PL.**-NOM            bray.Pst-**M.PL.**

#### D. Agreement Between Cardinal Numerals and Head Nouns

Another idiosyncratic feature of the agreement system of SA relates to the type of agreement between cardinal numerals and head nouns. The type of agreement observed is known in the Arabic linguistic literature as gender polarity or morpheme polarity (Al-qarni, 2021). For example, when the numeral is between 3 and 10, the numeral and the head noun must show inverse agreement in gender rather than normal agreement, as is shown in (6).

- (6) a.        qara?-at            Laila thalaath-at-a    kutub-in  
               read.Pst-F.SG L.    three-**F-ACC**   book.**M.PL-GEN**  
               ‘Laila read three books.’
- b.        \*qara?-at            Laila            thalaath-a            kutub-in  
               read.Pst-F.SG L.            three-**M-ACC**    book.**M.PL-GEN**  
               ‘Laila read three books.’

#### E. Lexically and Structurally Ambiguous Sentences

One of the characteristic features of natural languages is ambiguity in the sense that sentences can sometimes be lexically or structurally ambiguous (Hillert, 1997; Hutchins & Somers, 1992). To illustrate, consider the following example from English.

- (7) The man put the book in the box on the table.

The sentence in (7) is structurally ambiguous, as it can mean either (7a) or (7b).

- a.        There is a box, which is on the table, and the man put the book in the box.  
 b.        The man put the book in a box and put the box on the table.

Interestingly, the equivalents of structurally ambiguous sentences such as (7) are not structurally ambiguous sentences in SA. For example, (7) can be rendered into SA either as (7c) or as (7d) neither of which is structurally ambiguous.

- (7) c.        waDaṣ-a            r-rajul-u            l-kitaab-a  
               put.Pst-3.M.SG   DEF-man-NOM   DEF-book-ACC  
               llaḏī fī l-Sunduq-i            ṣala  
               which in   DEF-box-GEN    on  
               T-Taawilat-i  
               DEF-table-GEN  
               ‘The man put the book which is in the box on the table.’
- d.        waDaṣ-a            r-rajul-u            l-kitaab-a  
               put.Pst-3.M.SG   DEF-man-NOM    DEF-book-ACC  
               fī l-Sunduq-i    wa   waDaṣ-a            l- Sunduq-a  
               in DEF-box-GEN and   put.Pst-3.M.SG   DEF-box-ACC  
               ṣala T-Taawilat-i  
               on   DEF-table-GEN  
               ‘The man put the book in the box and put the box on the table.’

Lexical ambiguity can be illustrated with the following example.

- (8) Give me a ring.

The lexical item ring in (8) is lexically ambiguous in that it could mean either a ring that one can wear in one of the fingers, or it could mean a phone call. Especially important in this respect is the fact that MT tools, when faced with examples such as (8), cannot use the syntactic parsing inbuilt now in most MT tools, as way of resolving the ambiguity, as the word ring in both meanings has the same syntactic category, namely a noun.

#### F. Garden Path Sentences

Another type of structures which is also tested in this study is the type of sentences known in the psycholinguistic literature as garden path sentences (Osterhout et al., 1994). These are sentences that initially cause parsing problems for humans in that they initially lead the hearer/reader to a wrong syntactic representation (i.e., down a garden path) before they are later assigned the right syntactic representation. Parsing is the cognitive mechanism responsible for assigning a

real-time syntactic representation to an incoming linguistic input (Gorrell, 1999). To illustrate, consider the following example from English.

(9) The florist sent the flowers was pleased.

When speakers of English initially hear or read the sentence in (9), they are led into a garden path in that they initially assign the sentence the meaning wherein the florist is the one who sent something and the flowers are the thing that was sent by the florist. In other words, the sentence is at first parsed as ([The florist] [sent the flowers]). However, at the point where the hearers/readers encounter the rest of the sentence, i.e., [was pleased], they realize that they have assigned the sentence an initial wrong analysis, and they reassign the sentence the right analysis, where the florist is the receiver of the flowers that were sent to the florist by someone. That is, they reassign the sentence the analysis ([The florist sent the flowers] [was pleased]).

To target all of the above morphosyntactic features and structures, we constructed some sentences and selected a number of other sentences from the internet. Table 1 below is a summary of each feature or structure and the number of sentences constructed or selected for the purpose of the present study.

TABLE 1  
A SUMMARY OF TARGETED FEATURES AND STRUCTURES

morphosyntactic feature or syntactic structure	total number of test sentences = 60
number, gender, case, and definiteness	10-constructed
subject-verb agreement	10- constructed
subject-verb agreement in the feature of humanness	10- constructed
agreement between cardinal numerals and head nouns	10- constructed
lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences	10 (5 lexically ambiguous sentences + 5 structurally ambiguous sentences-selected)
garden path sentences	10-selected

## V. RESULTS

The findings of the study are offered in the following tables. The notation [✓] indicates that the MT tool offers a translation which conforms to the grammatical rules of SA, and is considered an acceptable translation of the SL sentence. The notation [X], on the other hand, indicates that the MT tool offers a translation where the grammatical rules of SA are not respected, and the translation offered is not an appropriate translation. Table 2 below offers the results obtained when the sentences constructed to target the morphosyntactic features of number, gender, case and humanness were fed to the three MT tools under study.

TABLE 2  
NUMBER, GENDER, CASE AND DEFINITENESS

English (source)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) Mary is an intelligent student.	Gender (feminine) agreement	ماري طالبة ذكية [✓]	ماري طالبة ذكية [✓]	ماري طالبة ذكية [✓]
2) Mary and Elizabeth bought tickets for the Opera	Gender (feminine) agreement	اشترت ماري واليزابيث تذاكر للأوبرا [✓]	ماري واليزابيث اشترتا تذاكر الأوبرا [X]	اشترت ماري واليزابيث تذاكر للأوبرا [✓]
3) Jack is an intelligent student	Gender (masculine) agreement	جاك طالب ذكي [✓]	جاك طالب ذكي [✓]	جاك طالب ذكي [✓]
4) Mary and Elizabeth are intelligent students	Number (dual) agreement	ماري واليزابيث طالبات ذكيات [X]	ماري واليزابيث تلميذتان ذكيات [X]	ماري واليزابيث طالبات ذكيات [X]
5) The workers went on strike	Number (plural) agreement	وقام العمال بالإضراب [✓]	العمال أضربوا عن العمل [✓]	أضرب العمال [✓]
6) The worker went on strike	Number (singular) agreement	دخل العامل في إضراب [✓]	قام العامل بالإضراب [✓]	أضرب العامل [✓]
7) The two Deans rewarded the two intelligent students	Case (nominative) agreement	وقد أجازت العميدان بمكافأة الطالبتين الذكيتين [✓]	لقد كافأ العميدان الطالبتين الذكيات [✓]	كافأ العميدان الطالبتين الذكيتين [✓]
8) The two students passed the two tests	Case (nominative + accusative/genitive) agreement	وقد اجتاز الطالبان الاختبارين [✓]	نجح الطالبان في الاختبارين [✓]	اجتاز الطالبان الاختبارين [✓]
9) The writer won two important awards	agreement in indefiniteness	فاز الكاتب بجائزتين مهمتين [✓]	وقد فاز الكاتب بجائزتين مهمتين [✓]	فاز الكاتب بجائزتين مهمتين [✓]
10) The writer won the two prestigious awards	agreement in definiteness	فاز الكاتب بالجائزتين المرموقتين [✓]	فاز الكاتب بجائزتين مرموقتين [X]	فاز الكاتب بالجائزتين المرموقتين [✓]
Score out of 10		9	7	9



Of the 10 sentences considered in Table 2, GT has a score of 9 out of 10, MB 8 of 10; whereas Systran has a score of 7 out of 10. Table 3 below offers the results obtained when the sentences constructed to target subject-verb agreement were fed to the three MT tools investigated in this study.

TABLE 3  
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

English (source language)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) The girls attended the class	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	حضرت الفتيات الفصل [✓]	الفتيات حضرن الفصل [✓]	الفتيات حضرن الصف [✓]
2) The girls are listening to the Opera	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	الفتيات يستمعن إلى الأوبرا [✓]	الفتيات يستمعن إلى الأوبرا [✓]	الفتيات يستمعن إلى الأوبرا [✓]
3) The boys attended the class	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	حضر الأولاد الفصل [✓]	الأولاد حضروا الفصل [✓]	الأولاد حضروا الصف [✓]
4) The boys are listening to music	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	الأولاد يستمعون إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الأولاد يستمعون إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الأولاد يستمعون للموسيقى [✓]
5) The two girls attended the class	subject-verb agreement	حضرت الفتاتان الفصل [✓]	الفتاتان حضرتا الصف [✓]	حضرت الفتاتان الصف [✓]
6) The two girls are listening to music	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	الفتاتان تستمعان إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الفتاتان تستمعان إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الفتاتان تستمعان للموسيقى [✓]
7) The two boys attended the class	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	حضر الصبيان الفصل [✓]	الأولاد حضروا الصف [✓]	حضر الصبيان الصف [✓]
8) The two boys are listening to music	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	الصبيان يستمعان إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الولدان يستمعان إلى الموسيقى [✓]	الصبيان يستمعان للموسيقى [✓]
9) The girl attended the class	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	حضرت الفتاة الفصل [✓]	حضرت الفتاة الفصل [✓]	الفتاة حضرت الصف [✓]
10) The boy attended the class	subject-verb agreement (in person, number and gender)	حضر الصبي الفصل [✓]	حضر الصبي الفصل [✓]	حضر الصبي الصف [✓]
Score out of 10		10	10	10

Out of a total of 10 sentences, GT and MB each has a score of 10 out of 10; whereas Systran has a score of 09 out of 10.

Table 4 below offers the results obtained when the sentences targeting agreement between the subject and the verb in the feature of humanness are tested.

TABLE 4  
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT IN THE FEATURE OF HUMANNES

English (source)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) The girls are eating their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	الفتيات يأكلن طعامهن [✓]	الفتيات يأكلن طعامهن [✓]	الفتيات يأكلن طعامهن [✓]
2) The dogs are eating their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	الكلاب تأكل طعامها [✓]	الكلاب تأكل طعامها [✓]	الكلاب تأكل طعامها. [✓]
3) The boys are eating their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	الاولاد يأكلون طعامهم [✓]	الاولاد يأكلون طعامهم [✓]	الاولاد يأكلون طعامهم [✓]
4) The leaves of the tree are falling.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	أوراق الشجرة تتساقط [✓]	أوراق الشجرة تتساقط [✓]	أوراق الشجرة تتساقط [✓]
5) The girls ate their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	الفتيات أكلن طعامهن. [✓]	الفتيات أكلن طعامهن. [✓]	أكلت الفتيات طعامهن. [✓]
6) The boys ate their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	أكل الاولاد طعامهم. [✓]	كان الصبية يأكلون طعامهم. [✓]	أكل الاولاد طعامهم. [✓]
7) The dogs ate their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	أكلت الكلاب طعامها. [✓]	تأكل الكلاب طعامها. [✓]	أكلت الكلاب طعامهم. [✓]
8) The cats ate their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	أكلت القطط طعامها. [✓]	أكلت القطط طعامها. [✓]	أكلت القطط طعامها. [✓]
9) The airplanes have just taken off.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	لقد أقلعت الطائرات للتو. [✓]	لقد أقلعت الطائرات للتو. [✓]	لقد أقلعت الطائرات للتو. [✓]
10) The teenagers ate their food.	Agreement in humanness between the verb and the subject	تناول المراهقون طعامهم. [✓]	وكان المراهقون يأكلون طعامهم. [✓]	أكل المراهقون طعامهم. [✓]
Score out of 10		10	10	10

Out of a total of 10 sentences, all three MT have a score of 10 out of 10. Note that what is of interest is the agreement in the feature of humanness between the subject and the verb. Therefore, the translation offered by MB of sentence (7) above is considered correct even though the target translation is ungrammatical in SA, as the pronominal object هم—does not agree in humanness with the verb أكلت.

Table 5 below offers the results obtained when the agreement between cardinal numerals and their head nouns is targeted.

TABLE 5  
AGREEMENT BETWEEN CARDINAL NUMERALS AND THEIR HEAD NOUNS IN GENDER

English (source)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) I bought three chairs	Inverse gender agreement between the numeral (F) and the noun (M) in the noun phrase	اشتریت ثلاثة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت ثلاثة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت ثلاثة كراسي [✓]
2) I bought nine chairs	Inverse gender agreement between the numeral (F) and the noun (M) in the noun phrase	اشتریت تسعة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت تسعة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت تسعة كراسي [✓]
3) I bought ten chairs	Inverse gender agreement between the numeral (F) and the noun (M) in the noun phrase	اشتریت عشرة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت عشرة كراسي [✓]	اشتریت عشرة كراسي [✓]
4) I bought ten tables	Inverse gender agreement between the numeral (M) and the noun (F) in the noun phrase	اشتریت عشرة طاوولات. [X]	اشتریت عشرة موائد [X]	اشتریت عشرة طاوولات [X]
5) I bought thirteen chairs	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (F) and head noun (M)	اشتریت ثلاثة عشر كرسيًا [✓]	اشتریت ثلاثة عشر كرسي [✓]	اشتریت ثلاثة عشر كرسيًا [✓]
6) I bought nineteen chairs	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (F) and the head noun (M)	اشتریت تسعة عشر كرسيًا [✓]	اشتریت تسعة عشر كرسي [✓]	اشتریت تسعة عشر كرسيًا [✓]
7) I bought sixteen forks	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (M) and the head noun (F)	اشتریت ستة عشر شوكة [X]	اشتریت ستة عشر شوكة [X]	اشتریت ستة عشر شوكة [X]
8) I bought thirteen toothbrushes	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (M) and the head noun (F)	اشتریت ثلاثة عشر فرشاة أسنان [X]	اشتریت ثلاث عشرة فرشاة أسنان [✓]	اشتریت ثلاثة عشر فرشاة أسنان [X]
9) I bought nine paintings	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (M) and the head noun (F)	اشتریت تسع لوحات [✓]	اشتریت تسع لوحات [✓]	اشتریت تسع لوحات [✓]
10) I bought four pencils	Inverse agreement on the first part of the numeral (F) and the head noun (M)	اشتریت أربعة أقلام رصاص [✓]	اشتریت أربعة أقلام رصاص [✓]	اشتریت أربعة أقلام رصاص [✓]
Score out of 10		7	8	7

Out of a total of 10 sentences, GT and MB each has a score of 7 out of 10; whereas Systran has a score of 8 out of 10. Table 6 offers the results obtained when lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences are targeted.

TABLE 6  
LEXICALLY AND STRUCTURALLY AMBIGUOUS SENTENCES

English (source)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) The man put the book in the box on the table	Structural ambiguity	وضع الرجل الكتاب في الصندوق على الطاولة [X]	وضع الرجل الكتاب في الصندوق على الطاولة [X]	الرجل وضع الكتاب في الصندوق على الطاولة [X]
2) I killed the king with the knife	Structural ambiguity	لقد قُتِلَ الملك بالسكين [X]	قُتِلَ الملك بالسكين [X]	قُتِلَ الملك بالسكين [X]
3) I killed the king with the red hair	Structural ambiguity	لقد قُتِلَ الملك بالشعر الأحمر [X]	قُتِلَ الملك بالشعر الأحمر [X]	قُتِلَ الملك بالشعر الأحمر [X]
4) Chop the tree with the leaves	Structural ambiguity	اقطع الشجرة بالأوراق [X]	أقص الشجرة بأوراق الشجر [X]	فرم الشجرة مع الأوراق [X]
5) Draw the man with the sunglasses	Structural ambiguity	ارسم الرجل بالنظارات الشمسية [X]	ارسم الرجل مع النظارات الشمسية [X]	رسم الرجل مع النظارات الشمسية [X]
6) Give me a ring	Lexical ambiguity (homonymy)	أعطني الخاتم [X]	أعطني خاتما [X]	أعطني خاتما [X]
7) I bought a pen for my dog	Lexical ambiguity (polysemy)	اشتريت قلمًا لكلبي [X]	اشتريت قلم لكلبي [X]	اشتريت قلم لكلبي [X]
8) I am looking at the face of the clock	Lexical ambiguity (polysemy)	أنا أنظر إلى وجه الساعة [X]	أنا أنظر إلى وجه الساعة [X]	أنا أنظر إلى وجه الساعة [X]
9) The crane is picking a small fish	Lexical ambiguity (polysemy)	الرافعة تلتقط سمكة صغيرة [X]	الرافعة تلتقط سمكة صغيرة [X]	الرافعة تلتقط سمكة صغيرة [X]
10) I bought ten rulers	Lexical ambiguity (polysemy)	اشتريت عشرة حكام [X]	اشتريت عشرة حكام [X]	اشتريت عشرة حكام [X]
Score out of 10		0	0	0

Out of a total of 10 sentences, all three MT tools have a score of zero out of 10.

Table 7 offers the results obtained when garden path sentences are targeted.

TABLE 7  
GARDEN PATH SENTENCES

English (source)	Feature checked	GT	Systran	MB
1) The horse raced past the barn fell	Parsing issue	تسابق الحصان أمام سقط الحظيرة [X]	أسرع الحصان بعد سقوط الحظيرة [X]	الحصان تسابق عبر الحظيرة سقط [X]
2) The old man the boat	Parsing issue	العجوز القارب [X]	الرجل العجوز القارب [X]	الرجل العجوز القارب [X]
3) The florist sent the flowers was pleased	Parsing issue	أرسل بائع الزهور وسر مسرورا [X]	أرسل بائع الأزهار الأزهار مسرورا [X]	بائع الزهور أرسل الزهور كان مسرورا [X]
4) The complex houses married and single soldiers and their families	Parsing issue	يضم المجمع منازل المتزوجين والجنود العزاب وعائلاتهم [X]	منازل المجمع متزوجة وعزباء وعوائل [X]	يضم المجمع الجنود المتزوجين والعازب بأسرهم [X]
5) The cotton clothing is made of grows in Mississippi	Parsing issue	الملابس القطنية مصنوعة من تنمو في ميسيسيبي [X]	الملابس القطنية مصنوعة من النباتات في الميسيسيبي [X]	يرصد الملابس القطنية من ينمو في ولاية ميسيسيبي [X]
6) The man who hunts ducks out on weekends	Parsing issue	الرجل الذي يصطاد البط في عطلات نهاية الأسبوع [X]	الرجل الذي يطارد البط في عطلة نهاية الأسبوع [X]	الرجل الذي يطارد البط في عطلة نهاية الأسبوع [X]
7) Fat people eat accumulates	Parsing issue	يتراكم الناس الدهون يأكلون [X]	الدهون تأكل التراكمات [X]	الناس الدهون أكل يتراكم [X]
8) Until the police arrest the drug dealers control the street.	Parsing issue	حتى تعتقل الشرطة تجار المخدرات يسيطرون على الشارع [X]	حتى تعتقل الشرطة تجار المخدرات المتحكمين بالشارع. [X]	حتى تعتقل الشرطة تجار المخدرات يسيطرون على الشارع [X]
9) When Fred eats food gets thrown.	Parsing issue	عندما يأكل فريد يتم طرح الطعام [X]	عندما يأكل فريد الطعام يرمى. [X]	عندما يأكل فريد الطعام يحصل ألقبت [X]
10) Mary gave the child the dog bit a bandaid	Parsing issue	أعطت ماري الطفل ضمادة على الكلب [X]	ماري أعطت الطفل الكلب قطعة بندية [X]	ماري أعطت الطفل الكلب عضه [X]
Score out of 10		0	0	0

Out of a total of 10 sentences, all three MT tools have a score of zero out of 10.

Table 8 below is a summary of the scores achieved by all three MT tools on the 60 test sentences used in this study, and their overall performance given in percentages.

TABLE 8  
OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE THREE MT TOOLS

MT	Overall Performance
GT	36/60 = 60%
Systran	35/60 = 58.33%
MB	36/60 = 60%

Table 9 below shows the overall performance of all three MT tools when the problematic lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences are excluded from the count.

TABLE 9  
THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE THREE MT TOOLS (PROBLEMATIC STRUCTURES EXCLUDED)

MT	Overall Performance
GT	36/40 = 90%
Systran	35/40 = 87.5%
MB	36/40 = 90%

## VI. DISCUSSION

The present study was an attempt to answer the following research questions:

- (1) Can the three MT tools investigated in this study be ordered in a hierarchy of performance?
- (2) Do the three MT tools encounter problems with lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences?

To answer the first research question, it is helpful to consider Tables 8 and 9, which provide a summary of the overall performance of all three MT tools considered in this study. When we consider how each of the three MT tools fared in terms of their observance of the morphosyntactic features of SA, all three MT tools show evidence of sensitivity to the morpho-syntactic features of SA with an overall score of 36/40 for GT and MB and 35/40 for Systran. Based on these figures, we can answer the first research question by claiming that all three MT tools considered in this study seem to perform well in English-SA translation. This means that as far as observance of the morphosyntactic features of subject-verb agreement in SA are concerned, there does not seem to be a difference in performance among the three MT tools considered in this study. In other words, all three MTs fare well in this respect, and not one of them seems to perform better than the other two. Our conclusion then is that the first research question receives a negative answer, as no hierarchy of performance can be provided among the three MT tools.

Notwithstanding the above, there does seem to be some evidence to suggest that dual number, which is a cross-linguistically marked number, and the interaction between the dual number and the gender feature on the agreeing verb pose a problem for MT tools (see for example the performance of all three MT tools on sentence 4 of table 2 above, and the performance of Systran on sentence 2 of table 2 above). This might explain the errors made by MT tools in table 2 above. There also seem to be evidence to indicate that another cross-linguistically feature, namely that of humanness, pose another problem for all three MT tools. That explains why all three MT tools made mistakes in table 5 above. Of particular interest in this regard is the observation that agreement between compound cardinal numerals (11-19, for instance) and their head nouns seem to be more challenging for all three MT tools than single numerals (see for example examples 7 and 8 of table 5 above).

When we, on the other hand, consider how the three MT tools fare with lexically and structurally ambiguous sentences and garden path sentences, we notice a consistent failure of all three tools in handling such sentences. Thus, the second research question posed in this study is positively answered, as these structures pose a serious problem for all three MT tools. One reason why the lexically ambiguous structures considered in this study are problematic for MT tools could be that the source of the polysemy cannot be resolved by recourse to the syntactic category difference between the target term and its polysemous term, as the target term in all the five lexically ambiguous sentences shares the same syntactic category with its polysemous word. For example, the term *ring* in *give me a ring* (= *give me a call*) and in *give me a ring* (= *give me a golden or silver ring to wear*) is a noun. The same applies to the other lexically ambiguous terms used in the test sentences of table 6 above. As for garden path sentences, it seems that unlike humans who, after an initial failure in assigning the right syntactic representation to such sentences, seem to be able to overcome their initial failure, MT tools seem at the time of writing this paper doomed to failure when dealing with such sentences. This, together with the consistent failure of MT tools to provide two translations for the two interpretations of syntactically ambiguous sentences suggests that syntactic ambiguity is a very thorny area for MT tools to grapple with.

## VII. CONCLUSION

One of the major conclusions of this study is that no hierarchy of performance seems possible when we pit the three MT tools considered in this study against one another. This is because all three MT tools seem to be doing well when it

comes to SA subject-verb agreement in a number of features. That said, there does seem to be some evidence to indicate that marked cross-linguistically marked morphosyntactic features such as those related to agreement with a subject which is dual in number or agreement in humanness with a subject in SA are more problematic for MT tools than unmarked features.

Another major conclusion of this study is that lexically ambiguous sentences where the target word and its polysemous term share the same syntactic category seem to be challenging for MT tools.

A third major conclusion of this study is that syntactic ambiguity in the form of a sentence with two ambiguous interpretations or of the form known as garden path sentences in the psycholinguistic literature is a serious problem for MT tools.

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